

# "Protective Mimicry": Forster's Literary Imitation of 'Divide and Rule' in *A Passage to India*

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## **Abstract**

Critical response to E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* remains diverse. While some commend Forster's depiction of the India, others express their misgivings at his portrayal of Indians attributing his delineation of the Indians, their behaviors, their religions and customs, even the geographical landscape to be in the Orientalist tradition. While looking at the historical bases of *A Passage to India*, this paper establishes that being conscious of the British administration's policy of 'divide and rule,' Forster undertakes a similar exercise of widening the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims. Forster's 'knowledge' of the political conditions in India and Europe, the differences between the two communities and his imperial anxieties pertaining to the future of the British Empire shapes his representation of Hindus and Muslims as two distinct 'types,' as a form of literary mimicry of the British policy of 'divide and rule.' This paper also argues that *A Passage to India*'s importance as a seminal colonial text in India has helped reinforce this difference in the Indian consciousness and continues to foment communal riots in the country even ninety years after its publication

In *A Passage to India (APTI)*, E M. Forster endeavors to unravel for western readers the mystery that shrouds India. British rule in India forms a fitting backdrop of the novel and the writer aims to delve into the psyche of both Indians and their British rulers. Forster finished *A Passage to India* in the space of twelve years; incidents in the novel allude to events taking place at that time. He began it after his first visit to India in 1912-13 when he completed portions of the introductory section. The rest of the novel he wrote after returning from his

second visit, in his capacity as Personal Secretary to the Maharajah of Dewas, an experience which provided him with a first-hand look at Hindu India. His first visit, on the other hand, had mainly exposed him to mainly Muslims. As P. N. Furbank says, " Insofar as he had one special motive for coming, it was simply that having hitherto mixed mainly with Muslims he wanted to see more of Hindus" (Vol. 2 p.70).

In view of this, it is not surprising that initial criticism of *A Passage to India* has heaped praise on Forster's depiction of India, its people, its beliefs, its culture and religion (Trilling, 11-27). Unlike Rudyard Kipling's *Kim*, most western critics believe that Forster's *A Passage to India* impartially portrays the arcane nation. In recent times, however, there has been a surge of criticism of *A Passage to India* that point to its deep-seated historical bias (Booker, 151). While a few critics continue to take a positive opinion of Forster's portrayal of Indians, others find the novel to be laced with racial prejudice, delineating the Indians, their behaviors, religion and customs, and even the geographical landscape in the Orientalist tradition (Said, 1).

The progenitor of *A Passage to India* is Forster's own *The Hill of Devi* (1953), a travelogue or a memoir, written in the mould of Orientalist travel narratives which were written apparently with the intent to gather knowledge about these countries the better to conquer and rule them (Said, 210). This book contains the letters and personal observations of the writer derived from his two visits to India. Published 29 years after *A Passage to India*, it provides researchers with background information and offers a firsthand account of Forster's experience to India. *The Hill of Devi* helps a reader of *A Passage to India* achieve a good understanding of the novel. It also informs the reader, as a chronicle would, about the political condition of the nation leading to the Partition and Independence of the country. In his very first letter in *The Hill of Devi*, he documents some incidents of political unrest in the country which is a result of a backlash arising from the transfer of the capital from Calcutta to Delhi. This sets the tone for the novel as readers become conscious of the fact that they will be reading about a country in political turmoil. In her assessment of Forster scholarship, Bette London disregards Forster's apolitical claim, ("For the book is not really about politics..." (62)) and opines that *A Passage to India* illustrates that "even the most metaphysical concerns have a political base...in culturally coded economies of writing and speech"(62). This conclusion, however, is inevitable, for it would be difficult for a writer who visited India at a politically charged moment in Indian history to

disregard it; thus historical events find their way into the plot of *A Passage to India*.

