

Univerzita Karlova v Praze
Filozofická fakulta
Ústav anglistiky a amerikanistiky

**Insularity and Connection in E.M. Forster's
Howards End and *A Passage to India*.**

Bakalářská práce

Vedoucí bakalářské práce:

PhDr. Zdeněk Beran

Vypracovala:

Jana Rezková

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Prohlašuji, že jsem tuto bakalářskou práci vypracovala samostatně a pouze na základě uvedených pramenů a literatury.

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Režieva

Introduction

Howards End and *A Passage to India*, the two best known novels by E.M. Forster are quite different in theme and setting, but they have an important aspect in common. Both novels take place in a strictly divided society and they both deal with the insularity and narrow-mindedness of separate communities and their inability to reach beyond their own environment and experience. “Only connect...”, an epigraph from *Howards End*, introduces one of the central themes of Forster’s writing.

E. M. Forster strongly believed in the importance of personal relationships and in living a full, undivided life. That is, a life in which spiritual, physical, emotional and rational aspects are all in harmony.¹ In order to reach the desired harmony, one needs to establish connections not only between the spiritual and material life, but also on the level of personal relations. Forster is concerned with an individual’s search for harmony, but also with finding harmony and overcoming fragmentation in the whole society. To reach such harmony, both within the self and within the society, is what the characters of his novels strive for. Forster disregarded religion already during his university years² and this may have led him to consider personal relationships of primary importance. His belief in personal relations is also expressed in his essay “What I Believe”, published in 1939. Personal relations enable us to find some order in the chaotic world³ and thus they are the first step to reach harmony. Apart from his non-religious attitude, Forster’s thinking was also influenced by the liberal tradition and by some romantic ideas.

E. M. Forster was born in a late-Victorian society and brought up in the liberal tradition, which valued historical progress, individual freedom, tolerance and the power of reason. The 19th century liberalism was optimistic about eliminating all evil from human life

¹Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 6.

²Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 7.

³Forster, E.M., “What I Believe.” *Two Cheers for Democracy*. London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1974. 37.

and the First World War meant a catastrophe for this liberal philosophy.⁴ Although most of Forster's fiction reflects the pre-war cultural environment, he was aware of these discrepancies of liberalism and he only adopted some aspects of liberalism to his own way of thinking. Forster especially disagreed with the liberal tradition's inability to recognize the mixture of 'good-and-evil' in man and its naïve faith in progress. Nevertheless, his belief in the individual and in personal relations may have its roots in the liberal tradition.⁵

The attempt to reach harmony is also crucial for romanticism, so it could be said that Forster is a successor of romanticism in this aspect. Indeed, to reconcile 'head' and 'heart' and other contradictory elements within the self is important both for Forster and for the romantics. In a similar way, Forster sought harmony between man and the earth.⁶ In *Howards End*, Leonard Bast wants to "get back to the earth" (124)⁷ and so he undertakes the adventurous walking trip at night for which he is very much admired by the Schlegel sisters.

Forster spent his formative years and subsequently most of his later life at the University of Cambridge. Cambridge symbolized the ideal of a harmonious, undivided life. "Body and spirit, reason and emotion, work and play, architecture and scenery, laughter and seriousness, life and art- these pairs which are elsewhere contrasted were there fused into one."⁸ All Forster's novels show the possibilities and difficulties of achieving such harmony. In *A Passage to India*, the situation is complicated by the coexistence of two different cultures in one place. *Howards End*, on the other hand, deals with a culturally relatively homogenous society. However, the characters here also have to face a lot of difficulties in trying to find harmony. This is because of the fragmentary nature of English society, which I will try to describe in the following chapter.

⁴Cox, C.B., *The Free Spirit*. London: Oxford U P, 1963, 3-4.

⁵Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 12.

⁶Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 12.

⁷All page references in *Howards End* are from the Penguin Books Ltd, London 1988 edition.

⁸Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 8-9.

Historical and cultural background of *Howards End*

Howards End was published in 1910, at the very end of the Edwardian period. Although these pre-war years were relatively peaceful and harmonious and they are often looked back to with nostalgia, there already existed many discrepancies even in this period. The English society was divided on the political, social and economic levels.

On the political level, the issues of nationalism versus unionism and imperialism versus anti-imperialism were becoming topical. *Howards End* is only concerned with England and so it leaves aside the problems of other parts of Britain, such as Ireland and the political struggles connected with it, but it touches upon the issue of imperialism. The Wilcoxes represent imperialists; Henry works with the Imperial and West African Rubber Company and both of his sons are involved with imperial Britain- Paul works in Nigeria and Charles has brought back a Dutch Bible from the Boer War (167). The Schlegels are not so enthusiastic about the Empire. "Imperialism had always been one of [Margaret's] difficulties" (197) and she admits that "An Empire bores me, so far, but I can appreciate the heroism that builds it up" (119). Forster's anti-imperialism, which becomes a central theme in *A Passage to India* is hinted at already in *Howards End*: "But the Imperialist is not what he thinks or seems. He is a destroyer. He prepares the way for cosmopolitanism, and though his ambitions may be fulfilled the earth that he inherits will be gray" (315).

Socially, there were inequalities between men and women on the one hand and a strict class division on the other. The issue of *Howards End* is concerned with these social inequalities, but it deals predominantly with the upper-middle classes. "We are not concerned with the very poor" (58). Forster leaves the lower social classes completely out of account probably because he himself was not familiar with their way of life at all. Even the portrayal of the lower-middle class, which is represented by the Bastys, is not very trustworthy as Forster had no experience outside his own social class. This could be seen as a kind of flaw as Forster

himself is in a way limited by his social background and is not able to grasp the real nature of social circles outside his own. Another reason for Forster's concentrating on the middle classes only is the fact that he sees the English society as predominantly middle-class.⁹ Indeed, most of his novels concern middle classes only.

The main characteristic of the English middle classes is the public school education¹⁰. Forster sees this as a uniquely English phenomenon (it does not even exist in Scotland or Ireland, let alone in other countries), which is responsible for the difficulties the English face abroad. Forster went to a public school himself,¹¹ and being a day-boy, he got to know both the life of a public school boy and the life outside the school, in the real world. Thus he was able to realize how artificial and unnatural the environment of a public school is. Public school boys are taught that the school is a smaller version of the real world and thus they are not prepared to understand the complexities of the world,

a world of whose richness and subtlety they have no conception. They go forth into it with well-developed bodies, fairly developed minds, and undeveloped hearts [...] An undeveloped heart, not a cold one. ("Notes On the English Character", 5.)

With such undeveloped hearts, most Englishmen are unable to understand emotional complexities and so they can neither reach the desired harmony of "body and spirit, heart and head," nor form valuable personal relations. As a result of that they fail to establish connections.¹² Forster's novels are full of characters with undeveloped hearts; Tibby and all the Wilcox men in *Howards End* and Ronny or even Fielding in *A Passage to India*, for example.

⁹Forster, E.M., "Notes on the English Character." *Abinger Harvest*. London: Edward Arnold&Co., 1946. 3.

¹⁰Forster, E.M., "Notes on the English Character." *Abinger Harvest*. London: Edward Arnold&Co., 1946. 3-4.

¹¹Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 4.

¹²Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 6.

Yet even within the upper-middle class there are significant fragmentations. Two completely different upper-middle class groups are represented by the Wilcoxes, who stand for the business life, and the Schlegels, the advocates of the inner, cultured life. As this is a crucial theme of the novel, I will come back to it later in a greater detail.

As for the inequalities between men and women, the issue is touched upon several times especially in the Schlegel circle and there is also an emphasis on reconciling the masculine and feminine elements. Wickham place is a female house, while the Wilcox home seems “irrevocably masculine” (56).

