

(UN)EARTHING THE COLONIAL IDENTITY IN A PASSAGE TO INDIA BY E. M. FORSTER

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1. Introduction

A Passage to India, a post-colonial novel which was written in 1913 and then revised and completed in Forster's second visit to India in 1921, was published in 1924, nearly after eleven years since it was first penned by E. M. Forster. The title of *A Passage to India*, taken from Walt Whitman's poem of the same name, suggests that Forster seeks some path to understand India, which is ironic, as no passage seems to be possible neither epistemologically nor socio-culturally between the colonized and colonizer. The time Forster had been to India (from March 1921 until January 1922) was predominantly significant in the history of British India since the nationalist agitation (revived immediately after the war and precipitated by repression and massacre in the Punjab) reached a climax point in the year 1920. At that time, not only Gandhi's non-cooperation movement, protesting against the Punjab massacre but also the British injustice to the Moslem sentiment in India over the Khilafat issue had a deep effect on the country. The success of these two movements was at its highest point during the months Forster was in India (Ganguly, 1990: 42). As a philanthropic, Forster himself was in favour of Civil Disobedience. During the last two weeks before Forster's departure, the policy of civil disobedience was implemented in many parts of Andhra, in the vicinity of Hyderabad where Forster was staying after leaving Dewas.

Having observed the triumph of Non-cooperation movement, Forster witnessed how Britain as an empire compromised demands of the Indian subject and how the British government's policies underwent a remarkable change. To Das, "*the British officials had been subdued, and had become courteous, and some were even respectful towards the Indian*" (1977: 20) to a certain degree. Nevertheless, the past mistakes in India make it impossible to (re)structure a society in egalitarian terms in a colonial setting. Because "[...] *the great blunder of the past is neither political nor economic nor educational, but social...*" (Forster, 1922: 614). According to his view, one of the major factors responsible for the conflicts between the two communities is the social gulf between the Indians and the Anglo-Indians.

Raghavan Iyer also analyses mainly four doctrines about the imperialism in India in his work: The Burkean doctrine of imperial

trusteeship, the utilitarian doctrine of state activity, the Platonic idea of a ruling elite and the Evangelical belief. At the end of his analysis, he concludes that all his doctrines derive from one main assumption: that Britain was superior to India and had power for her own well-being (1960: 9-71). This imperialistic argument, which justifies despotism in India, can be considered as the root of social friction between Englishmen and Indians. According to Das, the epitome that “*Forster would have liked to see imperial Britain fulfil in India was the creation of a democratic empire*” is to do with rebuilding “*an equal, multiracial and integrated society*” where both “*Indians and Englishmen living in India enjoy equal rights and privileges and live unrestricted by racial differences as individuals and as friends*” (1977: 24-25). However, Forster never believes that a superficial political concession could undo the damage that had already been done by the imposition in India of the imperialist system and doctrines in India in the past.

As far as social mistakes are concerned, the perspectives of the British also give some insights on the colonial India. For instance, James Mill in his work entitled *History of British India* explicitly states that India is “*a hideous state... tainted with the vices of insincerity; dissembling, treacherous, mendacious, to an excess which surpasses even the usual measure of uncultivated society*” (1820: 195), namely a statement which accuses Indian culture and civilization. Moreover, Macaulay as a member of Committee of Public Instructions in 1855 in India and a man who laid the foundation of English education in India, believing in the “*intrinsic superiority*” of Western literature and science, asserts that “*a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia*” (1943: 78-79). In the Imperialist years, about Alfred Milner, whom George Curzon during his foreign secretarial work sent to Egypt in May 1919 as Head of Imperial Mission, Forster believes that Milner was “*known as a militant Imperialist, who sincerely believed that the world would be happier if they were ruled by the British upper-middle classes*” (Das, 1977: 29).

A Passage to India, being among one of the 100 great works of 20th century literature by the Modern Library, have been analysed from a wide variety of perspectives in literary spheres. Many critics have dissenting opinions about the novel in general. For instance, to critic F. R. Leavis, the novel itself is “*a classic of the liberal spirit*” (1962: 277) whereas to Davies it just “*expos[es] the impotence of humanist decency in the face of racism*” (2001: 43). For Elinor Wylie, a writer of historical novels, “*A Passage to India is poetry, as it is also melodrama, and philosophy and ‘realism,’ if that word by any chance means life*” (1924: 277). Undeniably, the novel is about the futility of attempts at social rapprochement between the English and the natives in India. Moreover, to Baker, the novel is about “*the*

psychological dilemma of Anglo-Indians who wish to call India home” (2006: 68). Furthermore, to Brandabur (1993), the novel exposes destructive impacts of racism among people and pathological situations that existed in imperialism. Besides, to Robbins, “There is no one order of reality which is the truth about India, no single entity which represents the ‘real’ India... (2003, 204).