M. Keith Booker's book entitled *Colonial Power, Colonial Texts*, states that texts "are the products not of the individual imaginations of their authors but of complex historical phenomenon"(3). Booker tries to identify 'a bourgeois cultural revolution as a subtext of the modern British novel' and assess its impact on the "British colonial encounter"(1). He adds that, " Most twentieth century British colonial writers do, however, have an inherent sense of history, if only because they tend to be strongly aware that the British Empire about which they write is in the process of being swept away"(129). Drawing inspiration from Booker's arguments, this paper will try to establish the historical bases of *A Passage to India*. It will try to show that conscious of the British administration's policy of 'divide and rule,' Forster has undertaken a similar exercise of widening the gulf between the Hindus and Muslims. I will also take account of the thesis put forward by Francis B. Singh in "A *Passage to India*, the National Movement and Independence," in which Singh finds *A Passage to India* reflecting "the viewpoints of contemporary politicians such as Mohammad Iqbal, Mohammed Ali, M. K. Gandhi, and Jawaharlal Nehru" and "the influence of the Hindu and Muslim religions" (Singh, 265). However, this paper will differ slightly from Singh's article in that while he identifies Forster foregrounding the Indian National movement for Independence by uniting the Hindus and Muslims in *A Passage to India*, it will be arguing that Forster's 'knowledge' of the political conditions in India and Europe, the differences between two communities and his imperial anxieties pertaining to the future of the British Empire shapes his representation of Hindus and Muslims as two distinct 'type,' that is to say, as a form of literary mimicry of the British policy of 'divide and rule.' This paper also seeks to demonstrate *A Passage to India's* importance as a seminal colonial text that has helped reinforce this difference in the Indian consciousness, a difference which continues to foment communal riots in the country even after ninety years of its publication.

Forster's titles to the two sections of the novel, "Mosque" and "Temple" has generated a lot of debate as to his intent behind writing a novel about India. In his "Introduction" to the *Modern Critical Interpretations shi A Passage to India*, Harold Bloom considers *A Passage to India* as "a strikingly religious book" (2). A cursory glance into the book and the titles of the sections in themselves indicates how it separates India into 'compartments' and prepare us

for the schisms within India. Forster's purpose then becomes clear; he intends to find the 'real India' through his knowledge of the two communities. With this intention, he takes readers into the lives of the Muslims and the Hindus, while in his depiction of their lives, beliefs and religions he wants to emphasize the stark differences between them. The subtle technique Forster employs in rendering the differences between the two communities parallel the British policy of that period. For instance James P Carroll writes in his book *Constantine's Sword*,

Typically, imperial powers depend on the inability of oppressed local populations to muster a unified resistance, and the most successful occupiers are skilled at exploiting the differences among the occupied. Certainly that was the story of the British Empire's success, and its legacy of nurtured local hatreds can be seen wherever the Union Flag flew, from Muslim-Hindu hatred in Pakistan and India, to Catholic-Protestant hatred in Ireland, to, yes, Jew-Arab, hatred in modern Israel. [Ancient] Rome was as good at encouraging internecine resentments among the occupied as Britain ever was (81).

A recent study by K. Jaishankar and Debarati Halder on the spate of Hindu-Muslim riots in India have identified British administrators and their policies to be responsible for the conflicts between the two communities. They write,

Eventually, the imposition of colonial rule in India ignited animosity and conflict between the Hindu and Muslim communities. After the decline of Mughal power, the British often utilized "divide and rule" tactics in order to maintain governance over the vast area. In essence, the Hindu-Muslim conflict has existed in earnest since the British rule (Girdner, 1998). The British organized communal violence because it provided them a pretext to further suppress the people and declare that it was not the colonial rule that was the cause of the problems of the Indian people, but that religion was the problem. They blamed the victims and their religions for the situation created by the colonial rule, and said that it is the policy of the British to be fair and pursue a secular policy to do justice to all religious communities.

By trying to be fair, Forster's narrative in *A Passage to India* imitates the actions of British policy makers. Gramsci's notion of hegemony, which helps us understand the subtle techniques the bourgeoisie use to help establish control over the masses, thus becomes pertinent in a reading of *A Passage to India* (Booker, 4). Faced with increasing opposition in the aftermath of the Jallianwala Bagh



Massacre in 1919 and with Mahatma Gandhi's attempts to bring solidarity between the communities, the British administration of the period tried to create rifts between the communities. Foucault's idea of using 'persuasion' in order to bring 'voluntary obedience' can also be traced in Forster's depiction of Fielding and his role in the Muslim community in the wake of Aziz's trial (Booker, 4). After Aziz's acquittal Fielding tries to convince Aziz and the Indians to forego the reparations Adela would have to pay Aziz. Fielding's use of persuasion is indicative of the changing methods of containing Indians. The aggression of the British officials is set in contrast to the mild form of control Fielding intends to have over the Indians.