Furthermore, Forster very cleverly depicted the increasing tensions between the English and the Germans by giving the main characters, the Schlegel sisters, an Anglo-German nationality. However, I think that the hostility of the English towards Germans is a sign of their general intolerance towards other cultures. This self-complacency and self-confidence is another characteristic that Forster assigns to the English in his “Notes on the English Character”: “the middle-class Englishman, with a smile on his clean-shaven lips, is engaged in admiring himself and ignoring the rest of mankind.¹³” Without having any particular reason for it, the English are somewhat biased against foreigners both in *Howards Ends* and *A Passage to India*. In *Howards End* Mrs Munt’s distrust of “foreign things” (23.) speaks for this attitude. She wanted to prevent her nieces from investing into foreign things even though these foreign things proved to do better than the domestic ones (28). However, this hostility towards foreigners does not seem to be uniquely English. The German part of the Schlegel family feel the same superiority over the English. (chapter 4). Thanks to their being exposed to both of these cultures, the Schlegel sisters are not affected by this partiality. Already as a kid Margaret proclaimed that “either God does not know his own mind about

¹³Forster, E.M., “Notes on the English Character.” *Abinger Harvest*. London: Edward Arnold&Co., 1946. 9.

England and Germany, or else these do not know the mind of God. [...] at thirteen she had grasped a dilemma that most people travel through life without perceiving” (44).

The intolerance and narrow-mindedness of the English can be seen not only in the international context, but even among people of the same nationality. The distrust that people feel towards members of different social or cultural groups is a sign of their intolerance and insularity. Forster is very much concerned with this as he considers tolerance crucial for the advancement of human race.¹⁴ In all Forster’s novels the main characters try to establish connections; that is to reach beyond their own limited experience. In order to do so, most of them have to undertake some kind of journey and therefore travelling is an important theme of Forster’s novels. *A Passage to India* has a journey explicit already in the title and the journey Adela undertakes is a journey not only in the physical sense, but spiritual as well. In *Howards End*, Helen and Margaret travel to Germany and within England, from London to Hertfordshire and Shropshire, but most importantly they travel into a different spiritual environment. They do not need to travel as far as Adela in *A Passage to India* in order to find themselves in a world completely different from their own.

Margaret in *Howards End* wants to see life “whole” (165), not in fragments. This is a very difficult thing to do in the modern fragmented world and one must not enclose himself/herself in their own limited world. “The businessman who assumes that this life is everything, and the mystic who asserts that it is nothing, fail” (195). The truth is not even halfway between. “It was only to be found by continuous excursions into either realm” (196).

Another discrepancy that figures in *Howards End* is that between the city and the country. On the one hand there is the idyllic English countryside, to which *Howards End* itself belongs, and on the other hand there is the rapidly developing London. Forster obviously prefers rural England to urban areas and he would like to preserve the traditional view of

¹⁴Forster, E.M., “What I Believe.” *Two Cheers for Democracy*. London: Penguin Books Ltd, 1974. 36.

England as being purely rural. At the beginning of chapter 19, Forster is contemplating that to show a foreigner a typical part of England; it would be wisest to choose the Purbeck hills or perhaps the Isle of Wight, which is like a “fragment of England” (170). Although London is also briefly present in his description of England, “the island will guard the Island’s purity till the end of time” (170). Howards End is symbolic of the rural culture and the rapidly developing London with its expanding suburbia threatens this traditional rural world. Hertfordshire, where Howards End is situated, used to be a typical English countryside, but it is soon going to become London’s suburbia. There are many allusions to the destructive character of London in *Howards End*. “London’s creeping.” “London is only part of something else, I’m afraid. Life’s going to be melted down, all over the world” (329). “London was but a foretaste of this nomadic civilization which is altering human nature so profoundly and throws upon personal relations a stress greater than they have ever borne before’ (256). All in all, London represents the restless and fragmentary tendencies of modern life.¹⁵ A motor car is a symbol of the modern world; too quick and too polluted.

All these antithetical aspects and fragmentations of the English society at the end of the Edwardian period are present in *Howards End*. Apart from the personal struggle of Margaret and Helen to make connections and thus achieve a full life, the novel is also concerned with finding balance within the divided English society. Lionel Trilling claims that “*Howards End* is a novel about England’s fate, [about] who shall inherit England.”¹⁶ The question about England’s ownership is pondered upon as early as in chapter 19:

England was alive. [...] What did it mean? For what end are her fair complexities, her changes of soil, her sinuous coast? Does she belong to those who have moulded her

¹⁵Widdowson, P., *E. M. Forster’s Howards En: Fiction as History*. London: Sussex U P, 1977, 65.

¹⁶Trilling, L., *E.M.Forster*. London: The Hogarth Press, 1969, 102.

and made her feared by other lands [the Wilcoxes], or to those who have added nothing to her power, but have somehow seen her [the Schlegels]? (178)

Howards End is symbolic of England and thus finding the right heir of the house, an heir that would connect different aspects of the English society, in a way gives a clue about England's possible future. If we leave aside the fact that despite the complexity of contradictory elements of the English society as it is presented in the novel, *Howards End* does not show a complete picture of England -it disregards the rapidly growing cities and industrialization of England as well as the problem of poverty, thus it does not show the real England, but perhaps rather Forster's idealized version of England- it is very interesting to see that by combining and connecting different elements of the English society in the heir of *Howards End*, Forster wants to show us the necessity of making connections and overcoming insularity within the English society in order to secure a better and more harmonious future of England.

Making connections in *Howards End*: the rich vs.the poor

As I have already suggested, one of the levels on which connections are to be made is the social level. The Wilcoxes do not worry about social inequalities; they consider them natural and believe that there will always be rich and poor (160). Furthermore, they do not see the necessity to interact with people from other social classes, namely the lower ones. On the contrary, they consider it right not to get involved with the poor. Henry Wilcox advises to Helen not to take up “sentimental attitude over the poor” (192) and he stresses that no one is responsible for the poverty of others. This detached disregard of the poor seems to be a typical English attitude, which leads to the existence of the rich and the poor side by side and makes it possible for the upper classes not to feel responsible for the poor. This attitude can be demonstrated by the upper-class’s treatment of their servants. The servants’ services are taken for granted, but they are completely ignored as individuals.

While most of the main characters of *Howards End* come from the upper-middle class, Leonard Bast represents the newly emerging lower-middle class clerks. This “new slave class”¹⁷ is a result of the development of a capitalist society. “One guessed him as the third generation, grandson to the shepherd or ploughboy whom civilization had sucked into the town; as one of the thousands who have lost the life of the body and failed to reach the life of the spirit” (122). In other words, he is neither the “natural” nor the “philosophic” (123) man, but aspires to become the latter through culture.

Mr. Wilcox often uses the expression “I know the type” (152) when referring to Leonard Bast. This is a typical reaction of an insular mind of someone who feels superior over the other. This phrase is also used in *A Passage to India* by Ronny when referring with contempt to Aziz, an Indian doctor (93).¹⁸ Mr. Wilcox further states, “You must keep that

¹⁷Grandson, K.W., *E.M.Forster*. Edinburgh: Oliver and Boyd Ltd, 162, 63.

¹⁸All page references in *A Passage to India* are from the Penguin Books Ltd, London 2000 edition.

type at a distance. Otherwise they forget themselves. [...] They aren't our sort, and one must face the fact" (150).