As a novel sliding “*between both realist coherence and modernist fragmentation*” (Koontz, 2015: 136), *A Passage to India* presents a wide range of characters with their distinguishing identities in a colonial setting. According to Michael Bell, the reason of Forster’s bringing together a number of different people from different cultural background is about his preference on “*thematizing of conflicting world views*” as he wants to show that “*different world projections are not a matter of internal psychological conflict so much as the institutionalized traditions of different world religions: Christianity, Islam and Hinduism*” (1999: 24). Because the late colonial India, which was situated in the intersection of intense cultural overlaps along with ideological exchanges, illustrates the intricate relationships between the ruler and the ruled. Since India itself includes many different people from different nations, religions and races such as the Hindus, the Muslims, and the British, an amalgamation of Islam, Hinduism, and Christianity is dogmatically presented through scenery, constructions, characters and celebrations in the novel. Forster exemplifies Islam and Christian as well as Hindu beliefs as leitmotif to convey the hybridized elements which reshape the identity of the characters because of their close interaction. By presenting the collaboration of various religious groups against the British, Forster correspondingly shows signs of cynicism on how these divergent groups come and work together by presenting the British as a very thing which is convenient for “*a forced togetherness*” (Drake, 2017: 43) in a colonial setting, where identity of the characters is (re)formed repetitively.

2. Imperial and Colonial Discourse

Edward Said makes a clear definition on imperialism and colonialism: “*‘Imperialism’ means the practice, the theory, and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory; ‘colonialism,’ which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlers on distant territory*” (1994: 8) by emphasizing the role of distant territory. According to Ania Loomba, “*colonialism [is] the forcible takeover of land and economy, and, in the case of European colonialism, a restructuring of non-capitalist economies in order to fuel European capitalism*” (2005: 23) and thus, colonialism is to do with power and hegemony. Besides, Homi K. Bhabha demarcates the concepts such as ‘us’ and ‘them’ in order to validate the unequal relationship between ‘the ‘colonial power’ and the ‘colonized spheres’ as well as between ‘the

coloniser' and 'the colonised' (1994: 70) by unearthing the concepts of identity such as 'Who am I?', 'Who are we?', 'What is a person?', 'Is there such a thing as self?', etc. from the perspectives of colonialism and imperialism. Additionally, on the issue of colonial identities, Anne McClintock concludes that "*no social category exists in privileged isolation; each comes into being in social relation to other categories, if in uneven and contradictory ways*" (1995: 9) in her work. Moreover, Stuart Hall reveals that identity is significant when it is always positioned in a particular context, namely "*constituted within, not outside, representation*" (1996: 110) by means of a particular discourse. Accordingly, an individual (re)establishes his/her identity within the hegemonic power in a colonial setting through the use of colonial discourse, which is "*more dramatic, more intriguing, more neurotic and erotic*" (Sabin, 2002: 6). The colonial discourse also signifies the power. In other words, in a colonial setting, the colonizers use the discourse which exerts their power on the colonized. Thus, in such a circumstance, namely being under the strong influence of the coloniser, the discourse used defines the people of the West as supreme and powerful whereas the East is as 'the other'.

The concept of identity is profoundly connected with *power* and *subaltern* in colonial discourse. By borrowing the Freudian term "uncanny" (Freud, 2003: 124), Bhabha describes the cultural differences between the coloniser and the colonised. The term is commonly used in the sense that when a place does not meet with the expectations of an individual or else, there stands an incongruity between the expected and the reality, as is the case in *A Passage to India*. Furthermore, in Freud's essay, German terms 'heimlich' namely 'homely' or familiar is used in the sense of "*what was once well known and had long been familiar*" and 'unheimlich', namely 'uncanny' or unfamiliar, is used in the sense of belongingness to "*the realm of the frightening, of what evokes fear and dread*" (2003: 123). These distinctions between the known and the unknown and/or comforting and shocking are employed in Bhabha's essay to demarcate the concepts of *culture* and *cultural authority*. To him, culture is familiar "*with its disciplinary generalizations, its mimetic narratives, its homologous empty time, its seriality, its progress, its customs and coherence*" whereas cultural authority is unfamiliar as "*it has to be translated, disseminated, differentiated, interdisciplinary, intertextual, international, inter-racial*" (1994: 195). These two concepts illustrate postcolonial conditions of the individuals in the colonial settings as the former indicates the ideality of a culture, the latter suggests somewhat chaotic and complex.

A Passage to India, an exemplification of so-called internal liberation of the characters in a setting where imperialism and colonialism are the two dominant elements in (re)shaping the identity of the characters,

epitomizes both colonial and imperial discourse. By employing a number of incidences to illustrate how culture and cultural authority are virtually (dis)similar to each other, Forster purposefully exposes the ideological differences which are completely the results of sustaining and regaining power between the two cultures. However, interaction of divergent cultural values between the colonized and the colonizer results in (re)forming a new type of identity, namely 'colonial identity' as well as 'imperial identity'. In other words, colonialism destroys all cultural orders and borders while it attempts to re-create and re-establish new ones by introducing new cultural identities, all of which are both 'heimlich' and 'unheimlich'. Thus, the interaction of two agents, who have completely dissimilar cultural values, leads to the emergence of 'hybrid cultural identity' (Appadurai, 1995) in postcolonial settings.

