



RACIAL- CULTURAL REPRESENTATION OF THE OTHER ; THE POST-COLONIAL DISCOURSE IN “A PASSAGE TO INDIA” BY E. M. FORSTER

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ABSTRACT

This review paper probes for postcolonial components in E.M. Forster's novel "A Passage to India" (1924). In essence, it inspects how the "coloniser" treats the "colonised." In order to offer postcolonial studies and elucidate on its particulars involving the cultures of both the coloniser and the colonised, an earnest effort is undertaken. This paper integrates postcolonial theory to the analysis of the novel in order to gain a greater understanding of the postcolonial traits depicted. Due of racial tensions and cultural misunderstandings, Forster focused on the distinctions between Native Americans and Anglo-Indians. According to Forster's narrative, the Indians were inferior and backward while the British were superior and technologically advanced. Many Indians saw most British people as inferior to local Indians and undeserving of friendship, despite the fact that most British people thought themselves to be condescending. Forster portrays both good and bad-natured characters from both cultures in this novel, with an emphasis on how and why the British should provide Indians their territorial freedom so that all groups may cohabit contentedly. The present essay emphasises the gap between British and Indian people that will never be bridged. The study suggests that both cultures would have coexisted peacefully if the supposedly superior British had treated native Indians with equal status and love. (Nihel 1)

KEYWORDS: *Otherness, Orientalism, Alterity, ambivalence, alterity or otherness, postcolonialism*

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1 INTRODUCTION

Numerous literatures had described life in India during British rule. "A Passage to India" is the most astounding text. It was inspired by E.M. Forster's own travels through India. The interaction between colonisers and colonies during colonial rule is brilliantly portrayed. Forster illustrated the cultural and spiritual differences between Indians and the English people who have been in charge of India through a number of instances in the novel. He also demonstrated ambivalence in the colonizer-colonized relationship of the narrative (Chauhan 1).

Postcolonialism

Colonialism leads to the emergence of postcolonialism. There are two types of postcolonialism: post-colonialism (with a hyphen), which refers to the period that followed colonialism, and post-colonialism (without one). According to Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2003), the term "postcolonial" does not refer to a time after colonialism ended or to a period in history; rather, it refers to all of the cultures that have been impacted by the imperial process from the time of colonisation to the present). *"Post-colonialism deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies from the late 1970s the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization"* (Ashcroft et.al. 1).

There are two main definitions of postcolonial studies. The decolonization process, which began An effort was made by the formerly colonized peoples of Britain and the United States after Second World War other European countries to reclaim and establish their native culture and identity, is the subject of the historical perspective, *'as originally used by historians after the Second World War in terms such as the post-colonial state, 'post-colonial' had a chronological meaning, designating the post-independence period'* (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2007).

Postcolonial studies are concerned with two types of writings from a literary perspective. The first is the literature of the colonised, which is written by colonised people, and the second is the literature of a coloniser, written by colonising people, since one country is colonized and was formerly oppressed, a colonizer's culture is seen as better and higher than the colonized culture, which is considered as the "Other" (the Other). Nationalism, postmodernism, representation as well as resistance, ethnicity, feminism, languages, education, history, place, as well as production are all postcolonial topics. (Ashcroft, Griffiths & Tiffin, 2004).

It is a field of study that examines, clarifies, and addresses the cultural legacies of colonialism and empire. Additionally, it gives a set of analytical tools for dissecting colonial works and



constructing postcolonial literature in addition to describing a completely different experience of political freedom.

Postcolonialism examines how colonisation has affected nations and cultures, but since the late 1970s, literary critics have also used the term to explore colonisation's different cultural repercussions. It focuses on the examination of European colonial institutions, pre- as well as post-independent nations as well as people's resistance to colonialism, the intricacies of subjectivity, and the conquering of European territory. The influence of European imperialism can be seen in the historical, political, social, and economic analyses of these groups and countries. The term "post" refers to a way of interpreting post-colonialism that emphasises the articulation of pre-colonial, colonial, as well as post-independent cultures within and within officially designated historical eras. As said by Aijaz Ahmed, '*It is a Transhistorical thing always present and always in process in dissolution in part of the world or another*'. A few postcolonialist components of Sentiment, alterity, or otherness, as well as diaspora are all discussed in the assignment (Danish 9).