The reaction of the Schlegel sisters is quite different. They are generally concerned with charity and social inequalities and they feel that the upper classes should help the poor. They are interested in Leonard and wish they could help him. However, I believe that their interest in him is not only a result of their liberal and charitable nature, but it is also a reaction to Leonard's belonging to a different world (unknown and therefore interesting for them). They also appreciate that he "cares about adventures" (152) and cultured life. Nevertheless, their acquaintance with Leonard does raise the question of how to help the poor to become spiritually enlightened. It seems that providing them with commodities and cultural opportunities would not be sufficient, as "independent thoughts are in nine cases out of ten the result of independent means" (134).

While Margaret and Helen worry about the best way to help Leonard, he is not interested in their help at all. He does not want their "patronage" (147) because he connects them with romance and not the material life (143) and because he is too proud to accept any material help from them. In the end, Leonard is financially ruined and he stops caring about the cultured life altogether as material worries take up all his thoughts. Both the Wilcoxes and the Schlegels are responsible for his fall, although none of them directly.

Making connections in *Howards End*: The Schlegels vs. The Wilcoxes

The two main contrasting groups in *Howards End* are the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes and it is again Margaret and Helen Schlegel who try to reach beyond their own experience and try to establish connections outside their own world.

Margaret and Helen Schlegel represent the inner, cultured life and they value personal relationships above everything. They live in their own world of “the politico-economical-aesthetic atmosphere” (68) and they mix with their sort of people, discussing art and social affairs. “Temperance and tolerance and sexual equality were intelligible cries to them” (41). Nevertheless, when they discover that there is an outer world, a world completely different from their own, they are willing to understand it and even mix with it. Their emotivity and receptiveness are rather unusual and it may be due to the fact that they are only half English that they are so much more open-minded than most English people. Their hearts are definitely not undeveloped and so they are able to understand the importance of emotions. Personal relations are important because they lead to a fuller inner life and better understanding of the unseen.¹⁹ “It is the private life that holds out the mirror to infinity; personal intercourse, and that alone, that ever hints at the personality beyond our daily vision” (91).

The outer world is represented by the Wilcoxes. Although they are less developed characters than the Schlegel sisters and often seem types or even caricatures rather than individuals, they convey well the values they stand for. They seem to “have their hands on all the ropes” (41), they are the “sane, sound Englishmen” (236) that “keep England going” (268). Without doubt they are very competent and it is thanks to people like the Wilcoxes that England has prospered. However, they are also good examples of what Forster calls the undeveloped heart. “The Wilcoxes were not lacking in affection; they had it royally, but they

¹⁹Page, M., *Howards End*. London: The Mackmillan Press Ltd, 1993, 80.

did not know how to use it.” In other words, they are masters of the outer world, but the world of emotions is quite unknown to them.

Mrs. Wilcox is a special character. She belongs to the Wilcox family, yet she seems to be an advocate of the inner life rather than the outer. “She seemed to belong not to the young people and their motor, but to the house” (36). She values the past and she is very intuitive. Thus by marrying Henry Wilcox she also makes a step towards integrating the inner life with the outer. Howards End is more than a house for her. It is something that gives substance to her life. As Helen argues, “either some very dear person or some very dear place seems necessary to relieve life’s daily gray” (150-1). To Ruth Wilcox Howards End was “a spirit, for which she sought a spiritual heir” (107). She couldn’t find a spiritual heir in her own family, as Mr. Wilcox and his children thought of Howards End merely as a house. She had to look for the heir somewhere else. She finds the heir in Margaret Schlegel, who has paradoxically never seen the house and is not even aware of Ruth’s decision. Henry Wilcox is apparently unaware of the house having any other value than being merely a building, and not a very convenient one- it is small, old and “the position wasn’t right either” (141). His inability to see how important the house was for his wife leads him to simply ignore her last wish- that she “should like Miss Schlegel (Margaret) to have Howards End” (105). With their practical and rational attitude that completely disregards emotions and personal relations, the Wilcoxes easily dismiss this non-legal hand-written note as being a product of an ill mind and thus being of no importance. We can see Henry’s inability to appreciate the spiritual importance of the house even later in the novel, when Helen wishes to spend the night there.

For one, he refuses her request on moral grounds-he does not want to have his memories of his children and wife to be spoilt by an unmarried pregnant woman staying in the house. This attitude demonstrates not only the undeveloped heart, but also his hypocritical nature. As Forster argues in “Notes on the English Character”, unintentional hypocrisy is

another characteristic of the public school Englishmen.²⁰ They are very good at “confusing their own mind” without meaning to do harm to anyone.²¹ Mr. Wilcox certainly does not intend to be cruel or mean; he is simply unable to see the parallel between Helen’s case and his own affair with Jacky (chapter 38). Furthermore, he is unable to see why such a strange request as spending one night at Howards End could be of any importance. Again, he only sees the practical side of things. “Would she not be more comfortable, as I suggested, at the hotel?” “She will only catch cold” (298). Despite being a loyal wife, Margaret goes on to fulfill Helen’s wish even though this means going against her husband’s will. Here she is unable to please both Helen and Henry as the inner and outer worlds get into conflict. She is forced to choose one, and she chooses Helen and the inner life because, after all, it is the inner life that matters the most.

Interestingly, despite the plans of the characters not to live at Howards End, Mrs. Wilcox’s wish does come true in the end. Although her wish is at first ignored, Margaret eventually becomes the owner of the house. A strange, rather mystical character of Miss Avery helps significantly to this end. Not only does she confuse Margaret with Ruth (202), after all they are both Mrs. Wilcox, but during Margaret’s two visits at Howards End she insists that Margaret is going to live there despite Margaret’s having no such plans whatsoever. Miss Avery even unpacks some of the sisters’ belongings and thus makes the house look more alive. When Margaret and Helen are in the house together, they cannot help feeling that the house really feels to be theirs (294). Furthermore, Miss Avery sends them milk to make them feel even more at home. It is probably thanks to these little hints of Miss Avery that Helen gets the idea of spending the night at Howards End and why the sisters cannot resist staying there together (chapter 37).

²⁰Forster, E.M., “Notes on the English Character.” *Abinger Harvest*. London: Edward Arnold&Co., 1946. 10-12.

²¹Forster, E.M., “Notes on the English Character.” *Abinger Harvest*. London: Edward Arnold&Co., 1946. 11.

Helen is the more impulsive of the two Schlegel sisters and she is instinctively driven to the unknown, to the different. Both her brief romances with Paul Wilcox and Leonard Bast are not a result of her affections towards these men, but rather a result of her unconscious desire to connect with a world different from her own. She is briefly attracted to Paul because he is a member of the Wilcox family, so different from the people Helen normally gets in contact with. "The energy of the Wilcoxes had fascinated her, had created new images of beauty in her responsive mind" (37). "Paul was inevitable. Charles was taken up with another girl, Mr Wilcox was so old, Evie so young, Mrs Wilcox so different" (38). It was similar with Leonard, he "was an interesting creature, of whom [she] wanted to see more" (129). Her brief affair with Leonard is also a result of her feeling guilty and responsible for his fall.

However, Margaret is the one who in the end succeeds in making connections. Helen's responses to the existence of other worlds are impulsive and emotional. She admits that she "can only do what's easy. [She] can only entice or be enticed" (195), but Margaret is the one who is able to "attempt difficult relations" (195). While she values the inner life, Margaret also realizes the importance of the outer life:

The truth is that there is a great outer life that you and I have never touched—a life in which telegrams and anger count. Personal relations, that we think supreme, are not supreme there. [...] This outer life, though obviously horrid, often seems the real one.
(41)

She too feels attracted to the world of the Wilcoxes, although or perhaps because it is so very different from her world. "They were not 'her sort', [...] but collision with them stimulated her, and she felt an interest that verged into liking" (111). She wants to reconcile these two

worlds, despite their differences, as she believes these differences could usefully complement each other.