3. Discussion

A Passage to India depicts Forster's ideological sympathy for the less fortunate masses on the surface. However, in its deeper meaning, the novel reveals Forster's continual siding with the socially marginalized and politically oppressed groups as an implication of his liberal humanism. Structurally, the novel involves three parts entitled "Mosque", "Cave" and "Temple", each of which explicitly narrates the identity of the characters with their unique aspects. Forster, by classifying two conflicting groups, namely the Indians and the English, the East and the West, the colonized and the colonizer, simply juxtaposes the identity of the characters on a broader canvas. Thus, the theme of the novel mainly revolves around one typical question whether there is a connection among these three groups or not. Wilfred Stone reveals the distinctive features of the Indian society by symbolically referring to mosque, cave and temple: "*the three sections emphasize certain qualities of mind and soul – to the Moslem belongs the emotional nature, to the Anglo-Indian the intellect, and to the Hindu the capacity for love*" (1966: 311).

The first part of the novel portrays the city of Chandrapore and the neighbouring area by describing extraordinary Marabar caves. In the novel, space, that is to say, distinctive locations, explorations or crossing borders, becomes one of the most important elements that affects both colonial and imperial identity, which are profoundly dealt with borders. Because it is improbable to isolate identity from borders in a colonial setting. According to Urano, "*Forster turns his tourist gaze to the East, and sees India as a space escaping the epistemological cartography of the West*" (2010: 126). The distinctions between the characters, particularly the identity of British and the Indians are presented through the distance of their own dwellings. In other words, the distance portrayed between the Indian city of Chandrapore and the British colonial buildings indicates that the English prefer to be disconnected from the Indians.

The identity of the colonized is initially revealed in the scene where a group of Indian men are discussing about cross-cultural friendship “*whether or no [sic] it is possible to be friends with an Englishman*” (Forster, 1924: 6-7). The discussion held at Hamidullah’s house among Dr. Aziz, an Indian Muslim whose wife died at an early age and left him with three children, Hamidullah, who studied at Cambridge, and Mahmoud Ali, a poor lazy relative of Hamidullah unambiguously discloses the perspectives of the colonized on the colonizer. During the discussion, whereas Hamidullah advocates that cross-cultural friendship is only “*possible in England*” as he has “*received a cordial welcome at Cambridge*”, Mahmoud Ali believes that “*It is impossible here [India]*” (Forster, 1924: 7). As indicated, the Indians have prejudices against the Englishmen as they have not had any interactions with them outside of India. For them, it is impossible for Indians and Englishmen to be friends as one of the natives insistently states, “*They all become exactly the same, not worse, not better*” by adding that “*I give any Englishman two years [...]. And I give any Englishwoman six months. All are exactly alike*” (Forster, 1924: 7). The discussion among the natives simply suggests that cultural authority of the colonialism prevents the natives from having a sustainable intercourse under the colonial power.

The cross-cultural encounter of the colonized and the colonizer is vividly presented in the scene where Aziz and Mrs. Moore confronts each other at a mosque. Immediately after Aziz notices an Englishwoman in the mosque, he yells at her furiously: “*Madam, this is a mosque, you have no right here at all; you should have taken off your shoes; this is a holy place for Moslems*” (Forster, 1924: 17-18). Later Aziz learns that the old lady is the mother of the City Magistrate of Chandrapore and that she has already taken off her shoes at the entrance. While Aziz is escorting Mrs. Moore to the Chandrapore Club, they have had a friendly conversation. When they arrive, Mrs. Moore “*wished she was a member, so that she could have asked him in*” (Forster, 1924: 21). However, she is shocked to learn that “*Indians are not allowed in the Chandrapore Club, even as guests*” (Forster, 1924: 21-22) because it is the whites-only club.

The novel is a portrayal of Anglo-Indian life and characters on the one side, and of Indian life and characters on the other. According to Mike Edwards, Forster compares and contrasts “*the conception of intellect-dominated imperial power*” with “*an emotion-dominated subject race*” to unveil the identity of the characters (2002: 146) in a colonial setting. For instance, as a main character Aziz, a young Mahommedan doctor in Chandrapore with a simple-minded and almost childish personality, is presented as a pathetic poet who is thrilled by the mention of roses and bulbuls just like many other Persian poets. On the other hand, Ronny, as a self-complacent, censorious and unskillful man, is notorious for exerting his

power and being unsympathetic to the colonized. Because he believes that he is not in India to behave pleasingly, but to do justice and keep the peace.

In the course of the novel, Forster makes his readers focus on the expectations of his characters such as Mrs. Moore and Adela, who wants to see the real India. For instance, Adela's wish to see the real India is interpreted in many statements: "*I want to see the real India*" (Forster, 1924: 22). Additionally, she also states that "*I'm tired of seeing picturesque figures pass before me as a frieze [...]. I only want those Indians whom you come across socially - as your friends*" (Forster, 1924: 26). Indeed, Adela's demand to see the real India mainly stems not only from her own anxiety and curiosity about the county but also her uncertainty about whether she would decide to live and marry a colonial officer, Ronny. Because such a decision-making process is to do with her own identity and future. Unmistakeably, if she marries a colonial officer, she will always be labelled as an Anglo-English wife. Thus, she seems to be rather undecided whether to embody such a stereotype or not.