This paper aims to shed light on the intricate network of interpersonal interactions portrayed in "*A Passage to India*" by using post-colonial conceptions of "otherness." In "*A Passage to India*," Forster explores this relationship in different ways by creating individuals who are looking for human connection. The book examines how imperialism shapes human character and values in the British Raj, including both its divisive and unifying impacts. All the interactions in "*A Passage to India*" become infused with the ghost of a Colonial Other, forming a chasm that attempts to be bridged by the genuine human connection but ultimately falls short. Post-colonial theorists have articulated the Colonial Other in a variety of ways, but they all concur that this concept serves to legitimise a political and social order that favours colonisers over colonised people, thus reinforcing a system of subordination. (Makhijani 1).

An outline Since the 1970s, postcolonial studies have grown in popularity. Some would say that it began to gain popularity with the book's influential critique of Western depictions of the Orient by Edward Said "*Orientalism*," which was published in 1978 (Bahri,1996). Colonialism leads to the emergence of postcolonialism. Postcolonialism (without the hyphen) refers to a philosophical position, a theoretical notion, or a theory, whereas post-colonialism (with the hyphen) refers to the period that followed colonialism. By the 1990s, books like Spivak's began to utilise the term "postcolonial." "*In Other Worlds*" (1987), Ashcroft's, "*The Empire Writes Back*" (1989), Bhabha's "*Nation and Narration*" (1990), and Said's "*Culture and Imperialism*" (1993).

The phrase had become widely accepted in academic and public discourse by the middle of the 1990s. According to Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin (2007), "postcolonial" refers to all the cultures impacted by the imperial process from the time of colonisation to the present. It does



not mean "post-independence" or "after colonialism," but rather it starts at the first instance of colonial interaction. "*Post-colonialism deals with the effects of colonization on cultures and societies from the late 1970s the term has been used by literary critics to discuss the various cultural effects of colonization*" (Ashcroft 168).

Dobie (2012) asserts that the following fundamental presumptions are relevant to postcolonial theory:

- i. The application of power, physical coercion, as well as invasion are only some aspects of colonialism. It also entails replacing local cultural values with that of the colonizers. coloniser. Therefore, pre-colonial civilization will change or disappear.
- ii. In terms of dress, language, and behaviour, the colonised mimic, emulate, and copy the colonizer's own culture; otherwise, they perceive themselves as being inferior to the "superior" one.
- iii. The term "universalism" focuses on the values and procedures that the European colonisers held dear.
- iv. The coloniser views his culture as being superior to that of the colonised and vice versa. The "Orient" is perceived as unreasonable, outdated, and even tyrannical, whereas the "West" is considered fundamentally rational, advanced, and even virtue filled. This is known as Eurocentrism, where each working-class and subaltern culture is compared to the culture of the coloniser. The "Exotic Other" and the "Demonic Other" are two ideas that come up in.
- v. The "Demonic Other" is portrayed as subpar, detrimental, primitive, and wicked, whereas the "Exotic Other" reflects a fascination with the intrinsic beauty and dignity of the primal other.
- vi. The coloniser is not the only one who has an impact on and influences the colonised; the coloniser also has an impact and eventually becomes the colonised.
- vii. The European imperialist powers still are ruling and exploiting the nations of the Third World on an economic and political level; this is referred to as neo-colonialism
- viii. A process known as "hybridity" or "syncretism" that is characterized by change and conflict, in which two cultures—the origin culture as well as the host culture—combine to form a new and unique one. Ultimately, postcolonial literary theory allows the researcher to approach each of these subjects from a fresh perspective, honor the



cultures that are still present across the world, and recognize those that have been eradicated (Nihell).

Alterity

Thomas Pynchon's investigation of alterity is thematized in many different ways, such as psychologically via paranoia, schizophrenia, as well as narcissism, politically via control systems which pursue to eradicate otherness, economically via monopolistic transnational corporations and cartels which substitute national governments, scientifically in to the determinism and theories of entropy, as well as aesthetically through photography, film, storytelling, as well as line art. Pynchon analyzes these various parts of civilization as an effort to replace nature's unpredictability with such a perfectly planned as well as controllable kind of reality, like what Pointsman portrays in *Gravity's Rainbow* as "*a rather strictly defined, clinical version of the truth*". Much of Pynchon's narratological novelty and complexity come from his narrative interaction with essentialized identity concepts from the liberal humanist perspective, especially when his investigation of ontological categories of identity occurs in the context of European colonialism as well as its New World legacies (Madsen 212).