The most striking aspect of *A Passage to India* is Forster's vivid creation of a Muslim community which he highlights at the expense of the Hindu community. Forster's choice of a Muslim protagonist in a novel about India has drawn criticism from Nirad C. Chaudhuri, who criticized Forster on the ground that Hindus constituted the majority in India and should have received fuller coverage (Francis Singh, 275). Chaudhuri's resentment is indicative of the discord such a novel can create in the Indian community. Forster's privileging of a Muslim character as representative of India echoes the British administration's policy of isolating the two communities and stressing one at the expense of the other for expediency. The overwhelming presence of a predominantly elite Muslim community and the virtual absence of the Hindu community could also be interpreted as Forster's attempt to establish racial hierarchies in his novel.

The religious demarcation of the different sections in the novel, according to Forster's own comments and the explanation offered by some critics corresponds not only to the experience of Forster in India but also tends to heighten the tensions between the different communities. Indeed, Forster's structural framework suggests the passage that he himself took and then offered others, British and Indian, bent on knowing the real India. So he begins with "Mosque," as if to prioritize the Muslim presence. His reading of history had informed Forster that the Muslims did not constitute the 'real' India, but were 'outsiders' like the British. Benita Parry believes that Forster depicts "the monotheistic system of Islam ...as limited"(184). The Indian critic Rustom Bharucha concurs with Parry but points out-"As a Muslim whose allegiance is to Babur and Alamgir, the poetry of Ghalib, and the spirit of Islam, which is " more than a faith" for him, Aziz seems excluded from India in a significant way"(104). Muslims are represented by Forster's narrator as invaders who like the British had

settled in India by force and so the future of British control over India would require the knowledge of India's original inhabitants, Hindus. Hence, 'knowing' Muslims or acquiring knowledge about them would not suffice. Forster makes the transition from the "Mosque" to the Cave with the hope that nature, epitomized by the caves, could quench his thirst for the 'knowledge' he seeks. But even the secular terrain of Indian topography, which has been ravished by invaders, does not offer the much-needed answer. Forster eventually veers the readers to the Hindu State of Mau where he expects to experience the 'real India' in all its complexity. For Benita Parry the "Temple" episode and the Hindu rituals performed within the Hindu place of worship offers 'universal salvation' to everyone. Forster's preference of one religion over the other, Hinduism over Islam, which he makes explicit in his novel could be construed as a colonizer's subtle technique of classifying or categorizing Indian religion which has had far-reaching effects in the larger realm of Indian life. Monotheistic Islam had nothing new to offer British who themselves practiced a monotheistic religion. The variety and vitality of Hinduism never before experienced by British interested them more than Muslims.

Forster deflates Islam and Muslims by criticizing the 'decay' and 'degeneracy' that he felt had set in Islam. For these reasons, he seems bent on delineating Aziz's follies. Toward the close of the novel Forster takes us into the Hindu Temple section where he emphasizes the practices of the Hindus and highlights their religion as 'inclusive'. Wagner opines that-"Hinduism itself is attractive to Forster just because of its apparent childlike freedom from guilt" (367). Forster's privileging of one aspect of one community at the expense of the other was in reality fixing the notion of the 'difference' between them with serious ramifications to their relation and coexistence in the Indian soil. In the guise of being fair to both the communities, Forster actually seemed to indicate that the communities were polar opposites, locked in oppositions.

Forster's depiction of Aziz becomes significant in understanding the underlying differences between the two groups that he creates. Aziz becomes the scapegoat for all Indians in *A Passage to India* his characterization clearly falls in the tradition of the Orientalist discourse where the Oriental is portrayed, either as a liar or as too emotional and libertine. Aziz is the quintessential Oriental in addition to being a surgeon. Despite the false charges that she levels against Aziz, Forster's narrator insists that Adela thinks "over her own behaviour," does not like giving "trouble to others," and "was brought up to be honest." On the other hand, one loses count of Aziz's faults as the narrative progresses. Contradictions

abound in Aziz - " 'How unhappy I am!' and became happier" (56). He continues to revere Mrs. Moore but fails to acknowledge the courage of Adela who restores his dignity even at the expense of bringing calumny on herself. All these problems in Aziz are highlighted by the omniscient narrator and Fielding.