In the novel, thanks to the insistence of the two ladies to see the real India, a Bridge Party is arranged for the honour of both Mrs. Moore and Adela. It is held under the auspices of Collector, Mr. Turton. In this scene, Mr. Turton "*issue[s] invitation cards to numerous Indian gentlemen in the neighbourhood, stating that he would be at home in the garden of the Club between the hours of five and seven on the following Tuesday*" (Forster, 1924: 35). As indicated, Mr. Turton invites several Indian gentlemen to Bridge Party at the club by adding that he "*would be glad to receive any ladies of their families who were out of purdah*" (Forster, 1924: 35). This invitation causes a serious conflict among the natives. While according to some natives such as cynical Mahmoud Ali, Mr. Turton issues the invitation with the order of the lieutenant general, to some others such as Nawab Bahadur, the most important Indian landowner with a highly respected personality, "*[t]he invitation is worded very graciously*" (Forster, 1924: 36). However, some other natives believe that Nawab Bahadur is cheapening himself by accepting the invitation. Interestingly enough, what is ironic is that India is not the home of the uninvited English conquerors who believe they have an inborn right to forbid or allow the natives to a place that is already theirs. However, the Club is in the borders of the so-called English territory, which gives the Englishman freedom while displaying their xenophobic and jingoistic attitudes.

From the perspective of sceptical Mr. Turton, the Indians attend the party only for self-serving reasons. The bridge party exposes the antagonistic attitudes of the imperial rulers and the natives. Ronny intentionally tries to demonstrate how ill-mannered and stupid the Indians are, and how any meeting of the Indians and English is bound to end in fiasco. According to Sehgal, "*The mores of the Anglo-Indian society,*

therefore, not only destroy human relationships but also erect barriers and fences which prevent understanding. In fact, the Anglo-Indian mores stress segregation rather than integration of people belonging to diverse cultures, racial origins and social habits" (1973: 181). As the quote indicates, the Anglo-Indians segregate the people of diverse culture rather than integrate them in the novel. Moreover, the Anglo-Indian segregation is narrated as such when the British women warn Adela about the improper attitudes of the natives: "*She became the centre of an amused group of ladies. One said: 'Wanting to see Indians! How new that sounds!' Another: 'Natives! Why, fancy!' A third, more serious, said 'Let me explain. Natives don't respect one any the more after meeting one, you see.'*" *That occurs after so many meetings*" (Forster, 1924: 25). In the same scene, Mrs. Callendar adds that "*the kindest thing one could do to a native to let him die*" (Forster, 1924: 25). As specified, the xenophobic nature of imperial Britain is vividly presented just before Adela encounters with the colonized women.

The bridge party plays a significant role, particularly in uncovering identity of the characters with regard to their perspectives on race, religion and politics. As a formal social meeting, bridge party becomes the place of myriad encounters where the differences among the groups are visibly exposed. Although Forster himself is attuned to the issues of nationality, class, culture, religion and politics, at the end he remains concerned with the identity of the characters. For example, even though the bridge party is given for the honour of Mrs. Moore and Miss Adela, it can never be considered as a remarkably fruitful gathering. Because it is not the kind of party that they are accustomed to culturally and socially. Both Mrs. Moore and Adela arrive at the party early, but the Indian guests have arrived earlier. So, the Indians stand "*massed at the farther side of the tennis lawns, doing nothing*" (Forster, 1924: 38). Meanwhile, the collector's wife, Mrs. Turton refuses to "*shake hands with any of the men unless it has to be the Nawab Bahadur*" (Forster, 1924: 41) at the party, which simply gives the impression of inequality. More explicitly, Mrs. Turton's refusal to shake hands with any of the men reminds Mrs. Moore of their own nation's superiority. Mrs. Turton emphasizes her superiority with these words: "*You are superior to everyone in India except one or two of the Ranis, and they're on an equality*" (Forster, 1924: 42).

The novel goes deeper into the problems of Anglo-India, while at the same time it gives a vivid picture of the conditions under which English and Indians live. However, Englishmen, and to a much greater extent Englishwomen, have no desire at all to know anything of the native population of the country. Furthermore, the English who after the first few months in the country habitually lose even the vestiges of common courtesy in dealing with Indians of all ranks. Mrs. Turton, who is