Alterity, which means "the state of becoming other or distinct, diversity, otherness," is from the Latin word *alter*. Alternate, alternative, alteration, and alter ego are its English derivatives. The antonym identifies the word *alternate*, which is more widely used in French, the phrase was adopted by philosophers to represent a change in how the West understands the interplay within consciousness and the world as an alternative to the word "otherness.". The phrase has been frequently used synonymously to otherness and difference in postcolonial theory. The alterity of the colonised other, which, according to Spivak, is determined through a process of othering, is inextricably linked to the self-identification of the colonial subject and, in fact, the character of imperial culture. A difference in skin colour, region, and sex, as well as other historical as well as biological indicators of difference, are sociopolitically discoursed in Alterity, a space for superheroes.

The method used to create an "Other" is described under the term "alterity." It conveys the dual meaning of both the "Otherness" subject position in which an individual is positioned as well as the adoption of such a subject position also as the perspective of the Other. Therefore, alterity involves both placement and perception. As a result, alterity has an impact on how characters are created and how narrative perspective, focalization, space, time, causality, and truth as well as authenticity are handled. The theme of alterity is the ontological separation of the self from the Other, where the Other is identified by categorical distinctions like gender, racism, class, ethnicity, sexual identity, religion, and so forth. Alterity is more of a movement or verb than it is a thing or noun. It is a process of "Othering. Michael Taussig, a cultural



anthropologist, writes that “*alterity is every inch a relationship, not a thing in itself, and is, in this case, an actively mediated colonial relationship meeting contradictory and conflicting European expectations of what constitutes Indianness*” (Taussig 1).

As a result, even as they are paranoically wondering about how much of their sense of self is a construction dictated by strong external cultural interests, characters seem to develop subjectivity as well as, for some, a significant amount of personal experience. Other characters, narrators, as well as the reader all, participate in dialogically constructing identity as well as alterity, sameness, and Otherness, which places such theories in context. 'Otherness' is explored in the book in a variety of ways. Forster made it clear in the first section of the novel that Europe is superior to both India and Indians. With his incorrect choice of words when characterising the city of Chandrapore, he makes it abundantly evident that he is a colonialist. He continued that there are no works of art in the city. India is viewed as a "barbarous" and "evil" country. Forster had also made derogatory remarks about Indians: “*people are drowned and left rotting*”.

The entire culture of India is "abased" and "monotonous." He then contrasted an Anglo-Indian city station with the Native one, which is very different. “*Houses belonging to Eurasians stand on the high ground. Chandrapore appears to be a different place it is no city but a forest.*” This illustrates the supremacy of the British coloniser and the inadequacy of an Indian colonised in his comparison of the landscapes of the East and West. Forster switched from locations to characters in the paper. Indian ladies were portrayed by E.M. Forster as embodying the ethos of selfless service to their families. The wife of Hamidullah is not permitted to eat anything before her husband or other males Overall, The Indians are depicted as being embarrassed of their race, way of life, and traditions. They are additionally shown as being less than and under the British people.

In “*A Passage to India,*” E. M. Forster mostly attacks imperialism for making it impossible for local natives and Anglo-Indians to develop intimate ties. This idea is first introduced by the narrator when Mahmoud Ali as well as Hamidullah ponder, “*whether or not it is possible to be friends with an Englishman*” (Forster 33). On the final page, Forster reacts to this theory by saying, “*No, not yet... No, not there*”. This implies that under British control all attempts at forming friendships are rendered difficult for political, hegemonic, as well as unfavourable reasons. By highlighting several issues that arise when people try to engage in colonial India, Forster makes his case against imperialism very plain and compelling (Nur 1).