Bette London points out an interesting fact regarding Forster's feelings about Arabs at the time he was writing *A Passage to India*, who quotes him: "I came inclined to be pleased and quite free from racial prejudice, but in 10 months I've acquired an instinctive dislike to the Arab voice, the Arab figure, the Arab way of looking or walking or plump sitting or eating or laughing or anything—exactly the emotion that I censured in the Anglo-Indian towards the natives" (qtd. in London, 94). Forster's remarks about Arabs become pertinent to his attitude towards Muslims in India primarily because he and his countrymen had studied history in a distractive manna. They were very well aware that Muslims in India shared strong emotional and cultural ties with the Arab. The events of the Khilafat Movement, where Indian Muslims expressed solidarity with Arab Muslims, may also have been at the back of his mind while he established correspondence between Arabs and Indian Muslims. London further adds:

Speaking as his culture dictates, he submerges his personal identity in that of the group. But by the end of the essay he reveals the act as a pose: " In the above anecdote, I have figured as a typical Englishman. I will now descend from that dizzy and somewhat unfamiliar height, and return to my note-taking." Forster suggests that his entire performance was an act of mimicry." (qtd. in *The Appropriated Voice*, 95)

Read in this light it becomes clear that Forster is actually imitating the techniques employed by the colonial rulers. The technique is one of creating fissures between the two major communities, Hindus and Muslims, only to later try to put up the pretence of joining them.

Forster's praise of Hindus or Hinduism is suspect. He points out that Hinduism is better than Islam but that does not charm him into endorsing it fully. Barbara Rosecrance feels that, "yet there is much to show that Forster draws back from a full embrace of Hinduism. His treatment is affectionate but detached" (82). Particularly important is Forster's use of Aziz as a conduit for anti-Hindu statements. Aziz's anathema for Hindus and his total disregard of their religion highlights the deep fissure between the two communities. Forster's portrayal of a Muslim character who hates Hindus corresponded with an important moment in Indian History when the two communities were trying to unite with the intention of fighting the British. Francis B. Singh

writes, "Between 1920 and 1923, Gandhi attempted to realize his conception of Indian independence as basically communal harmony by throwing his support behind the Khilafat agitation and getting Hindus to support it also. The function of this entente, according to Gandhi, was to 'secure Mohammedan friendship for the Hindus and thereby internal peace...'" (267). Throughout *A Passage to India* we sense the tension between the two communities. Although for a brief moment after Aziz's trial there is an entente, Forster's narrative harbors communal animosity in Aziz by making him utter anti-Hindu sentiments. Aziz's generalization of Hindus in response to Adela's complaint of the Bhattacharya's who promised to come to pick them up but failed to come smacks of an ingrained revulsion for anything Hindu. "Slack Hindus—they have no idea of society; I know them very well because of a doctor at the hospital" (69). The narrative voice magnanimously excuses Aziz's extremities since, "incapable of reasoning, his "emotions never seem in proportion to their objects" (254). Therefore, his impatience with regard to Hindus and suspicion of them as allies of the British are explained away as resulting from a febrile imagination.

Similarly, the other Muslim characters in *A Passage to India* also express revulsion towards Hindus. The narrative forces readers into believing that Muslims consider Hindus to be inferiors allying them with the English and pitting them against Muslims. An example is the Nawab Bahadur's condescending views regarding the Maharani of Mudkul, when he says, "A Native State, a Hindu State, the wife of a ruler of a Hindu State, may beyond doubt be a most excellent lady, and let it not be for a moment supposed that I suggest anything against the character of Her Highness the Maharani of Mudkul. But I fear she will be uneducated, I fear she will be superstitious" (93). This prejudice against the Hindus is also echoed by Mr. Haq, an educated Muslim and a close friend of Aziz, who says, "All illness proceeds from Hindus" (105). Forster's depiction of educated Muslim characters as fiercely communal makes one wonder about the extent of the prejudice harbored by illiterate Hindus and Muslims against each other. Communal tension inevitably resonates through the novel and instills in readers a sense of the irreconcilable difference between these two major communities.

In the "Temple" section, Forster presents both the British and the Muslims as aliens in a Hindu land. But he categorizes them into two types. Fielding's genuine desire to watch the Hindu festival seems to be about them indicative of the liberal British attitude to Hinduism, of their wanting to know. Such interest is set up against Aziz's cultivated ignorance of Hinduism.