completely prejudiced and rude, feels superior to all Indians in every respect and she uses “*a few words of welcome in Urdu*” (Forster, 1925: 42). She rather prefers imperative forms of their language rather than polite ones. On the other hand, Adela’s observation at the bridge party indicates that the English are unpleasant to Indians. According to Borchardt, “*For Adela, her trip to India began with the promise of exoticism, excitement, and the contented life of a married woman. Instead, she experiences boredom, isolation, and romantic disappointment. She finds little charm in Chandrapore’s scenery, dislikes the intolerant and unwelcoming Anglo-Indians, blunders every time she tries to interact with Indians, and realizes her marriage to Ronny will bring nothing but emptiness and disappointment*” (2013: 25). Adela expresses her annoyance at the rudeness of her countrymen. Yet, one of the most striking narrations is the scene where Adela tries to get in touch with the natives at the party: “*Indeed, all the [Indian] ladies were uncertain, cowering, recovering, giggling, making tiny gestures of atonement or despair at all that was said [...]. Miss Quested had her desired opportunity; friendly Indians were before her, and she tried to make them talk, but she failed, she strove in vain against the echoing walls of their civility*” (Forster, 1924: 43). This extraction simply shows the incentive of Adela to break the ice and reach the Indian women through friendly gestures. However, it becomes impossible for her to reach them as the cold barriers of sociality have already been erected in the Anglo-Indian society. Thus, both the colonized and the colonizers have realized their race-based and culturally specific belongingness and thus, they retreat back to their own individual and cultural identities. However, among the Anglo-Indians, Mr. Fielding is the one who avoids cultural and social biases in every aspect. He kindly and freely socializes himself with the Indians.

In an imperial setting, Mrs. Moore witnesses to what extent the imperial India has changed the identity of his son, Ronny. She is shocked to see how his son has turned into a severe and unpleasant young man. She questions her son’s judgments by saying him: “*You never used to judge people like this at home*”, and then Ronny responds to her mother: “*India isn’t home*” (Forster, 1924: 33). Even though Ronny works in the administration of the country and has a sense of responsibility on the eyes of the Englishmen, it is trivial for him whether the natives are treated poorly or not. For the natives, forcing them to remain passive, imposing them to ignore their self-respect, and urging them to feel inferior consciously are among his dastardly deeds. In the novel, Forster demonstrates the superiority of the colonizer over the colonized through the colonizer’s discourse. For instance, Ronny’s assuming the Indians as a “*side-issue*” (Forster, 1924: 51) indicates that he is free to behave the colonized patronizingly. However, as a woman whose ideas have not been corrupted and intoxicated on colonialization yet, Mrs. Moore becomes rather anxious about the

imperial identity of her son as she has never been accustomed his son's using judgemental discourse in England. Even if Ronny attempts at persuading Mrs. Moore of the significance of the British existence in India and reminds her of the coloniser's ultimate aim and mission in a colonised country, she hardly understands the legitimization of the colonisation process which is rather based on the enslavement of the other races. As seen from the very moment Mrs. Moore arrives in India, she observes and makes some inferences about the colonial life by assessing both sides, the colonized and the colonizer. Under the guise of bringing civilisation and knowledge to the colonized, the colonizer, in this case Ronny, attempts to unveil his real intention.

A Passage to India involves a wide variety of major characters who are developed in length and depth. For instance, Mrs. Moore and Professor Godbole are the representatives of both material and spiritual realms. However, the central racial distinctions appear in the novel when there is a group of characters gathered at Fielding's house for tea: Adela, Aziz, Fielding and Professor Godbole. The characters are getting well despite the oddities presented by Godbole himself until Ronny Heaslop arrives. Ronny's arrival is something like an intrusion to the established order among the people of different nationalities. Forster's creating an unusual setting in which presumptions, misperceptions and misapprehensions arising from racial, gender and cultural differences are all frivolous is undermined by the rush of Ronny and his unconcealed annoyance. Ronny tells Adela that "*There's to be polo [...]. Everything's altered*" (Forster, 1924: 81) and then, he gives an authoritative command such as "*I want you and mother at once*" (Forster, 1924: 81). In the meantime, Godbole's reverential attitudes, as he calls Ronny as 'sir', are blended with Ronny's arrogant behaviour. Ronny criticizes Fielding for having "*left Miss Quested alone*" (Forster, 1924: 82). This seems to be the reason of his vehemence since nothing could be worse than leaving a young lady with two Indians for him. Undeniably, Ronny has no right to criticize Fielding heavily and publicly before the members of the so-called inferior race, as Fielding is also an Anglo-Indian, since he has to preserve the impression of friendship among the members of the superior race. On the surface the dispute between them seems as if it is nothing about, but in its deeper sense, it is much more than that. The reason of the dispute lies in the fact that whether the status of the Indians or the valuation of man is significant in human affairs. However, it is common that Ronny's ignoring of the Indians is a distinguishing characteristic of nearly all Anglo-Indian.

Forster makes his readers believe that Ronny's behaviours arise not from his ill-mannered or offensive manners but from "*dehumanising power of his position*" (Edwards, 2002: 87). Because Indians are, in his own view, subordinate to Anglo-Indians and Ronny's position bears no relation to the