Margaret also realizes that she, Helen and Tibby can dedicate themselves to the cultured life only thanks to their being provided with a sufficient amount of money. “I stand each year upon six hundred pounds, and Helen upon the same, and Tibby will stand upon eight, [...] and all of our thoughts are the thoughts of six-hundred pounders” (72). “Independent thoughts are in nine cases out of ten the result of independent means” (134). She understands that all this money comes from the outer business world and so she feels it necessary not to isolate herself from the outer world. “How dare Schlegels despise Wilcoxes, when it takes all sorts to make a world?” (112) “More and more do I refuse to draw my income and sneer at those who guarantee it” (178).

After Helen’s brief affair with Paul Wilcox, it is Margaret who starts ‘connecting’ with the Wilcoxes on a more permanent basis. First she befriends Mrs. Wilcox and after Mrs. Wilcox’s death she develops her friendship with Henry Wilcox. “He and she were advancing out of their respective families towards a more intimate acquaintance” (160). Margaret finally decides to marry Henry Wilcox not only because she feels lonely and because “the vessel of life” seems to be “slipping past her” (155), but also because she wants to “connect the prose with the passion” (188). Margaret hopes that by marrying Henry she would be able to open his eyes to see the inner world as well as the outer.

Mature as he was, she might yet be able to help him to the building of the rainbow bridge that should connect the prose in us with the passion. Without it we are meaningless fragments, half monks, half beasts, unconnected arches that have never joined into a man. (187) [...] Only connect! [...] Live in fragments no longer. (188)

At first she believes that she would be able to change Henry by simply loving him, but she gives up when she sees that he really is unable to connect. After the crucial episode when Henry refuses Helen's request to spend the night at *Howards End* (Chapter 38), Margaret decides to stay with Helen not only because she values the inner life and her friendship with Helen above everything, but especially because she sees the futility in trying to change Henry's attitude. He wants to see life "steadily" (165) and therefore is unable to make connections. "He had refused to connect, on the clearest issue that can be laid before a man" (322). Therefore she does not wish to forgive him. She wants to "protest against the inner darkness", against thousands of "hypocritical" and "muddled"(300) "men like him" (322).

That Margaret is in the end able to reconcile Henry and Helen and can share her life with both of them is only thanks to Henry's breakdown after Charles is sentenced to two years in prison. Whether this kind of a victory can be considered a success remains the question, Margaret nevertheless succeeds in uniting everyone at *Howards End*. She "picked up the pieces" (328) and connected them all. The inner cultural life is connected with the outer world "of telegrams and anger" through Margaret's marriage to Henry. As this does not seem to be a sufficient connection, the "real heir" is the child of Helen's idealism and Leonard's adventurous individualism and he will be under the protection of Margaret's and Henry's union.²² *Howards End* becomes a female house, while the eventual owner will be a male,²³ classless child growing up neither in the city, nor in the pure countryside as Hertfordshire is becoming suburbia. Nevertheless, it is significant that all these connections take place in rural England and although "London's creeping" (329), the city is left out of the idyllic picture. Although it is objectively impossible to disregard the role of industrial areas and cities when contemplating England's future, Forster's idealized vision of England is obviously rural only.

²²Widdowson, P., *E. M. Forster's Howards End: Fiction as History*. London: Sussex U P, 1977, 86.

²³Page, M., *Howards End*. London: The Mackmillan Press Ltd, 1993, 58.

Countryside is “England’s hope” (314). “In these English farms, if anywhere, one might see life steadily and see it whole” (264). The child that is eventually going to inherit *Howards End* is going to grow up together with a country boy, a yeoman Tom.

Thus the new heir connects all essential elements of the English middle class, which is the desired combination of England’s future. Besides, not being “English to the backbone”, the heir has got a good potential to overcome the typical English insularity in the future.

Historical and cultural background of *A Passage to India*

A Passage to India was published in 1924 and it is based on Forster's two visits to India in 1912 and 1921. During his two visits to India, Forster had the opportunity to get to know different aspects of India thanks to different purposes of his journeys and different people he met there. During his first visit, he got to know the Moslem side of India as he stayed with his Indian Moslem friend Syed Ross Masood. His second visit enabled him to become more familiar with the Hindu part of India as he was appointed a Secretary to the Maharajah of the Hindu State of Dewas. Furthermore, he met a number of Anglo-Indians during both of his visits. These three different introductions to India provided the basic tripartite structure of *A Passage to India*.²⁴ The first part, Mosque, concerns mainly Moslem India, the Caves examine the Western approach and Temple, the third part, shows the Hindu approach to spirituality.²⁵ The three parts also represent three weather seasons; the cold weather, the hot weather and the rains. For India is not only divided by religion, but also by natural barriers created by the weather extremes. During the rainy season, it is impossible to cross some rivers in order to get from one region to another and during the hot weather, the fire separates one region from another.

Having been written over a period of twelve years and being based on several different experiences of the author, the novel does not reflect any specific historical facts or events, but shows a general portrayal of India under the rule of The British Empire. Although *A Passage to India* is not primarily a political novel, the complex situation of India at that time provides a background that enables Forster to explore and develop the theme of insularity and fragmentation. As I have already suggested, all Forster's novels deal with a fragmented society, but the divisions in *A Passage to India* are sharper than in his previous works. Firstly,

²⁴Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 155.

²⁵Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 157.

there is a clash between the Indian and Anglo-Indian societies, who live side by side in India, but do not interlink at all. Secondly, the Indian society is itself divided through religion (Hinduism, Islam) and social castes.

Already in the first chapter of *A Passage to India*, which, unlike other Forster's novels, begins with a description, the reader is informed about the two different sides of the city of Chandrapore. First comes a description of the muddy and not particularly interesting Indian city. A description of the British Civil station follows. "Viewed hence Chandrapore appears to be a totally different place" (31). The ironic description of the Civil Station suggests its sterile practicality and illusionary character. "It provokes no emotion. It charms not, neither does it repel. It is sensibly planned, [...] a grocer's and a cemetery, [...] roads that intersect at right angles" (32). "It shares nothing with the city except the overarching sky" (32). Several crucial ideas are embodied in this last sentence.

Firstly, the British have created their own world in India, which has nothing to do with the real India. Hence the illusionary character of the British headquarters. The English who come to India and stay in the circle of other Anglo-Indians can never understand India as they only see it from the British perspective. Most of the Anglo-Indians that feature in the novel are typical public school Englishmen with undeveloped hearts. What they create in India is another version of their public school world in miniature. They live in their insular world, not dissimilar from the world they know in England. They amuse themselves with typical English activities such as bridge, tennis and English theatre and they do not mix with the natives at all.

Secondly, the fact that one place can be seen from two completely different perspectives also exemplifies one of the crucial aspects of India; its chaotic nature that is hard to interpret. In this sense, India comes to represent the universe, too complex and chaotic to have any ulterior objective meaning.

The image of an “overarching sky,” which appears repeatedly throughout the novel is also first introduced in this passage. On the one hand, the sky represents the expansiveness of the universe, whose limits and values are difficult to grasp. Thus it conveys the feeling of frustration and vagueness. “Outside the arch there seemed always an arch, beyond the remotest echo a silence” (71). On the other hand, like the rainbow bridge in *Howards End*, the sky in *A Passage to India* symbolizes the possibility of transcendent harmony that in a way unifies contradictory aspects. The sky is the only thing that India and England share, it is impartial and the image of the sky always appears when there is some promise of harmony or connection. Mrs. Moore’s feeling of unity with the universe comes during her contemplating the Indian sky (50-51). The only brief moment of unity between Adela and Ronny is marked by the night sky encircling them (103). But the sky is also present during the last parting of Fielding and Aziz and in fact it has its last word: “And the sky said, ‘No, not there.’” (316).

