



# Theme of Colonialism Discussed in E.M. Forster's 'A Passage to India'

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**Abstract:** "Control by one power over a dependent area or people" is the definition of colonialism. In actuality, colonialism is the violent invasion and occupation of another nation by one nation, which then claims the territory and relocates its citizens, dubbed "settlers." Despite their frequent interchangeability, colonialism and imperialism are not the same concepts. Imperialism is characterized as a system of laws and customs that increases a country's authority over the social, political, and cultural spheres of other countries. Imperialism can be defined as the rationale or philosophy that justifies colonial endeavors. Queen Victoria founded the British Raj in India in 1858, and until Indian independence in 1947, Britain remained the country's dominating power structure. Despite the fact that a great deal of fiction and critical research has attempted to depict aspects of the British Empire's existence in India and its psychological consequences on Indian residents.

**Keywords:** Colonialism, Civilize, Red-Nosed Boy, Missionaries, Anglo-Indian.

## INTRODUCTION

The general mindset that underpinned colonialism was the idea of the "white man's burden," or, to borrow Rudyard Kipling's term, that it was European moral obligation to "civilize" other countries. Therefore, the British believed that the Indians benefited from their colonial authority over India. Although Forster was a British author, he strongly criticizes colonialism in the book. Although he never goes so far as to call for a direct Indian uprising, he does demonstrate the fundamental flaws in the colonial system. In spite of their condescension and lack of originality, Forster's portrayal of the majority of British males employed in India is one of condescension and harmfulness, since their roles within the colonial system almost always force them to become racist and destructive individuals. The most overt manifestation of this is seen in Ronny's character development. With the exception of Mrs. Moore and Adela, the British women frequently come across as less sympathetic than the males, to the point where Turton holds them accountable for the hostilities with the Indians. Although the women do not engage in the same daily labor or relationships with Indians as the men do, they are typically more racially insensitive and patronizing (possibly as a result of their overall seclusion from real Indian society).

Through the novel's depictions of their attitudes and customs, the worldviews of English men and women are revealed from their psyche. To make clear the part that thinking and psychology play in interactions with people. It has revealed the ways in which an unstructured mentality and an unconstructive psyche disrupt human connections. In addition to exploring racism and colonialism, the book explores a concept that Forster explored in many of his previous works: the necessity of preserving both ties to the land and a cerebral life of the imagination. The relationship between the British and Indians in India is depicted in the book, along with the tensions that develop when Adela Quested, an English visitor, accuses Dr. Aziz, a well-liked Indian man, of attacking her during an outing. Among Aziz's numerous supporters is the empathetic local college principal Cecil Fielding. Adela falters on the witness stand throughout the trial, at which point she drops the accusations. Fielding and Aziz part ways, but they make a hesitant return two years later. An outcrop of boulders leads them to take different routes as they ride through the jungles, signifying the ethnic politics that led to a rift in their friendship.

E. M. Forster split *A Passage to India* into three sections. The opening section of the book, "Mosque," is largely a description of Chandrapore. The division of the earth and sky, as well as the physical division of the city into pieces, point to a deeper division between the English and Indian sectors. This part introduces the idea that drives the main line of this novel, which is about human relationships: "Is it possible for the Indian and the Englishman to be friends?" The reader is initially introduced to Dr. Aziz and his friends in order to present all sides of this topic. Major Callendar oversees Aziz, a Muslim physician who works in Chandrapore's government hospital. Aziz's friends include Mahmoud Ali, Nawab Bahadur, a powerful landowner, and Hamidullah, an Indian barrister who has resided in England. These individuals are depicted talking about the English officials in charge of India during the British Raj in the first few chapters. Mr. Turton, the collector; Major Callendar, the English physician; Mr. McBryde, the police magistrate; and



Ronny Heaslop, the city magistrate and most recent appointment to the Chandrapore office, are among the English faction who also talk about the Anglo-Indian relationship. Between these groups, or outside them, are the English principal of the government school, Mr. Fielding, who has no allegiance to any of them; Mrs. Moore, the mother of Ronny Heaslop, who is in India chaperoning Miss Adela Quested, Ronny's intended fiancée; Professor Godbole, a Hindu who is distinct from both the English and the Muslims by nationality and religion; and the English missionaries, Mr. Graysford and Mr. Sorley, who are trying to convert the Indians to Christianity without displaying any of the haughtiness of English officialdom.