1. Literature review

Only in the 1990s did postcolonial criticism become a separate subfield of criticism. It has become more popular thanks to the influence of works like: “*In Other Worlds*” (Gayatri



Spivak,1987), “*The Empire Writes Back*” (Bill Ashcroft,1989), “*Nation and Narration*” (Homi Bhabha,1990), and “*Culture and Imperialism*” (Edward Said,1993). “*Race*”, “*Writing as well as Difference*”, 1986, edited the One of the best-known Americans in this discipline is Henry Louis Gates and reproduced from two topics of general critical inquiry, is a significant collection of pertinent pieces. Post-roots the term "colonialism" appears in Frantz Fanon's “*The Wretched of Earth*” Written in French in 1961, it expressed what might be referred to as "Cultural resistance" to France's colonial rule over Africa. For colonial people to have a voice as well as an identity, according to Fanon, they must first take ownership of their history. The second stage is to start undermining the colonist mindset that devalued the past. Postcolonialism, which assumes both the inferiority of what isn't European and Western as well as the superiority of that which is, is thought to have begun with Edward Said's Orientalism in 1978.

Edward Said, defined the long-standing and distinctive practice of "Orientalism" in European culture, which is used to categorise the east an "Other" and the west as superior. He asserts that West has orient characteristics “*As a sort of surrogate and even underground self*” (Walder 236). In a contradictory way, the east is seen as an intriguing area filled with the strange, magical, and appealing all at once. Instead of seeing them as individuals, one should think of them as a collective, with their behaviour being guided more by instinctual feelings (such as lust, fright, or rage) than by deliberate acts. Post-colonial writers explore the origins of their own country. rejecting modernity because it is polluted by their nation's colonial history. an understanding of how the known European is portrayed as the morally corrupt "Other"

Memmi (1965) explained in his study the causes of their pessimism and arrogance. She makes the case that the colonists may have been influenced by Darwin's thesis of the survival of the strongest because they persisted in pressuring as well as killing the native people due to their covert economic goals. Because of their way of thinking, they may have felt forced to occupy, colonise, and govern the weaker people (Memmi 1).

Boehmer (1995) The same philosophy is seen in the white race, according to his study, which claimed that they invaded other countries to consume their resources and to abuse their people's labour and lands. This behaviour is consistently displayed throughout the novel in several instances where the characters feel a sense of otherness, superiority, or ambivalence to avoid closeness and channel their energy toward their uplift (Boehmer 1).

Amina (2006) also compared the components of English arrogance to those of the Romans, who formerly believed they were the chosen as well as the protected, in his study. She linked their perception of themselves as superior to their previous assertion that they could have



drawn inspiration from Romans since they believed they were invincible and unbeatable like the Romans (Khan et.al. 124).

Zoe Lehmann (2007) in the study “*The Colonial Other*” in E.M. Forster’s “*A Passage to India*” adapts 'otherness' themes from post-colonial thought to “*A Passage to India*”. The study made an effort to shed light on the intricate network of interpersonal relationships that this study describes. The individuals, as well as maybe Forster himself, have a difficult time balancing the unsettling idea of colonizer subjects with interpersonal relationships despite the appearance of civilised engagement. Forster believed that Relationships that last are hampered by the colonial other, and in his book “*A Passage to India*” He portrays a pessimistic view in which attempts to narrow the cultural difference only make it wider (Mahmood 293).

Oana Andrei Pirnut (2007) British versus Indian Culture “*A Passage to India*” focuses on the contact created between British colonies and the Indians while exploring the difference between these an Indian and British cultural element in E. M. Forster's novels, that he investigated. “*A Passage to India*”. He also emphasised the differences between Indian and European thought. Throughout the book, Forster's message evolves. Characters like Fielding and Aziz at the book's beginning demonstrate Forster's conviction that everyone can connect if they have goodwill, intelligence, and respect for others. However, in the last images, the Indian landscape itself appears to stand up and depart Fielding and Aziz. Forster contends that even when men have the best of intentions, other factors like cultural differences and outside meddling may work against their union (Mahmood 293).

Forster’s masterpiece work, “*A Passage to India*” described the Indian societal scene during the British era. It is important to note the conflicts between East and West civilizations as well as the prejudiced misunderstandings within that book. Although the writer receives appreciation for a strong character analysis of Indians, there is criticism for the erroneous anti-British prejudice. Forster undoubtedly draws inspiration from English cultural and social conditions, but he also portrays the complex oriental response under British rule in India with sympathy and judgment, highlighting the tension between temperament and tradition.