Most of the Anglo-Indians in the novel are caricatures rather than developed characters. This shows the author’s contempt for this group of people, especially for Anglo-Indian women. The notion that it is the English women who make it impossible for the English and Indians to come to a mutual understanding is hinted at several times. Mr. Fielding “had discovered that it is possible to keep in with Indians and Englishmen, but that he who would also keep in with Englishwomen must drop the Indians” (80). They act with snobbery and absolute superiority towards Indians. “You’re superior to everyone in India except one or two of the ranis, and they’re on an equality,” one of them informs Mrs. Moore at the unsuccessful bridge party (61). Throughout the novel the Anglo-Indians are repeatedly referred to as “the Turtons and Burtons,” an expression which emphasizes that they are all similar types that represent British administrators in India rather than individual characters. Later in the novel Fielding states that “the more the Club changed the more it promised to be

the same thing” (272). Although individual members of the club change over the time, the nature of the club remains the same.

Despite the fact that the English are in India because of Indians, they systematically ignore them. An example of this behavior can be observed in chapter two, when two English ladies take Aziz’s tonga without asking him. “It had come to the usual thing - [...] his bow ignored, his carriage taken.” This is a typical reaction of Anglo-Indians, who do not even give a thought to the fact that the lives of Indians are of any importance. A similar situation can be seen when Major Callendar arrogantly assumes that Indians have no social lives and calls Aziz from Hamidullah’s dinner party (chapter 2).

The other social group that figures as an antithesis to the Anglo-Indians are the native Indians themselves. However, this group is much less homogenous than the former one and there are many fragmentations even within the Indian society.

Looked at as a whole, the Indian society creates an impression of a muddle. Indians are disorganized, unpunctual, often unable to distinguish reality from fantasy and their “emotions never seem in proportion to their objects” (253). They do not hesitate to produce an innocent lie in order not to offend and they are unable to see things objectively. As if this was not enough to create confusion, they are divided through language, religion and social castes. “There is no such person in existence as the general Indian” (264). Although Forster obviously sympathizes with Indians more than with the English, Indians, and especially the main Indian character, Dr. Aziz, are not exempt from being treated with irony. Their light-heartedness and mistrustfulness is often exaggerated in a similar way as the hypocrisy and other negative characteristics of the English.

Most of the novel takes place in the Moslem India, but the end of the story moves to a Hindu region and Hindu characters are present in the earlier parts as well. The difference of religion creates barriers between people and when Aziz tries to overcome these barriers and

organizes the expedition to the Marabar caves, he realizes the practical difficulties in bringing Moslems, Hindus and Christians together. In organizing this expedition, he faces a number of difficulties that emphasize the gulf that divide people in India.²⁶ “Trouble after trouble encountered him, because he had challenged the spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments” (141). Even such a basic thing as dining together proves to be extremely complicated as it is difficult to form a menu that would accommodate the habits and taboos of all travellers (140-141). This minor incident demonstrates the complexity of the Indian society and the strict barriers that keep people in “compartments.” Aziz often shows his anti-Hindu attitude and wishes that “India was one; Moslem” (119). However, it is not and the only thing the various parts of India with different religions seem to have in common is their hatred of the English. “And if the English were to leave India the committee [of Hindu, Moslem, Sikh, Parsee, Jain and Christian nationalists] would vanish also” (119-20). This passage hints at the impossibility of India becoming one nation and the idea is repeated by Fielding in the final chapter of the novel. “India a nation! What an apotheosis!” (315) Thus it is obvious that even without the British rule, India would face great difficulties in achieving unity and harmony.

There are inequalities on the social level as well. Although the novel is more concerned with other problems, it is obvious that the Indian society is strictly divided into castes and the lower classes are ignored by the upper ones in a way not too different from the situation within the English society in *Howards End*.

²⁶Colmer, J., *E.M.Forster: A Passage to India*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1969, 39.

Making connections in *A Passage to India*

While *Howards End* is primarily concerned with finding a connection between the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes, one of the main themes of *A Passage to India* is creating a “bridge” between the English and Indians.

From the beginning of the novel we can observe the contrast between the casual and friendly atmosphere that prevails among Indians (for example in chapter 2 during the conversation between Aziz and his friends) and the rigid formality of the English Club.²⁷ The officially organized bridge party at the club with the aim to bring Indians and English together is a complete failure. The English treat Indians with the same contempt as usual and although some mingling between these two groups has been planned, “the courts were monopolized by the usual Club couples” (66) and most of the time the English kept to their side of the lawn so that they would not have to get in contact with Indians more than necessary. There is very little interaction between British and Indians and no bridge between the two is formed.

On the other hand, the tea party arranged by Fielding at the college turns out to be much more successful; probably because it is informal and unofficial and because the participants attend it out of their free will, not under obligation. Another reason for its success may be the fact that none of the snobbish Anglo-Indians is present at the party and thus the friendly atmosphere is not disrupted. However, as soon as Ronny comes to fetch Adela and Mrs. Moore, the relaxed atmosphere of the party is destroyed. Mrs. Moore and Miss Quested are newcomers to India and therefore they are not yet affected by the rigidity and snobbery of Anglo-Indians. On the contrary, they are open-minded and keen to discover the “real India.” Nor is Mr. Fielding a typical Anglo-Indian. He has not adopted the typical Anglo-Indian attitude and he seems to get on better with Indians than his countrymen anyway. It is at this

²⁷Colmer, J., *E.M.Forster: A Passage to India*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1969, 23.

tea party that the friendship between Aziz and Fielding is established and that plans for the expedition to the Marabar caves are made (Chapter 7).

As in *Howards End*, making connections and establishing personal relations is crucial in *A Passage to India*. Mr. Fielding's belief that "the world [...] is a globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of goodwill plus culture and intelligence" (80) summarizes this view. However, in *A Passage to India* there is a significant shift of the centre of attention from the individual's search for unity with others to the search of more universal unity. In other words, more emphasis is placed on the importance of finding harmony both in human relationships and in man's relationship to the universe. These two are often interlinked as individuals seek to escape from the feeling of separateness by the means of love and friendship, through which they hope to find universal harmony. "All invitations must proceed from heaven perhaps; perhaps it is futile for men to initiate their own unity" (58). One can understand other people and the universe in which one lives only through love and imaginative perception of beauty.²⁸ Unfortunately, most people fail in achieving this harmonious relationship with their surroundings and this realization makes the novel evidently less optimistic than Forster's earlier novels. However, it is not altogether pessimistic and there are several glimpses of the promise of harmony throughout the novel.

Mrs. Moore experiences one such vision of beauty and unity when she contemplates an Indian night:

She watched the moon, whose radiance stained with primrose the purple of the surrounding sky. [...] A sudden sense of unity, of kinship with the heavenly bodies, passed into the old woman and out, like water through a tank, leaving a strange freshness behind (50-51).

²⁸Colmer, J., *E.M.Forster: A Passage to India*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1969, 27.