Aziz arrives at Hamidullah's house to spend a social evening with his pals at the beginning of the story. The main topic of discussion between them is the humiliations the Indian must endure at the hands of the English authorities and their spouses. They make special fun of young Ronny Heaslop, who they call the "red-nosed boy." Aziz receives a call at his boss Major Callendar's residence. When he finally shows up, he discovers that the major has left. His tonga is interrupted by two English women, and when returning home by foot, he meets Mrs. Moore at the mosque. The elderly woman makes a point of getting to know Aziz and Muslim customs; he refers to her as an Oriental. When Adela Quested later says she wants to see the "real India" at the English club, a bystander suggests she "try seeing Indians." In an attempt to lighten her mood, Mr. Turton proposes to host a "Bridge Party," a garden party with the apparent goal of bridging the gap between English and Indian cultures and providing Adela and Mrs. Moore with the chance to mingle with some of the wealthier Indians. That evening, Ronny and his mother talk about her meeting with Aziz at the mosque at Mrs. Moore's cottage. Mrs. Moore is horrified by Ronny's callous behavior and his blatant bigotry. She responds sympathetically to a wasp, one of India's least common animals, on her way to bed.

The younger and more liberal of the two English missionaries, Mr. Sorley, is unwilling to acknowledge the humble wasp even if he is prepared to acknowledge that there might be a paradise for mammals on the outskirts of the town. The Turtons' garden party simply serves to highlight the separation of peoples because each group sticks to itself. Mrs. Moore and Adela's kindness impresses Cyril Fielding, who freely mingles with the Indians, and he extends an invitation for tea at his house. They are also invited to the Hindu couple Bhattacharya's house for a Thursday morning visit, which never happens. That evening, during a conversation with Ronny, Mrs. Moore expresses her disgust with her son once more and gives him a Bible quotation to remind him that God is love and that man is supposed to love his neighbor—despite the fact that she has personally found God to be less fulfilling in India than ever before. She is elderly, Ronny reminds himself, and he laughs. While having tea at Fielding's house, Mrs. Moore and Adela have a delightful conversation with Aziz and Mr. Fielding's mysterious Hindu associate, Professor Godbole. Aziz invites them on a trip to the Marabar Caves because of Mrs. Moore's and Adela Quested's goodwill, and they accept. Ronny Heaslop shows up at Fielding's cottage to play polo with his mother and Adela; but, because of his rudeness toward Aziz and his haughty attitude toward all Indians, Ronny and Adela fight, and Adela ends up telling him she can't marry him.

Afterwards, the youths go for a ride with Nawab Bahadur. When the car gets into an accident on a back road with an unknown animal, they are reunited and make an engagement announcement. Mrs. Moore takes the news in stride, but when the accident is mentioned, she whispers, "A ghost!" Feeling grateful for Cyril Fielding's companionship, Aziz sends the English professor a photo of his late wife, which is the equivalent of asking Fielding to join him behind the purdah, the greatest respect an Indian can bestow. The following section, "Caves," starts with a thorough explanation of the Marabar Caves, which are the odd hollow caves inside the equally odd Marabar Hills, which rise from a flat region outside of Chandrapore. Aziz has organized a lavish tour to these caves for Adela Quested and Mrs. Moore. He has extended the invitation to Fielding and Godbole as well. Fielding and Godbole, regrettably, miss the train, leaving Aziz in complete command of the trip, which starts with a rail ride and concludes with an elephant ride to the caves' closest location. Mrs. Moore refuses to go any further in the first cave because she is afraid of the echo and the throng of people.

