

E. M. Forster



❖ What is the good of your stars and trees,
your sunrise and the wind, if they do not
enter into our daily lives?

~ E. M. Forster (1879-1970)





Based on his individual experiences and reactions to widespread class stereotypes E. M. Forster assigns distinct morals and values to the diverse social classes in his novels.

- ❖ **Edward Morgan Forster** was an English novelist, short story writer, essayist, and librettist.
- ❖ He is known best for his **ironic and well-plotted novels** examining **class difference and hypocrisy** in early 20th-century British society.
- ❖ Forster was homosexual, but this fact was not widely known during his lifetime. His posthumously published novel *Maurice* tells of the coming of age of an explicitly homosexual male character.

Life Influences

- Father studied at Cambridge
- Forster also went to Cambridge after inheriting 8000 from his Aunt Marianne
- After graduating he traveled to Italy and India
- He used his experiences and observations in his novels



The Bloomsbury Group

The Bloomsbury Group was an English collectivity of loving friends and relatives who lived in or near London during the first half of the twentieth century. Their work deeply influenced literature, aesthetics, criticism, and economics as well as modern attitudes towards feminism, pacifism and sexuality. Its best known members were Virginia Woolf, John Maynard Keynes, E. M. Forster, and Lytton Strachey.

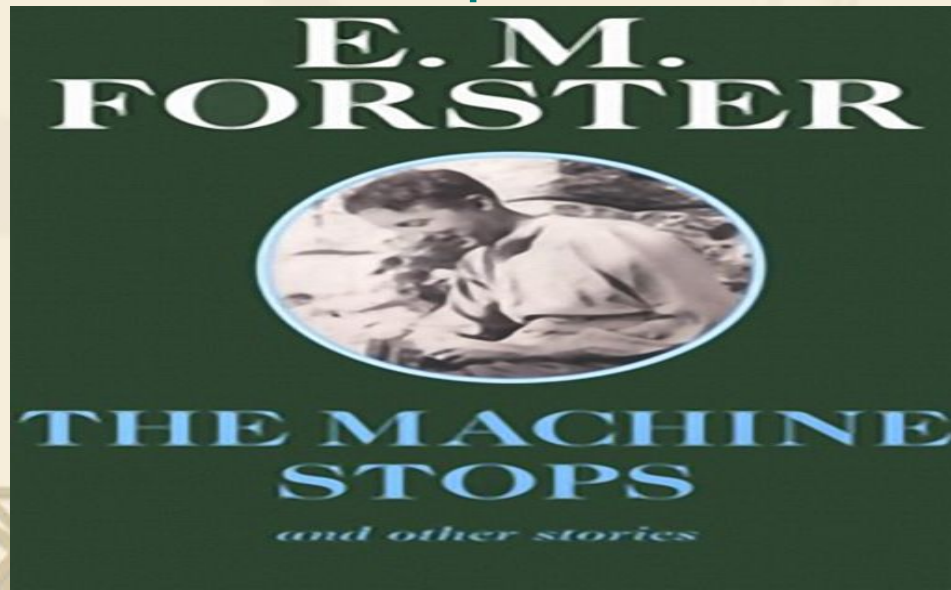




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His writing style

The ability to create characters and situations of great human significance, his exploratory power, and his qualities as a serious moralist with great ability as a sensitive realist in displaying the Edwardian and post war society.



Works of

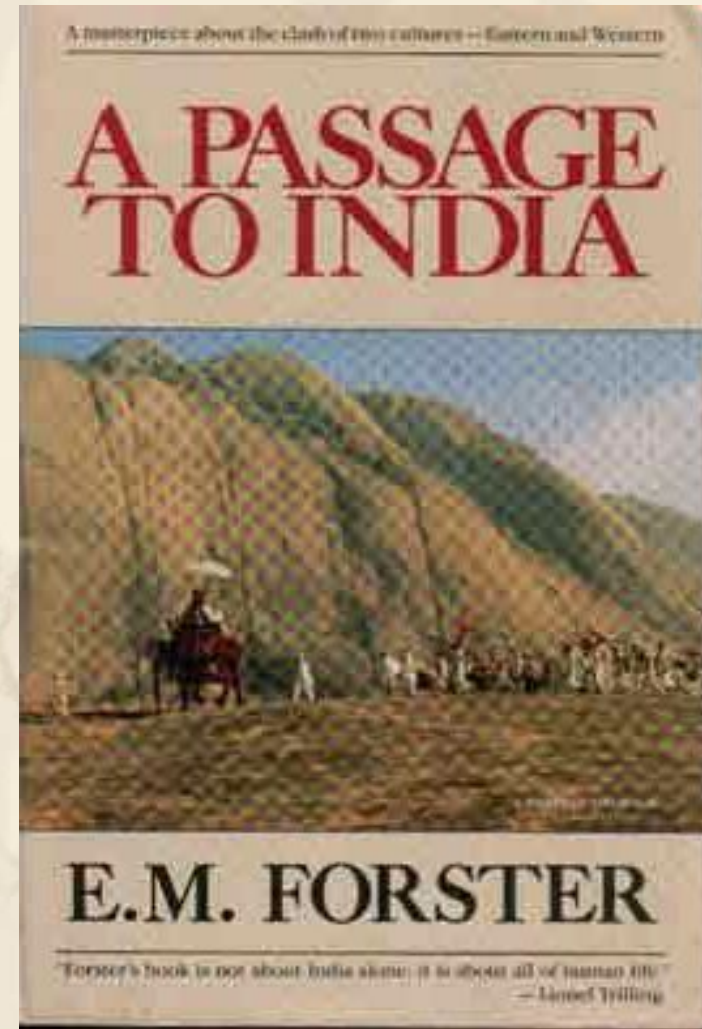
By E.M. Forster

Key themes in Forster's novels

- ❖ 1. The pursuit of **personal connections** in spite of the restrictions of contemporary society
- ❖ 2. The irreconcilability of **class differences**
- ❖ 3. **Sexuality**: a general shift from heterosexual love to **homosexual** love over the course of his writing career. (the posthumously published novel *Maurice* and the short-story collection *The Life to Come*)
- ❖ 4. Forster is noted for his **use of symbolism** as a technique in his novels, and he has been criticized for his attachment to mysticism.

