



E.m.forster's A Passage to India Supports the Liberal Humanist Tradition

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Altruism or desire to help all without any selfish interest has been praised and advocated by all sane thinkers ever since the advent of human beings and that has been the cardinal point in every religious group anywhere in the world. Cooperation and collaboration are the two main pillars on which human society can stabilize itself. Man must go far ahead of the animal kingdom if he wants to be really proud of being a man. General progress and welfare of the society, collective enterprise and humanitarian activities, all these together constitute what is generally termed liberal humanistic tradition. Forster subscribes to these views as evidenced by his writings. He never ceases to attack the manners and morals of those who against these views. class consciousness, regimentation, the monolithic structure of british imperialism and its wide --spread machinery --al l these are criticized by him in his writings. Soldiers and officials are satirized by him. He was not a blind follower of any of the denominations of the Christian religion. Many times he has made hostile comments on the activities of the clergy. Religion in its widest sense he does not object to, despite the fact that any amount of religious mysticism cannot ultimately solve human problem and miseries. Forester had a passionate devotion to individual liberty and therefore was firmly against fascism and communism. Regimentation and party slogan mongering came under his mistrust and therefore, vehement criticism. He considered liberalism and freedom as identical. Forster has clearly expressed his humanistic views and tendency in his collections of essays entitled *A Binger Harvest* and *Two cheers for democracy*. He was not against nationalism or patriotic feelings. Love of the fatherland and pride for the cultural inheritance from ancestors should not override democratic ideals and universal brotherhood. He was dead against hero-worship however great the idol may be. They produce a desert of uniformity around them and often a pool of blood too. He encouraged ideas of philanthropic benevolence, freedom of speech and rights of the individual. He had blood relationship with great men and women of piety, integrity, public service and benevolent activities. He might have rejected religious dogmas and unrealistic moral codes of some of the religious sects but never doubted the sincerity of those people.

He wanted all people to be true to themselves and their conviction. No one should allow his own mind to come muddled. *A Passage to India* is a work of art, a novel meant to be read and enjoyed. It is not a political pamphlet or ethical treatise. Hence overt remarks about humanism and allied ideas need not be expected in it. But where is the author who can help projecting his pet ideas unconsciously his literary work. the novel does not conceal a gentle undercurrent of liberal and humanistic views running all through it. in the tussle between imperialist diehards and freed ohm-loving nationalists, foster could not resist the temptation of criticizing the bureaucrats and sympathizing with the lovers of freedom. While admiring the efficiency of the Anglo- Indian officials of Chandra-pore, he never hesitates to disapprove of their policies and to decry their haughtiness and arrogance, their racial aloofness and snobbery. He makes Ronny remark that it was not the duty of the English officials to be pleasant in their behavior towards the Indians. The author ridicules the indecent haste that the collector and others evince in making arrangement for the Trial of Dr. Aziz on the basis of a verbal charge of a visiting English lady. The wife of the collector remarks that every Indian should be made to crawl on the ground at the sight of an English woman. Evidently Forster might have recalled what general O'Dyer did at Jallianwalla Bagh. Forster did want a happy personal relationship between Indians and English men. It was for these purpose that he introduced the attempt at friendship by Dr. Aziz and Fielding which of course failed for various reasons. The college principal represents forster in the novel. His approach to life is extremely humanistic and liberal. Sane in his views and sweetly reasonable in his argument, Fielding is completely free from racial prejudice. Though agnostic, Forster was considerate to the protagonist of religion whether Islam or Hinduism. He is sufficiently responsive to Hindu mysticism and the doctrine of Universal Love which does not exclude the animal kingdom or even inanimate objects.

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