Indians except for official administration, namely one is the ruler and the other one is the ruled. In other words, the Indians can never be treated as “individuals” or “private” humans so their positions as human beings are beyond Ronny’s indulgence and familiarization. Furthermore, when Aziz reiterates his order to Fielding’s servant, Ronny feels insulted because he thinks that Aziz is a spoilt-westernized type of man, who has no idea and will of his own. According to Edwards, “[B]y daring to recast Ronny’s order, Aziz sets himself up as an equal, and Anglo-India cannot countenance such revolutionary behaviours. The edifice of the empire of India rests upon a consistent refusal to regard the indigenous races as having the human rights of their rulers” (2002: 88). Indeed, Ronny does not consciously dehumanise Indians, it is a natural inducement of the ruler in India. On the contrary, Aziz thinks that he is completely human and is equal with Fielding, and he feels free to assume any other equality with Ronny. Moreover, unlike Godbole, who stands up from the beginning of the party to the end, Aziz remains seated and unlike Godbole, he prefers calling Ronny by his surname, “Mr. Heaslop” not by “sir”. Forster describes this behaviour by the use of an oxymoron “*offensively friendly*”. To Edwards, “Ronny really does represent the Anglo-Indians” whereas Aziz “*represents the slave who masks inner contempt with superficial respectfulness*” (2002: 91). Moreover, Ronny also despises Aziz for his dressing style, as Aziz is “*exquisitely dressed, from tie-pin to spats*” and has forgotten the “*back collar stud*” on his dress, which makes his dressing most extravagant. Ronny gazes Aziz and says, “*you have the Indian all over*” by associating him with “*the fundamental slackness that reveals the race*” (Forster, 1924: 87).

In the course of the novel, a seemingly equal relationship between the colonizer and the colonized is illustrated through Fielding. Even if Fielding is generally on good terms with the English in Chandrapore, the Englishmen sometimes feel unrest with the way Fielding behaves to the Indians. Because for them, the Indians become less obedient through the education system of Fielding as he normalizes interacting with them and exchanging ideas on a number of issues. Undeniably, Fielding shows differences in his manners as an Englishman from the others. For instance, Fielding does not show any implications of using power on Indian men. Interestingly enough, in some cases Fielding disagrees with the other Englishmen in India: “*He [Fielding] could not at first see what was wrong. He was not unpatriotic, he always got on with Englishmen in England, all his best friends were English, so why was it not the same out here?*” (Forster, 1924: 64). The answer to this question is rather easy. Because the Englishmen in England do not have colonial power whereas they have in India. Moreover, it becomes rather enthusiastic for Fielding to be friends with non-white men as “*He had no racial feeling*” (Forster, 1924: 65). Thus, the relationship between Aziz and Fielding is not arbitrary rather it

is the result of their inner self, a self which ignores all sorts of judgmental decisions.

On the other hand, according to Bakshi, the relationship between two men seems to be a “*specifically homoerotic*”, an intercourse which implies Forster’s own lust for homosexuality “*outside of British society*” (1996: 24). Similarly, Sara Suleri explicitly discusses the differences between “*the visibility of race*” and “*invisibility of sexual preference*” (1997: 133) in the novel by arguing that racial difference is eroticized between Fielding and Aziz. Considering homosexuality from a historical perspective is of the utmost importance in revealing the implicit references on homosexuality in the novel. As known, “*homosexuals were forced to look outside of English society for places and ideas more conducive to male friendship*” (Bakshi, 1994: 29) in those years. As for the novel, the theme of homosexuality is inserted ambiguously. Even if it is possible to state that the Englishmen arrive in India “*intending to be gentlemen*”, they later discover that “*it will not do*” (Forster, 1924: 7). Additionally, even if their initial aim is to be friend with the Indians, the Englishmen change in the course of time because of the power of the colonized or of the homoerotic desires, which they have never had the chance of experiencing in their homelands.

In the second part of the novel entitled “Caves”, identity of the colonized and the colonizer is revealed through the use of an uncanny setting, namely the Marabar Caves. A day trip is arranged for Mrs. Moore and Adela Quested who are deeply concerned in seeing the real India than any other thing. However, the invitation issued by Aziz to the caves becomes a muddle in the hands of a Moslem Indian as he has had to contemplate every detail meticulously and has had to consider every needs of his guests who come from different backgrounds. Because even the food they eat becomes a major problem. For instance, Adela, Mrs. Moore and Fielding would prefer to eat ham and drink liquor whereas Dr. Aziz would not, as his religion forbids him to eat ham. Conversely, Professor Godbole would feel rather offended if anyone ate beef. Aziz realizes afterwards that uniting all these people from different origins, religions and races would be a trouble for him. However, the experience they have at the caves make an exceptional impact upon them. In other words, Mrs. Moore and Adela react with the same societal codes of Britishness by presenting more elaborate and refined personalities.

In the novel, building a cross-cultural understanding between the colonizer and the colonized is almost impossible as the colonizers arrive the land with their own prejudgements. Adela, who is disinterested about what the Anglo-Indians believe and who wants to know the real India, actually begins to have some ideas on the British identity rather than Indian ones in a colonial setting when she is exposed to cultural settings. For

instance, she thoroughly gets to know the identity of Anglo-Indian Ronny. While Adela and Aziz are walking and talking to discover another cave, Adela questions whether she is really in love with Ronny Heaslop or not. Then, she thinks that she does not love him. Moreover, in an Anglo-Indian colonial community, Adela's statements as such "*By marrying Mr. Heaslop I shall become what is known as an Anglo-Indian*" and "*I can't avoid the label. What I do hope to avoid is the mentality*" (Forster, 1924: 61) overtly reveal her own concerns about how she will resist that label and what it means to be an Anglo-Indian. Her endeavour to identify her own identity reveals the uncanny relationship between British self and Anglo-Indian self. Because "*Identities are not fixed; they are not homogenous [...]. They are the product of ceaseless negotiations between various cultural entities marked by asymmetries of power leading to the view of postcolonial identity as involved in invention and newness*" (Abraham, 2007: 52). Thus, Adela questions her own identity as a European woman in the colony as her body also reveals a sign of bourgeois domesticity and racial superiority. Then, Adela resolves that what she really wants is to untangle herself from Anglo-Indian community by disengaging herself from Ronny Heaslop.