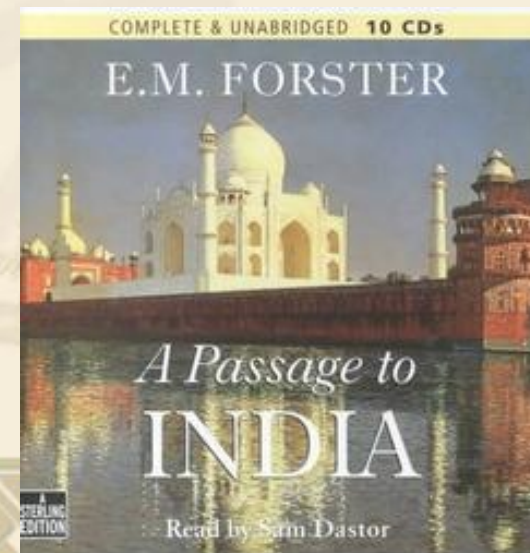
A Passage to India (1924)

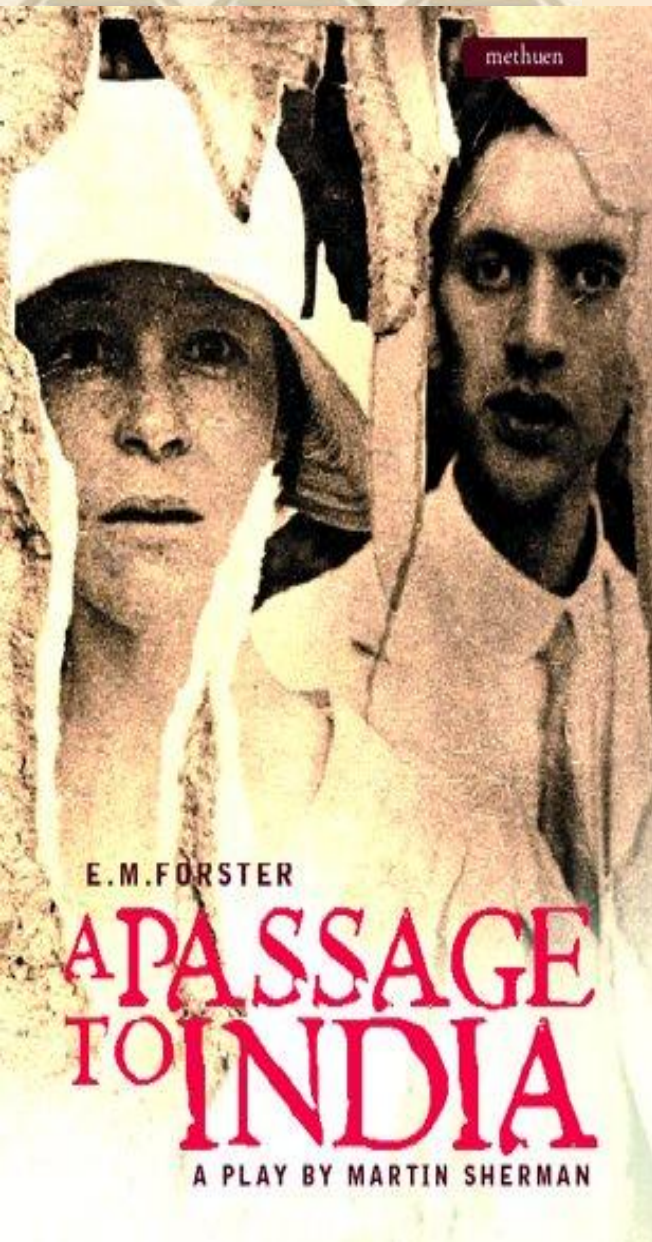
- ❖ is a novel set against the background of the British Raj and the Indian independence movement in the 1920s.
- ❖ It was selected as one of the 100 great works of English literature by the *Modern Library*. Time Magazine included the novel in its *TIME 100 Best English-language Novels from 1923 to 2005*.



A Passage to India

- ❖ Themes:
- ❖ 1. the difficulty of friendship between an Englishman (the colonist) and an Indian (the colonized)
- ❖ 2. the racism and oppression of the British who rule India
- ❖ 3. the “muddle” of Indian civilization and psychology, and the oneness (and perhaps sameness) of all life





A Room with a View

- ◆ Symbolic meanings of “rooms” and “views”:
- ◆ “rooms”: conservative and uncreative, e.g. Mrs Honeychurch, Cecil usually pictured in a room
- ◆ “views”: forward-thinking and modern character types, e.g. Freddy and the Emersons often described as being “outside”

A Room with a View



The symbolic differences between Italy and England:

Forster idealized Italy as a place of freedom and sexual expression. Italy promised raw, natural passion that inspired many Britons at the time who wished to escape the constrictions of English society. While Lucy is in Italy her views of the world change dramatically, and scenes such as the murder in the piazza open her eyes to a world beyond her "protected life in Windy Corner".



A poem is true if it
hangs together.
Information points to
something else. A
poem points to nothing
but itself.

E. M. Forster