While the ultimate aim is to achieve universal harmony, it should be noted that all attempts to reach it must begin on the level of personal relations. The novel is primarily concerned with overcoming insularity and finding connections between the two cultures, the English and Indians. If the two nations are to come to understand each other, it is first of all necessary for individuals to overcome prejudices and establish personal relations with members of the other culture. Again, we can see that personal relations are the first step to finding global understanding and harmony and they are therefore of supreme importance for Forster. The unsuccessful bridge party shows the futility of trying to “bridge” the two cultures formally and globally. The characters that try to reach beyond their own community and try to establish interracial and intercultural friendships are doctor Aziz, Fielding, Miss Quested and Mrs. Moore

The friendship that the novel is primarily concerned with is the one between Fielding and Aziz. Besides coming from two different cultures, they also significantly differ in character and therefore their friendship is rather fragile from the beginning. Fielding is kind and friendly, but unable to form deep and lasting relations.²⁹ His actions are based on reasonable decisions and he lacks imagination. Aziz, on the other hand, is impulsive, emotional and his imagination is rather too rich. He interprets reality as it best suits the situation and thanks to his imagination he often mixes fantasy with reality. For example, when Miss Quested gets lost in the caves, he immediately makes up a “simple and sufficient explanation of the mystery” (165) in order not to dishonour Miss Quested or his friends (chapter 16). Such innocent lies are completely natural for him and he does not see that they can do more harm than good.

Furthermore, Aziz and Fielding are bound to face misunderstandings and breakdowns in communication since they come from utterly different cultural backgrounds. Yet despite

²⁹Colmer, J., *E.M.Forster: A Passage to India*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1969, 33.

these obstacles and despite the fact that Aziz generally distrusts and dislikes the English, his first meeting with Fielding establishes a feeling of kinship between them. When Aziz falls ill and feels somewhat lonely, he remembers Fielding with affection: “No Englishman understands us except Mr. Fielding” (114). Their friendship is confirmed in chapter 11 when Aziz shows Fielding the photograph of his dead wife. Fielding is rightly worried that he might not be able to be intimate with Aziz (or with anyone else, for that matter) as he has no secrets to disclose, no strong emotions to share (129). Nevertheless, this gesture of trust is a culmination of their friendship and it is significantly placed at the very end of the first part of the novel. Everything that follows puts their friendship to a test and shows the difficulties in maintaining it.

At the beginning of the story it seems that it is going to be Adela Quested and Mrs. Moore who are there to connect with Indians. They are the only female characters in the novel who are not mere caricatures, and, what is more, with whom the author sympathizes. While most of the resident Anglo-Indians live in a very insular society and are altogether close-minded and intolerant towards Indians, the newcomers are disgusted with their countrymen’s attitude and they want to get to know Indians. Although Adela and Mrs. Moore arrive in India together and they are both eager to overcome the barriers that separate the English and Indians, they differ significantly in character and attitudes. That is why each of them reacts differently to the Indian experience and their contributions to the situation in India differ dramatically.

Miss Quested wants to see “the real India” (46). In fact, her wanting to “see” India and Indians rather than genuinely wanting to get to know them personally might be the reason why she fails. From the very beginning she is interested in India, not Indians (258) and she wants to meet Indians not for the sake of personal relations, but because she hopes that they might help her to get to know the country. They are merely a means to finding real India. This

is also why she is interested in Aziz at first: she “believed that when she knew him better he would unlock his country for her” (86). “She regarded him as ‘India’, and never surmised that his outlook was limited and [...] that no one is India” (88-9). Although at first Adela in a way tries to connect with Indians (the bridge party is also organized on her account), she is the one who in the end drives the Indian and English communities further apart and only increases their mutual hatred.

Mrs. Moore is a Christian humanist who believes that one should love all people equally.³⁰ This is why she does not treat Indians with contempt and superiority. “God has put us on the Earth in order to be pleasant to each other. God ... is love” (70). Her brief encounter with Aziz in the mosque (chapter 2) is marked by “the secret understanding of the heart” and a forever-lasting bond is established between them. This is the most valuable connection that is achieved in the novel as it is based purely on emotions and intuitive understanding and it is not impeded by social or political inequalities.

Although Mrs. Moore dies and leaves the story relatively early, she remains symbolically present and dominates the rest of the novel. She remains present especially in the mind of Aziz, who always remembers her with kindness and she becomes “Esmoor” for Indians. While she is absent at the trial and therefore unable to give evidence and support either side, both sides claim her to be their supporter. Her point of view remains unknown due to her sudden death on the sea and therefore she remains a positive figure both for the English and Indians. Although she would certainly have sympathized with Aziz, her sudden disappearance from the scene enables her to remain in a way impartial. Mrs. Moore’s spirituality also stays present until the end of the novel. The idea that “God is love” is not only crucial for her, but also for Hinduism, which is the prevailing religion of “Temple.”

³⁰Martin, J.S., *E.M. Forster The endless journey*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1977, 144.

Mrs. Moore has a similar role in the novel as Mrs. Wilcox has in *Howards End*. They both have an air of mysticism around them and their intuitive inner life gains them lasting personal relations. Both Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Wilcox are believed to have telepathic abilities and although they die early and unexpectedly, they remain symbolically present. They are not influenced by social conventions and therefore can freely find friendships with members of the “enemy’s camp.”³¹ Through their eternal symbolic presence they indirectly help other people connect with others. For example, it is partly thanks to Mrs. Wilcox that the Schelgels and the Wilcoxes are reunited at Howards End and the memory of Mrs. Moore makes it easier for Aziz to reconcile with Adela in the end (314) and befriend Ralph Moore (306).

One thing that Adela and Mrs. Moore have in common is their belief that the world is understandable and that everything can be explained. Adela hates mysteries and Mrs. Moore does not like muddles (86), but India is full of both. The experience in the caves is a culmination of their confrontation with mysterious India and the inexplicable echo undermines Mrs. Moore’s faith and Adela’s emotional stability. For the caves symbolically represent India; they are chaotic and mysterious. More generally speaking, they suggest the disordered universe in which man unsuccessfully tries to discover order.³² By entering the caves, one comes closer to realizing the limitations of any attempts to understand and interpret the world and personal anxieties become more prominent. That is why entering the caves and experiencing the ominous echo that evokes feeling of frustration and evil gives way to Mrs. Moore’s religious crisis and in Adela’s case an emotional break-down, which is a result of her sexual and emotional inhibitions.

The expedition to the caves marks the end of whatever harmony has been achieved or at least hoped for in the previous part. Firstly, Mrs. Moore finally realizes the limitations of

³¹A Passage to India, 328.

³²Martin, J.S., *E.M. Forster The endless journey*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977, 152.

her religion when she experiences the terrifying echo in the caves. It makes her realize that there might be inexplicable and ineradicable evil at the heart of the universe.

The echo began in some indescribable way to undermine her hold of life. [...] Then she was terrified over an area larger than usual; the universe, never comprehensible to her intellect, offered no response to her soul, and she realized that she didn't want to [...] communicate with anyone, not even with God" (160-1).

Adela also experiences an ominous echo in the caves and although we never learn what actually happened in the caves, I am inclined to believe that nothing happened except for the culmination of Adela's emotional crisis. Her rationality clashes with physical desires and this together with her inability to love prevents her from achieving "wholeness of being."³³ Like most Englishmen, she represses emotions and fails to connect the body and spirit.³⁴ Unlike Ronny, she realizes this defect in her character and perhaps it is this realization that leads her to her nervous breakdown in the caves. Just before she enters the caves she realizes that she does not love the man she is going to marry and, what is more, that it has never occurred to her before. "Not to love the man she is going to marry! Not even to have asked oneself the question until now!" (163) While Aziz represents India for Adela in her conscious mind, unconsciously she associates him with her repressed fears and desires and therefore she charges him with the assault.³⁵

Furthermore, Aziz's arrest and the trial that follows destroy the connections established in the first part and it becomes clear that harmony can no longer be achieved. The

³³Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 162.

³⁴Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster: A Passage to India*. London: Edward Arnold Ltd, 1969, 43.

³⁵Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 162.

arrest further widens the gulf between the English and Indians and their mutual hatred that has been suppressed so far now bursts out openly into mass hysteria.