Tayyab (2010) examined how their mindset has an impact on the social climate in India. Amina (2006) also notes the same tide of abhorrence as well as preeminence, as they thought themselves to be the pinnacle of knowledge and astuteness, while Jeffrey (1998) recognises the effects of such thinking during the trial scene as they were determined to hold Aziz as guilty. They consider themselves to be the bosses, believing that everything they do and say is appropriate and justified. She clarifies the English position by stating that they desired to adhere to Whiteman's burden theory because they believed they were the only ones who could help the poor and could verify righteousness by upholding the law and order within



areas under their control. The way the English behave in various situations is consistent with their perception of themselves as superior and more civilised. Amina (2006) contrasts this mode of thinking with Whitman's (1871) vision of an eastern and western sea connected by the opening of a Suez Canal, which Kipling (1899) also imagined. However, given this psychology and the circumstances, it appeared quite implausible (Khan 124).

In his research, **Muhammed Elham Hossain (2012)** "*The Colonial Encounter*" in "*A Passage to India*" sheds insight on the circumstances that led to East and West taking opposing positions. He asserted that a careful and comprehensive reading of "*A Passage to India*" demonstrated Forster's awareness of politics and liberal wit regarding racial tension and other human issues. It may be attempted to combine two races, like the east and west; emotions might peak on both sides; however, this cannot be done in a master-slave setting. Rather, Forster predicted that the colonists would have to dismantle their Indian empire before building a bridge between East and West (Mahmood 293).

In his research, **Mohammad Ayub Jajja (2013)** "*A Passage to India*" The Colonial Discourse, the Representation of India, and Indians as Stereotypes explore the relationship between imperialism as well as culture, in addition to the imitation as well as hybridization that ensued among Indians and the development of their own identity. Based on an examination of the novel's text using a postcolonial lens "*A Passage to India*". The research showed that "*A Passage to India*" only engages in colonialist discourse that has maintained and promoted the stereotypical image of India as well as Indians like one form of Orientalism.

It has also been demonstrated as Forster did not even mention the widespread brutality and persecution of the native peoples by the colonists. He made a strong connection between culture as well as imperialism but avoided mentioning any Indian leaders or the fight that the Indian people waged against their rulers. This essay portrays Indians as being ashamed of who they are, their culture, and their identity. They are portrayed as being less than human and incapable of handling their issues maturely and responsibly. The current investigation has revealed the projection of European hegemonic assumptions. Infighting and internal conflicts among Indians regarding social and religious issues have also been emphasised. (Mahmood 293).

2. Discussion

In "*A Passage to India*", The general attitude of British families toward Indians, with few exceptions, demonstrates the difference between the colonisers and the colonised. "*A Passage to India*" These are only a few of the numerous books that portray colonial and postcolonial texts. A few post-colonialism components are tracked and compared. The



relationship that receives the minimal attention is between colonisers and colonised. the surrender on the other side and the authority on the other. The novel's text contrasts the colonists' authoritarian demeanor with the one of the colonised.

In “*A Passage to India*,” the common perception of Indians held by British households, with few exceptions, is a stark example of the divide between the colonisers and the colonised. She recalls the incident where Mrs. Lesley and another woman dove into Tonga, “*O tonga-wallah, Club, Club. Why doesn't the fool go?*” Dr. Aziz isn't The Tonga wallah waits for the fee that will be paid by an idiot who cannot comprehend the English women him (Danish 9).

This demonstrated the colonists' abhorrent behaviour and hateful attitude toward the downtrodden. Another example of marginalisation can be found in the novel when an Indian gentleman drove up to the home of an official and was urged to approach more appropriately by the servants. This incident was just one among thousands more visits to dozens of authorities, but it gained widespread attention. The story of the native's humiliation is an occasion of fame for others. The Chandrapore Club included, “*Indians are not allowed into the Chandrapore Club even as guests*” Indians are not even permitted to attend British meals and parties as guests. Alterity, the quality of being distinct or different from something else, is present. To eliminate the disparities between the colonizers and the colonized, as well as between their respective responsibilities like an authority and a gap between them must be closed.