Adela continues alone with her guide, Aziz. Thinking of marrying Ronny, Adela foolishly inquires as to whether Aziz is married to more than one woman. Disturbed by her questions, the gregarious little Indian bolts into a cave to regain his composure. Adela enters a different cave on her own and is allegedly attacked by someone there. She dashes down the hillside and encounters Nancy Derek, an English maharani's friend who has escorted Fielding to the caves. Nancy brings Adela back to Chandrapore, distraught. Aziz amuses his other pals in the interim and travels back by train with them, unaware of Adela's whereabouts. Mr. Haq, the police inspector, meets him at the station and takes him into custody for hitting Miss Quested. Fielding's support of Aziz causes him to become estranged from the English. The English unite around Adela and demand an expedited conviction. Now reduced to apathy, Mrs. Moore not only declines to acknowledge that Aziz might be at fault but also to testify against him in court; Ronny arranges her travel to England. While traveling, she passes away; yet, the locals of Chandrapore briefly come to know her as a legend. Adela Quested, who has been in shock since the event in the caves, unexpectedly regains her composure during the trial and



clears Aziz. She receives rejection from the English as a result of her dropping the accusation against Aziz. Ronny finally calls off their engagement when Fielding grudgingly allows her the use of his cottage while he is away on official business. After Adela returns to England, dejected after her time in India, Fielding convinces Aziz to dismiss his lawsuit for damages.

The novel's location changes to the Hindu state of Mau two years later in a part titled "Temple." After the trial, Fielding got married, went back to England, and was given a tour to central India to evaluate government schools. Godbole is now Mau's Minister of Education, and thanks to his connections, Aziz is now the Rajah of Mau's personal physician. This section's first chapter details a Hindu ritual commemorating the god Krishna's birth. In a state of religious rapture, Professor Godbole leads the temple choir and dances with joy. As he muses over God's love, he associates a wasp with Mrs. Moore while in this nearly trancelike state. The Hindu ritual repeats the Christian phrase "God is Love," which Mrs. Moore had encouraged her son to say. However, a printing error causes it to read "God si Love." When Aziz learns that Fielding is visiting Mau as part of his official responsibilities, he becomes irritated. He has lost all faith in the British and even in Fielding himself; upon discovering that Fielding had wed in England, he came to the conclusion that the spouse was Adela Quested and from that point on he would not open any of Fielding's correspondence. Aziz remarried and is now living with his kids. He is accepting of Hindu holidays even if he does not practice Hinduism, and he is happy to be free of British rule. But he has allowed his medical profession to deteriorate to the point that he is just a glorified medicine man.

Aziz discovers that Fielding's wife is Stella Moore, not Adela Quested, when he runs across Fielding again. Fielding has been traveling with Stella and her brother Ralph to India. After treating Ralph's bee stings, Aziz develops a unique bond with him since Ralph resembles his mother, Mrs. Moore, in many ways. After the god's birth is celebrated, the Hindu festival carries on. To have a better view of the event, Fielding, Stella, and Aziz and Ralph leave in separate boats. The boats clash and overturn during the storm. The ceremony ends and the English head back to the guest house amid the overall commotion that ensues. Ralph has been informed by Aziz that the rajah has passed away, but the news won't be made until after the celebration. While Fielding is fascinated by Hinduism, he is unable to comprehend the impact it has on Stella and Ralph. Aziz thinks Ralph, like Mrs. Moore, at least has an Oriental intellect. Although Fielding finds that the school that Professor Godbole was to superintend has been neglected and the building turned into a granary, he does nothing to rectify the situation.

The floods, which have kept Fielding in Mau, abate, and he and his party make plans to leave. Before they go, Fielding and Aziz take a final horseback ride together. Good-naturedly, they argue about the Anglo-Indian problem. Aziz excitedly declares that India must be united and the English driven out. Sensing that this is the end of their association, Aziz and Fielding attempt to pledge eternal friendship in spite of their differences, but the path narrows and their horses are forced apart, signifying that such a friendship is not yet possible. Both the colony and the colonists have been profoundly impacted by colonialism. After overcoming their dislike of the colonists, the colonized people learn about their own past and, ultimately, their national identity. The colony people's views about how to create their own future as a nation gave rise to colonialism. Unquestionably, the colonist has grown to identify with the consequences of colonialism. The colonizers behave as if they are superior to the conquered. They treat the colony inhabitants humiliatingly as a result.

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