The friendship between Fielding and Aziz is also put to a test as the arrest causes a number of misunderstandings. Their different reactions to Aziz's arrest exemplify the different nature of English and Indian thinking. Aziz impulsively jumps out of the carriage, while Fielding shows a typical calm reaction of a reasonable Englishman (171). While Fielding never questions Aziz's innocence and visits him in prison as soon as he gets the permit, the over-sensitive and irrational Aziz suspects his friend of deserting him (187). From now on their friendship is constantly disturbed by Aziz's suspicions. He thinks that Fielding wants him to spare Miss Quested from paying him the compensation because it would improve the reputation of Aziz and Indians generally among the English. However, Fielding values individuals more than cultures and he does not care about reputation at all. Later, Aziz even starts to think that Fielding wants Aziz to let Adela off paying because he was going to marry her in England. Again, suspicion and exaggerated imagination are at work in Aziz's mind and together with Fielding's over-rationality make it difficult for the two to remain close friends.

Fielding soon realizes the difficulties implied in being on Aziz's side. "He regretted taking sides. To slink through India unlabelled was his aim" (183), but this is impossible as his being on Aziz's side is automatically viewed as strictly anti-British. At the same time it is impossible to merge completely with Indians and thus he in a way becomes separated from both communities. When the trial is over, Miss Quested finds herself in a similar situation as Fielding earlier; she is rejected both by the English and Indian communities. The hostility of the English is obvious; most of them believe, or want to believe, that Aziz is guilty and although her final decision is favourable for Indians, she remains emotionally detached from them. Her sacrifice "came from her heart, [but] it did not include her heart" (245). Although

Miss Quested and Fielding are two very different characters and they never become very close, they have a few things in common. They are more tolerant and open-minded than most of their countrymen, but they are also to an extent affected by the syndrome of “undeveloped hearts”. Their over-rationality and lack of imagination prevent them from finding fulfilling personal relations and achieving the desired harmony. Furthermore, they can never fully comprehend the mysteries of India with their rational and non-spiritual attitude.

The incident in the caves and the trial ruin all hopes for finding mutual understanding between the English and Indian. On the other hand, it slightly contributes to the solidarity among Indians of different religions. As has been already mentioned, Indians define themselves as a nation only in terms of being anti-British. This notion can be seen in Aziz’s attitude as he chooses to move to a Hindu state devoid of British control as opposed to remaining in a Moslem region, which is under the British rule.

The last section of the novel takes place in Mau, a Hindu part of India and we can observe that although the barriers between Muslims and Brahmans still exist, they are less prominent than in Chandrapore. Aziz does not demonstrate his hate of Hindus as strongly as he does at the beginning of the novel. Since the trial, the focus of his negative feelings has shifted towards the English rather than Hindus. He even confuses hatred of the English with personal hatred and when Fielding revisits India, Aziz’s hostility towards him can be partially explained by this (289-90). He does not want to have anything to do with the English anymore and wishes “no Englishman or Englishwoman to be [his] friend” (298).

Although Aziz does not take Hindus quite seriously and they constantly remind him of “cow-dung” (265), he can live with his Moslem family surrounded by Hindus in relative harmony. Despite his being a devoted Moslem, he realizes that in order to have a “motherland,” India, Moslems and Hindus must come together and “the song of the future must transcend the creed” (265-6).

“Temple” begins with a detailed description of a Hindu festival and its chaotic nature seems to exemplify the chaotic character of India itself.³⁶ “This approaching triumph of India was a muddle (as we call it), a frustration of reason and form” (282). Despite this “muddle,” the chaotic crowd seems happy and in a harmonious unity. “They loved all men, the whole universe, and scraps of their past, tiny splinters of detail, emerged for a moment to melt into the universal warmth” (283). By putting all living things on the same hierarchical level and by emphasizing the collectivity as opposed to individualism, Hinduism may offer a solution for unifying India. Professor Godbole is the main character that carries the Hindu theme and although he is evasive most of the time, his repetitive phrase “God is Love” conveys the most important aspect of his religion, or indeed any religion, as this phrase is used by Mrs. Moore as well (70).

The question whether the English and the Indians can be friends is raised several times in the novel and it is one of the central themes. The problem is first discussed in chapter two by a group of Indians and they agree that it might be possible, but definitely not in India (33-4). Although some Anglo-Indians are friendly towards Indians at first, a short stay in India changes their attitude and most of them become arrogant, unapproachable and autocratic. “I give every Englishman two years, be he Turton or Burton [...] and I give any Englishwoman six months” (34). This characteristic feature of the Anglo-Indians could be connected with the self-complacency and self-confidence of the English, as Forster explains in his “Notes on the English Character.”³⁷ If the English are prone to self-complacency in general, this feature can easily flourish in a situation when they are given the power to rule over another nation. Ronny, being a public school Englishman, provides a good example of this characteristic. Adela realizes that “India had developed sides of his character that she had never admired.

³⁶Martin, J.S., *E.M. Forster The endless journey*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1977, 154.

³⁷Forster, E.M., “Notes on the English Character.” *Abinger Harvest*. London: Edward Arnold&Co., 1946. 9.

His self-complacency, his censoriousness, his lack of subtlety, all grew vivid beneath a tropic sky” (96). It is not so much the influence of India that causes these changes. The concept of colonization creates posts with inadequate power and authority. In a situation like this, when one nation is subjected to the rule of another nation, it is impossible to establish an equal relationship between the two nations and thus it is not possible to achieve full harmony on the level of personal relations. Despite the attempts of certain characters and their minor successes in establishing interracial and intercultural friendships, the ending of the novel speaks clearly for the impossibility of establishing such relations in the given time and place. “No, not yet, [...] no, not there” (316).

Another question is whether India as a nation could find unity if the British were to leave it to its own rule. The answer to this question is most likely negative and historical events have proved so. While Forster does not offer a solution to the situation, we can only speculate whether the main obstacle to finding connections between the English and Indians is the supremacy of the English or the antagonism within the Indian society.

Conclusion

In searching for order, people tend to simplify the complexities of the world by means of religion, social structures or personal relations. The quest for order is natural for all human beings, but it leads to creating insular social circles that are separated from one another.³⁸ Both *Howards End* and *A Passage to India* are concerned with overcoming the barriers that keep people in their insular circles. These barriers exist on different levels, be it cultural, social, religious or simply personal. It is important to realize that Forster is concerned with the concept of insularity in general. The fact that *A Passage to India* deals with the problem of insularity on an international and interracial level, while the insular groups in *Howards End* seem less diverse is unimportant. What matters is that both novels deal with the problem of insularity in a similar way. There are characters in both novels who try to overcome the barriers that separate people and they always start on the level of personal relations. The characters that are trying to connect face similar problems. Despite their openness and willingness to connect with different social groups, they are in the end restricted by the values and attitudes of their own class and culture.³⁹ Perhaps that is why only those people who grew up in an international environment, such as the Schlegel sisters, succeed in overcoming insularity to an extent.

However, the two novels differ in the outcome of the attempts to establish connections. Although diversity of people is important and the ending of *Howards End* shows that harmony can be achieved by combining diverse elements, it is precisely this human diversity that makes it difficult to establish personal relations in *A Passage to India*.⁴⁰ The differences in nationality, race and religion form an insuperable obstacle to overcoming insularity in the latter novel either because of the complex social and political situation in

³⁸ Martin, J.S., *E.M. Forster The endless journey*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1977, 159.

³⁹ Martin, J.S., *E.M. Forster The endless journey*. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1977, 5.

⁴⁰ Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 157.

India or because the author's views became less optimistic over the period of fourteen years that separates the publication of these two novels.