According to Malcolm Bradbury, "What does come through is Forster's appreciation of certain elements in Hinduism, an appreciation that achieves its apotheosis in *A Passage to India*, and particularly in "Temple," the novel's foreshortened final part" (3). Forster highlights Aziz attitude towards Hindus when he makes him say, "I know nothing at all about the religion here. I should never think of watching it myself" (301), and "It is useless discussing Hindus with me. Living with them teaches me no more...Why [one you] so curious about them" (319). Setting up Aziz, the representative Muslim, as the outsider, Forster writes, "Aziz did not pay attention to these sanctities, for they had no connection with his own; he felt bored, slightly cynical, like his own dear Emperor Babur, who came down from the north and found in Hindustan no good fruit, no fresh water or witty conversation, not even a friend" (306). In a very subtle fashion, the narrative underlines the Muslim's refusal to 'know' the Hindu, a stance which tends to thwart any attempt to achieve amity between them. Thus, Forster pits the two communities against each other.

However, in this kind of a situation, Forster presents the liberal British as the opposite of the educated Muslim in his portrayal of Fielding's desire to watch the celebrations of Gokul Ashtami. Furthermore, the invocation of Mrs. Moore in Godbole's consciousness during the celebrations points at the possibility of friendship or relationship between the British and the Hindu.

Many critics have attempted to see Forster's *A Passage to India* from his view of India seen through a 'double vision' that is characteristic of his stance throughout his oeuvre. This is in keeping with Forster's credo espoused in *Howards End*, of "Only Connect...and human love will be seen at its height" (Ch. 22) But although Forster provides readers of *A Passage to India* with the possibility of friendship between two sets of people, Fielding's and Aziz's friendship, though most expatiated in the novel, does not come to fruition and is ridden with suspicion and misunderstanding, primarily due to Aziz's failure to understand Fielding's true feelings about him. The more important friendship that Forster establishes on a symbolic and metaphysical level is that between Mrs. Moore and Godbole. The novel traces the trajectory of these two friendships and at the end announces the failure of the first most obvious one and hints allegorically at the success of the latter. At the end of the novel Fielding's query to Aziz, "Why can't we be friends now?" is answered by the sky which utters, "No, not yet, no, not there" (322). On the other hand, describing Godbole's invocation of Mrs. Moore amidst the chanting of Gokul Ashtami, the narrative informs us that "Chance brought her into his mind while it was in this heated

state, ... and he impelled her by his spiritual force to that place where completeness can be found" (286). Forster's use of these two sets of pairings, both positing an Anglo-Indian with an Indian, reflects the policy that led the British to maintain a separation of the two communities. We can trace a parallel to the division of the provinces of Bengal and Punjab in 1911 into a Hindu and Muslim sub-division. It also forestalls the Partition of undivided India into India and Pakistan in 1947.

In the "Mosque" section of *A Passage to India* Forster introduces his idea of a possible friendship between an English and an Indian by bringing Mrs. Moore and Aziz together but as the novel progresses this possibility is converted into a nullity. Mrs. Moore's act of removing her shoes before entering the mosque, owing to her "knowledge" of the Muslim practice, wins Aziz's heart and he develops an affinity for her. They come together on two more occasions, at Fielding's party and the Marabar caves, but the relationship does not work out, although it appeared to be so promising. Indeed Forster does not explore the relationship any further, though Aziz continues to remember Mrs. Moore in the trial scene and afterwards. The fate of this aborted friendship foreshadows the outcome of Aziz's failure to forge lasting relationships with Fielding.

In the "Mosque" section the references to the Mohurram celebrations and the possibility of a communal flare-up also provides readers with of the notion of the tension existing between the two communities. This is how Forster describes the situation:

Mohurram was approaching, and as usual the Chandrapore Mohammedans were building paper towers of a size too large to pass under the branches of a certain peepul tree. One knew what happened next; the tower stuck, a Mohammedan climbed up the peepul and cut the branch off, the Hindus protested, there was a religious riot, and Heaven knew what, with perhaps the troops sent for (96).