In the cave scene, Adela attempts to explore Aziz, a representative of the colonized, by making a number of rude and improper remarks unknowingly. For example, Adela turns to Aziz and asks him, "*Have you one wife or more than one?*" (Forster, 1924: 165) inquisitively. Because, the colonizers believe that "*Mohammedans always insist on their full four*" (Forster, 1924: 165). Aziz is shocked by the question he is asked. For him, "*to ask an educated Indian Moslem how many wives he has - appalling, hideous!*" and additionally, Adela is not aware of what she has done and whether she has said something wrong or not. Indeed, the conversation between Aziz and Adela "*... polarize[s] the distinction - the Oriental becomes more Oriental, the Westerner more Western - and limit[s] the human encounter between different cultures, traditions and societies*" (Said, 1979: 46) to a certain degree.

Adela enters the cave during the expedition and on emerging she has the impression that Aziz has followed her in and assaulted her. Since the accusations are made publicly and an explosive reaction is created in the town, the trial is arranged immediately after Adela is called as a witness. This atmosphere also creates tension among the public at the court, but Adela suddenly declares that no one has followed her into the cave. The trial collapses, a temporary crisis occurs, and the life resumes its normal tenor. However, after the muddle in the Marabar Caves, the tension between the English and the Indians becomes more apparent than it was ever before. In treating the question of what really happened in the caves is an oblique narration in the novel. According to Allen, there are mainly

two answers on what has happened in the caves; one is 'natural' and the other one is 'supernatural' (1955: 947). However, to him, it is one of characteristics of Forster to portray incidents from several perspectives. And such a double perspective or binary oppositions have always been the source of a great deal of confusion in the interpretation of his novels. The naturalistic expression is somewhat about how a nice girl like Adela could malign a decent man like Aziz. The naturalistic expression clearly defines that Adela, upon entering the close confines of that last cave, "*got a sun-stroke and went mad,*" (Forster, 1924: 166) and she hallucinated that someone had attacked her. The other approach, namely supernatural approach to the incident is that Adela herself enters into the cave with the problem of love and marriage. She has been suddenly assailed by doubts in the cave. So, her false charge against Aziz places her a terrifying experience. She has made an effort to eliminate the terror and given a meaning to the things around her.

As far as the identity of the colonizers is concerned, Fielding, the only character who actively observes 'both sides', can be said to have distinctive aspects such as being impartial and unprejudiced. He seems as if he is there to resolve complaints and disputes of all kinds, and to act within the existing laws and cultural traditions as an impartial adjudicator. Fielding has always been cognizant of the fact that two sides must build up a good rapport with each other. Unlike Ronny, Fielding is an experienced man since he has been to India with a public role as a teacher, who "*resides in the subaltern spaces and the mainstream Anglo-Indian culture*" and who "*is rendered a half-caste, white but not quite English*" (Ghimire, 2012: 74-75). Fielding, as a man of the world who is "*mature and reasonable, generous and just*" (Kermode, 2009: 60), has gained valuable experience not only from his extensive journeys but also from his sexual encounters. As an unmarried man, his reliance to his own emotions makes him develop mutual friendship based on affection rather than some abstract concepts such as country or social sets. He has no faith in God, but his lack of religious allegiance gives him the opportunity of inclusiveness.

In the novel, what is explicitly depicted is that the colonizer express no desire or intention of coming to a better understanding with the colonized. Because the common expression is that the Indians are not worth the effort. On the other hand, the better-class Indians are also on the opinion that it is useless to try to be friends with the English. Furthermore, the attitudes of the two races are expressed more vividly when Adela is announced to have been attacked by Dr. Aziz. Remarkably enough, no one among the English stops to consider the truth of the question, namely the possibility of her being wrong. Mrs. Moore and Fielding are the sole two who suggest that she might have been mistaken. However, the atmosphere of this scene is so significant that a presumably virtual state of warfare between the

English and the Indians suggests two hostile camps. And everything turns upside down when this English girl is honest enough to withdraw her charge since she realizes that she may have been mistaken. Trilling makes a note on the difference of the two nations in the novel: "*The separation of race from race, sex from sex, culture from culture, even of man from himself, is what underlies every relationship. The separation of the English from the Indians is merely the most dramatic of the chasms in this novel*" (1965: 151). For instance, while the whole English in Chandrapore assume that Aziz is guilty and this guilt is the collective guilt of all Indian people, the Indians are not eager to defend Aziz and are much more interested in the details of the evidence and legal processes. Moreover, many Englishmen take the assault on Adela as an assault by all Indians on the British themselves.