If ever visiting the English, the visitors from India are told to remain on the veranda. Aziz says, “*The veranda is good enough for the Indian*”. The primary component of postcolonial literature is "alterity," which refers to the rational hostility between the colonisers and the colonised. In “*No Longer at Ease*”, Mr. Green's portrayal of Africans demonstrates how different people are treated similarly. He says, “*The African is corrupt through and through*” and “*They are all corrupt. I am all for equality and all that. I for one would hate to live in South Africa*” (Danish 9).

3. Conclusion

One of the main characteristics of contemporary imperialism was the attempt by Anglo-European countries to dominate the world culturally, financially, as well as politically from the Eurocentric perspective with the belief that it was good for everyone. The goal of the current study, at its core, was to emphasise the postcolonial components in E.M. book. “*A Passage to India*” (1924). As a result, discussing the specifics of the discipline of postcolonial studies, particularly those that relate to the connection between the coloniser and the colonised, was highly methodical and crucial. Postcolonial theory, which offers a complete sense of the relationship between both the powerful as well as the powerless has



been manifested in literature, was necessary to gain insight into reflection as well as the representation of these postcolonial traits, including racism, bigotry, imitation, otherness, and ambivalence.

Considering the underlying tenets and ideas of critical postcolonial theory. According to E.M. Forster, the "colonialist" worldview is better, and the "Orientals" as constantly being marginalised and subject to the preconceptions that the "Westerners" had created about Indians are there to control them. It is a postcolonial book because it depicts racism, bigotry, and otherness between the slave and the owner, where the slave is seen as the inferior former evidently alluded to the British Raj and the latter to Indians. The story also looks at the interaction between culture and imperialism, which led to the hybridization and replication of indigenous cultures and identities. after the book "*A Passage to India*" From the colonizer's perspective, it portrayed Indians as inferior being's incapable of handling their business responsibly. While the Indian characters were kept in the background, the British ones took center stage.

"*A Passage to India*" demonstrates ambivalence and alterity characteristics. Forster accurately depicts the situation in which English and Indian people can coexist in harmony. While he does not explicitly tell the British to quit India, he promotes the peaceful coexistence of English and Indians. The author asks God to remove obstacles and forge a bond between the two races. The novel examines the effects of blending two cultures. The inability of humans to end prejudice between persons of different races is evident.

This essay has provided a general summary of British colonial rule in India. India was one of Britain's most significant colonies, and it possessed colonies all over the world. The great book "*A Passage to India*" by Edward Morgan Forster explored the relationship between the "Self" and the "Other" and whether they can become friends. The British can only be friends with Indians of British rule in India recedes, Forster concluded his book. India was described in the book as being a barbaric and chaotic country. Native Americans were unable to articulate themselves and were not taken seriously by British civilization. Thus, the novel is rife with the postcolonial elements.

Near the end of this study project, the researcher finally realized that E. M. Forster divided both groups (British and Indians) examined in this research project into two categories. Good people and crafty, egotistical creatures coexist in both groups. Throughout the narrative, decent people from both populations encounter both good and terrible people, but how they react to these encounters depends on their super-ego. Mrs. Moore and Cyril Fielding are two persons who could understand the situation and mistake, however occasionally even a well-educated and compassionate person like Fielding fails to do so.



This is the fundamental reason why there is miscommunication and hostility between the two communities. Most British people believe they are superior to locals, which makes the natives believe that the proudly British were their foes. This is another source of hostility. There was a good chance that Indians and Britons could have coexisted peacefully as a family if both tribes showed each other the respect and affection they deserved.

In conclusion, the English eliminated all potential for denigrating the Indians. A representative public institute student named Ronny Heaslop worked hardest to defame the residents. Even though Forster's endeavour to close the gap between both the English as well as the Indians appeared to fail, he discovered ground realities that were completely at odds with his humanistic perspective. The colonial psyche, marred by racial animosities, bitterness, arrogance, and animosity, did not allow for the development of relationships, or provide any room for friendship. The research also made clear Forster's colonial psychology, which is sensed in the statements.

The study shows that relationships built on prejudice and conceit deteriorate to such an extent that compensation is rarely possible. Even the ardent Mrs. Moore and the kind-hearted Fielding are unable to stop the collapsing deadlocks. However, they make every effort to keep these relationships to a minimum. Whatever the case, the paper discovered encouraging evidence that Forster did disclose the colonial psyche and accurately projected the circumstances that damaged the relationships.

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