The idea that Hindus and Muslims cannot coexist peacefully is expressed clearly, implying the dire need of a British presence to redress the problem. Forster contrasts the preparations for Mohurram with the celebration at Gokul Ashtami at Mau, which passes peacefully. Praising Forster's depiction of the Hindu festival, K. Natwar Singh, writes that "his description of the Gokul Ashtami festival is flawless. Forster caught the spirit of the festival and found meaning and significance in Hindu ritual which have eluded or escaped other English writers" (54). Michael Orange too agrees, "The enactment at Mau is accorded almost sacred respect" (72). Thus, Forster shows that in Mau, a Hindu majority



state, religious fervor can be manifested without any hitch developing in the course of the festivities. Contrarily, in British India, the communities clash and cause all sorts of problems. The idea of separate nation states for the two communities seem to be the solution for enduring peace between them. It is almost as if Forster was prescient about the British decision to divide India in 1947.

Furthermore, in the "Temple" section we see Aziz's attitude towards Godbole undergoing a transformation. Unlike his suspicion of Godbole and Dr. Panna Lal in the "Mosque" section, Aziz tries to understand Godbole here, as "he was well assured that Godbole was a dear old man" (292). Thus the coexistence of Hindus and Muslims depends on a power dynamic where one community wields power owing to its greater numbers and the other becomes subservient.

Alternately, Forster may be apportioning blame primarily on Muslims, perhaps hinting that they are the more violent and belligerent community ("Aziz was provocative. Everything he said had an impertinent flavor or jarred" (77) and "Some Muslims are very violent" (267)) as opposed to the Hindus, whose adherents Forster refers to as "mild-featured men." Forster even views Hinduism as better than Islam when he says that "Something that the Hindus have perhaps found" (277). While Islam is frequently referred to as a religion that is moribund ("the themes he (Aziz) preferred were the decay of Islam") and an obstacle to freedom ("Islam itself, though true, throws cross-lights over the path to freedom") (268). Forster, like those of his countrymen who were at the helm of power, seems to be thinking about a model for a strictly defined tripartite society in India. He seems to negate the assimilation of the Indian Muslims into India by stressing that the Hindus "were the toiling ryot, whom some call the real India" (284). On another occasion he makes Fielding tell Aziz "Yet you can't have patriotic poetry of the 'India, my India' type, when it's nobody's India" (277). Forster's sentiments are governed by his awareness that "the British India rests on sand" (260).

Certainly, Foster's narrative underscores the British administration's handling of Hindus and Muslims at that time. The pitting of the Indian Hindu and the Indian Muslim, in order to stop them from uniting, permanently scars the relations. We can see a direct reference to this exercise in Colonel Maggs attempt to influence the Rajah of Mau against employing Aziz as his physician. As the narrator puts it, "Colonel Maggs learnt with concern that a suspect was coming to Mau, and, adopting a playful manner, rallied the Old rajah for permitting a Moslem doctor to approach his sacred person" (294). Forster's narrative also informs us that "Most of the inhabitants of India do not mind how the Indians are governed" (114). It further attempts to ingrain in the reading



consciousness that since there were serious differences between the Hindus and the Muslims, the onus of running the administration would best be carried out by the British. It is to be pointed out that Fielding's intentions in befriending an Indian can be suggestive of the Orientalist's goodwill towards the native subjects. His vocation and commitment to teaching brings to mind Macaulay's pronouncement in his "Minutes on Indian Education", where he prescribes the formation of "a class (of natives) who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect." It was for this class that Forster wrote *A Passage to India* at a time when nationalism was on the rise. As Jyotsna G. Singh points out, "... in introducing English Literature to the elite Indian...the colonial rulers were not being egalitarian, but rather engaging in a 'hegemonic activity' by which, in Gramsci's terms, "the consent of the governed is secured through intellectual and moral manipulation rather than through military force"(123). *A Passage to India* too falls under this scheme of the ruling class whereby in a very insidious fashion the colonial policy of 'divide and rule is ingrained in the consciousness of the two major communities of India.

The canonization of *A Passage to India* in universities in the Indian subcontinent becomes problematic because it widens differences between the two communities that still live together. The subtle manner in which the book establishes racial hierarchies and its judgmental attitude to the two major religions of the countries. It need to be kept in mind because the deeply entrenched communal differences that surface in *A Passage to India* stems not only from the British officials whose duty was to rule India but also from seemingly liberal British attitude. Forster's narrative voice attempts a similar ploy of stressing the incompatibility of the two communities at the same time very subtly giving reader the impression that the liberal British would govern India without prejudice.

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