In the novel, Forster's characters find themselves eccentrically reciting the demands and expectations of an imperial system. For instance, Adela repeats the racial stereotype of the sexually aggressive Indians. Adela, a frequently anxious and hysterical representation of modernity, suffers from 'hysteria' after accusing Aziz of sexual assault. She is unable to get rid of the haunting sound of the echo, an uncanny sound whether it is the sound of a beast real or imagined in the cave. When she sets out to see the real India, she is confronted with hallucination at the Indian Marabar caves rather than reality. Adela's imagination of being sexually attacked by Aziz also indicates the recurrent stereotype of sexually aggressive Indians. Because in the novel, the Anglo-Indians get pleasure in repeating the masochistic scene of interracial sexual assault. Ronny Heaslop as a British man assumes that British women need to be protected from Indian men as the theory of Mr. McBryde, superintendent of police, particularly, on 'Oriental Pathology' (Forster, 1924: 243) suggests Indian men are inevitably attracted to white women.

4. Conclusion

In *A Passage to India*, Forster captures the uneasiness in India, particularly after the 1st World War as his novel commonly reflects his experiences while travelling to India in the years 1912-1913 and 1921. *A Passage to India*, an ostensibly anti-imperial novel, reveals "*deep fissures in the liberal humanist framework that allowed for a generous, dignified, secular, and tepid opposition to the Empire. [...] The inability of the British characters to accommodate non-duality reveals the terror of facing the otherness of indeterminacy*" (Drake, 2017: 22). Forster deliberately and repeatedly confronts the reader with the Indian art/architecture/setting to display the Otherness of the self. For instance, the visitors' confronting with the erotic Indian temples is nothing to do with familiarization of a cultural Otherness but rather a kind of discovery to their own psychological self, a journey to the real self, a struggle for defining their identity by

illuminating its dark sides. Thus, the uncanny self within the self also emerges in a colonial setting for the British ones.

This study concludes that the English characters, all of whom are the representatives of the colonizer, attempt to (re)identify themselves as they are aware of the fact that their identities are changing gradually and visibly because of their privileges in a colonial setting. As indicated, the transformations of the colonizer are noticeable with the way they treat the colonized. Sehgal remarks that how the identity of the characters transforms from one identity to another when the context changes: “A transformation takes place in the attitudes of the characters. Imperial India transforms Ronny into a self-complacent, censorious and bitter young man; Turtons and Burtons into intolerant and unsympathetic rulers; Fielding into ambiguities; Mrs. Moore into a ‘memory’ to be cherished; Adela into a ‘muddle’ and finally her subsequent withdrawal to England” (1973: 214). Accordingly, all these paradigms such as “human relationships with their various possibilities and disasters” are indicated and “social comic irony of confronting one social world with the standards of another” is presented through displaying “social and political implications” (Bradbury, 1966: 135) in the novel.

Forster’s transition from a liberal humanist intellectual into an actively engaged member in India can undoubtedly be traced in this work through his depictions, which are the results of his ideological sympathy with the subcontinent. Similarly, Forster’s written documents such as letters, reviews and essays written in the years preceding the publication of *A Passage to India* prove that Forster himself is frustrated with the British Raj, that is, the rule by the British on the Indian subcontinent from 1858 to 1947, particularly about the manner of Anglo-Indian officers who habitually (mis)treated local inhabitants. Moreover, “*For Forster, however, irreconciliation between the British Raj and India had less to do with colonial policies and practices than with a decisive change in social attitudes by both sides*” (Koontz, 2015: 127).

As indicated, even though the novel suggests that the gap between the colonizer and the colonized can be narrowed through a number of social practices, it seems like it is rather impossible to form a balanced relationship between them. Under the auspices of the coloniser, it remains an unsurmountable problem to maintain a friendly atmosphere between the two nations. Accordingly, even if “*there have been many attempts to tame the ‘wild’ and ‘uncivilized’ India, it remains a country of ‘failure’ in the eyes of western people*” (Tüfekci Can: 2015: 416) because of the misunderstandings and prejudices between the colonized and the colonizer ideologically and culturally.

By presenting how the colonized is exploited by the colonizer, Forster explicitly shows cultural, social and political distinctions between them. For instance, the British tend to stay aloof from the natives since their pride prevents them from having an intercourse with the natives, even the educated Indians are treated with contempt. Also, the Anglo-Indian women are presented as arousing an insensate and unreasoning hostility in the novel. Last but not least, Memmi summarizes the relationship between the colonized and colonizer, “*For if colonialism destroys the colonized, it also rots the colonizer*” (Memmi, 1974: XVII) and adds “*For me, oppression is the greatest calamity of humanity. It diverts and pollutes the best energies of man - of oppressed and oppressor alike*” (1974: XVII). In the novel, Forster consciously shows the identity of the colonized and the colonizer, both of which are rotten, in a colonial setting through his humanistic approach.

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