The theme of personal relations and finding connection in order to achieve harmony is common for both *Howards End* and *A Passage to India*. Both novels are concerned with establishing personal relations and overcoming barriers that separate people. However, while *Howards End* deals with overcoming insularity within English society and is concerned with a harmonious future of England, *A Passage to India* extends the problem to a universal level.⁴¹ As *Howards End* is about England, the latter novel is about India. It is about finding harmony between the English and Indians as well as within India. However, *A Passage to India* is not only concerned with an individual's desire to establish connections with others, but also with the universe.

None of the novels offers a "clear-cut resolution."⁴² The ending of *Howards End* is more optimistic than that of *A Passage to India*, but they are both open endings. In his *Aspects of the Novel*, Forster explains that "expansion," that is opening out rather than closing in a conclusion, is desirable.⁴³

While the ending of *Howards End* is more optimistic and perhaps more "rounded off" than the ending of Forster's last novel, it is also less convincing. It has often been criticized for its sentimentality,⁴⁴ but I believe that no matter how unrealistic or uneasily achieved the final harmony is, it conveys a message that personal relations do matter and that they are the first step to achieving harmony by overcoming insularity and making connections. The ending of *A Passage to India* is somewhat less optimistic and also more difficult to interpret. Personal relations and establishing connections still matter, but they are not alone sufficient to find harmony in the complex universe.

⁴¹Colmer, J., *E.M. Forster The Personal Voice*. London: RKP, 1975, 157.

⁴²Page, M., *Howards End*. London: The Mackmillan Press Ltd, 1993, 59.

⁴³Forster, E.M., *Aspects of the Novel*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books Ltd, 1968, 170.

⁴⁴Page, M., *Howards End*. London: The Mackmillan Press Ltd, 1993, 53.

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Summary

E.M. Forster žil v době, kdy anglická společnost procházela řadou změn a kdy se začaly viditelně projevovat rozpory a nerovnosti uvnitř společnosti. Forster si byl těchto změn a nerovností vědom a jako zastánce liberalismu je považoval za negativní, stejně tak jako nesoulad v jakékoliv jiné oblasti života. Jak je patrné z jeho románů a esejů, Forster si nejvíce cenil přátelství, toleranci a svobodu jedince. Jednou z jeho stěžejních myšlenek je snaha dosáhnout harmonie a celistvosti ve všech aspektech života. Je tak třeba sjednotit hmotné a duchovní stránky života a zároveň dosáhnout harmonie v rámci celé společnosti. Lidé mají tendenci uzavírat se v úzkém okruhu sobě podobných jedinců a projevovat nezájem, netoleranci, nebo dokonce nepřátelství vůči ostatním společenským skupinám. K dosažení harmonie uvnitř společnosti je třeba překonat bariéry mezi lidmi, ať už společenské, náboženské nebo kulturní, pomocí navazování hodnotných přátelství.

Forsterovy dva neznámější romány, *Rodinné sídlo* (1910) a *Cesta do Indie* (1924), se odehrávají v různém prostředí i době, ale oba romány vyobrazují nejednotnou společnost, ve které existují značné nerovnosti a lidé z různých společenských skupin žijí sice na jednom místě, ale příliš spolu nekomunikují. Různé společenské skupiny tak žijí izolovaně vedle sebe, ale ne spolu. Hlavní hrdinové Forsterových románů se snaží překonat tyto bariéry, které lidi od sebe rozdělují, a navazují přátelství s lidmi z jiných společenských okruhů.

Svou práci jsem rozdělila do dvou částí, ve kterých se postupně zabývám problémem překonávání společenských a kulturních bariér v těchto dvou románech. V *Rodinném sídle* se jedná o problém sociální nerovnosti mezi vyšší střední vrstvou (rodina Wilcoxů a sestry Schlegelovy) a nižší střední vrstvou (Bastovi) a zejména o hledání propojení mezi sestrami Schlegelovými, které představují vnitřní kulturní život, a rodinou Wilcoxů, představiteli materiálního světa. V *Cestě do Indie* jsou bariéry mezi lidmi ještě zřetelnější, jelikož zde

vedle sebe žijí dva národy, Indové a Britové, naprosto odděleně. Navíc zde existují značné nerovnosti i v rámci indické společnosti. Téma navazování přátelství však zůstává stejné pro obě díla.

Vedle dějových rovin obou románů, ve kterých dochází k navázání kontaktů mezi lidmi z různých společenských skupin a k dosažení určité harmonie mezi nimi, se v obou románech vyskytují důležité metafory odkazující k harmonii a propojení. V *Rodinném sídle* je to zejména opakovaně se objevující fráze „duhový most,“ kterým je třeba překlenout propast mezi vnitřním světem sester Schlegelových a materiálním světem Wilcoxů. I sama fráze „jen spojit“ („only connect“) se v tomto díle často opakuje a tak čtenářům připomíná hlavní téma románu. V *Cestě do Indie* je centrální metaforou pro dosažení harmonie symbol oblouhy. Stejně tak jako duhový most v *Rodinném sídle* se symbol oblouhy objevuje v pasážích, kde dochází k určitému propojení nebo příslibu harmonie. Zatímco v *Rodinném sídle* se jedná v první řadě o harmonii v rámci života jedince a v rámci společnosti, v *Cestě do Indie* se navíc ještě přidává téma celosvětové harmonie a vztahu jedince ke světu. Forsterův poslední román se tedy nezabývá pouze společenskými problémy, ale i filozofickými otázkami.

Ačkoliv se *Rodinné sídlo* a *Cesta do Indie* liší mírou dosažení harmonie (*Rodinné sídlo* nabízí v závěru větší naději na dosažení harmonie než Forsterův poslední román), v obou románech jsou důvody neúspěchu podobné. I když většina hlavních hrdinů projevuje ochotu a snahu sblížit se s druhými, nakonec jsou vesměs všichni nechtěně ovlivněni svým prostředím a nepodaří se jim přátelské vztahy s představiteli jiných společenských a kulturních skupin udržet. Snad s výjimkou paní Moorové jsou protagonisté, kteří dosáhnou určitého mezikulturního propojení či překonání jiných bariér, neanglického původu. Forster ve svých dílech často naráží na negativní vlastnosti Angličanů, které jsou především důsledkem anglického školství, a které brání jednotlivcům pochopit jiné národy. Je to zejména neschopnost porozumět problematice citových a mezilidských vztahů a do jisté míry

také samolibost a pokrytectví.⁴⁵ Prostředí, ve kterém člověk vyrůstá, samozřejmě ovlivňuje každého, nehledě na jeho národnostní původ. Tyto problémy tedy nemají pouze Angličané, ale například i Aziz v *Cestě do Indie* čelí problémům v mezikulturní komunikaci kvůli své typicky indické nedůvěřivosti a tendenci vše zveličovat. Dalším společným rysem obou románů je přítomnost tajemné ženské postavy (paní Moorová v *Cestě do Indie* a paní Wilcoxová v *Rodinném sídle*), která výrazně, ačkoliv možná nevědomě, přispěje ke konečné harmonii.

Rozborem *Rodinného sídla* a *Cesty do Indie* jsem dospěla k závěru, že ačkoliv se obě díla do jisté míry liší v námětu i vyústění děje, autor v nich s tématem překonávání bariér a izolovanosti zachází velmi podobně. To je dáno životním postojem autora a podobné principy by jistě bylo možné vysledovat i v ostatních románech E.M. Forstera. Prostředky k dosažení harmonie, motivy i výsledky snažení jednotlivých postav, stejně tak jako literární prostředky k vyjádření problematiky harmonie a překonávání bariér, jsou podobné v obou románech.

⁴⁵ Forster, E.M., "Notes on the English Character." *Abinger Harvest*. London: Edward Arnold&Co., 1946. 3-4.

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