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BOOK REVIEWS

E. M. Forster

INDIA AGAIN— EXTRACTS FROM AN UNPUBLISHED JOURNAL

INTRODUCTORY NOTE

By M. A. Halls

On the fifth of October, 1945, E. M. Forster boarded a Sunderland flying-boat in Poole Harbour on the south coast of England, en route for India. During the flight he started a journal in an old notebook that had been given to his aunt Laura Mary Forster almost ninety years before, and which had since passed to him. Three months later, on the return journey, he concluded his journal with the words published below.

During the intervening three months in India his thoughts had turned to the place of the writer in the modern world, and how he may best create in art bridges between distant races, and between the present and the past; this was the theme of his address to the First All-India Writers' Conference, held at Jaipur on the 20th-22nd October. Past and present were vivid in his imagination at this time; the return to India after twenty-five years was in itself deeply moving, and then there was the recent World War, and the more recent peace. Moreover, a few months before the German surrender Forster had nursed his mother in her last illness, and when he left for India her death was still a present reality for him; he had placed flowers in her room, and a spray of honeysuckle on the pillow of her bed, before setting out. She was ninety when she died, and Forster had had a home with her all his sixty-six years.

As he flew towards India he found that he was passing over all the past and contemporary civilisations that he had tried to connect, with the bridges of his own art, to contemporary England:

> Since leaving Poole yesterday morning have summarised 40 years—France—passed over St Remy, and saw Toulon in the distance where I first met Achille. Sicily—Taormina and mother, the dahlias in whose room and the honeysuckle on whose pillow must still be fresh. Egypt—Mohammed and my Alex circus, the Holy Land since we passed today over the Dead Sea, mistaken even by a Brigadier for the Persian Gulf, and in the middle of the coming night, India. Few people alive can have such culture—practically all the enlightened Englishman's tradition—and very few can have seen it reeled off beneath them by a flying-boat. [6.x.1945]

Thanks to the Machine, and his imagination, he was following the course of his 'Letter to Madan Blanchard', moving backwards in time, and eastwards, into the 'unwound world' of memory and introspection, and the brighter dawns and quieter nights of Asia.

Nevertheless, his three months in India were to be emotionally and physically exhausting, owing to the travel, the social life, and even the very warmth of his reception by his Indian friends. And worse, a sense of loss and waste, and of the passing of time, was to remain with him, which rose from the thought that he had survived into an epoch, and lived in countries, which were not truly his own; in which, though a writer, he could never be a novelist. In other men this consciousness might easily have decayed into petulance and self-justification; Forster turned to the hope that lay in the future, and in other writers. As he reflected in the flying boat during the voyage out:

> Young writer wanted—space not as I knew it, or time [. . .] I should have a cinema mind—I detected it neglecting its opportunities. [6.x.1945]

Three months later, as the returning plane dipped towards Malta, he concluded his last entry with a characteristic appeal to the young writers of the future; not so much of

England's or India's future, but rather of mankind's. And he adds, 'I have never walked on Malta yet. Seen from a boat in 1915', as if, when one is sixty-six years old in a world more than ever corrupted by oppression and commercialism, there is still a future, and a new shore to step onto.

THE TEXT

The diary entry for 30.xii.1945 is transcribed entire from the original manuscript. Punctuation and spelling are unchanged, with the exceptions noted below. I have indented the three paragraphs, which Forster marked only by beginning them on a new line. Two false starts, deleted and replaced with other words, have been ignored. I have had to supply two words for the sake of sense: see below.

Page 3 line 5: 'must be lower'; *MS reading*: 'must lower'
4 6-7: 'conciliatory, an old dear'; *MS reading*: 'conciliatory an old dear'
21: 'blew, curing'; *MS reading* : 'blew curing'
22: 'Ould's'; *MS*: 'Oulds'
29: 'I have been crying'; *MS*: 'I have crying'

The diary entry for 6.x.1945, quoted, in part, above, has been made clearer by the insertion of one dash.

EXTRACTS FROM THE JOURNAL

30 December 1945

Between Africa and Malta, above the clouds. The sun rose on us about half an hour ago. The sea travels with us, the clouds seeming to lie beneath it, foam passes over their flocks. Sometimes two sets of clouds, one travelling with us, the other which must be lower down, going contrary under the impact of wind. Difficult to reconstruct realities from appearances. I have thought how the Greeks would

have liked to be in this plane, also Ruskin. I have thought how man has not yet conquered the world in the sense of knowing its beauty, and how—my powers of imagination now spent—I have failed to do what I might. The only first class thing about me now is my grief. With dissatisfaction I look back upon myself in India, humourous [sic], conciliatory, an old dear, whose lavish gestures gave away very little, and has been too idle to record the honest-to-God facts. This diary of 12 pages represents 3 months. Ould has done better.

Cairo yesterday, and indeed today, for our much vaunted York did not get off till 3.0 A.M. because of engine trouble. It set us down at dawn, and, V.I.P.s, we went off in a car to Shepherds, I stayed there last with poor Shuttleworth in 1918 or 1917, in a housemaid's attic, and there made the fated remark that curbed our friendship, never perhaps an ardent one. I went to the pyramids as I did once with him when he snarled at the guides, and again in 1922, a happier visit when Middleton and I rode on donkeys or horses across the desert and ended in the swimming pool of Mena house. The pyramids are fidgety with excavations, and an icy sandstorm blew, curing itself at midday with a bout of rain. But I was glad to have gone and to have seen Ould's pleasure. We managed the odious train journey and had help and gaiety from the Gippoes on the train. Their skins and stances excited me, and I was glad to be away from Indians. In fact I have got Indianlogged. Three months of that sort of thing is enough.—Here is one page written in this book, and already I am sleepy. Going to the airfield in the night, my thought was Can't I lie down? I have been crying too, thinking of mother, and too often I think of her body going to bits, and of its huddled position in the churchyard. I will take if I have not lost it, a leaf of the asoka tree which the curator at Mathura had picked for me, and I will lay it on her grave. No I have not enjoyed India much, felt a shell. In the Fort at Agra, though, and enjoying myself, I thought that but for her death I could not have come, that it is thus at least her gift to me, and that my remark to her that

moring 'I shall have your love', is not after all macabre. Thanks to her disappearance, and my own fame, I have had this outing at the age of 66. The day after tomorrow shall be 67. O lovely world, teach others to expound you as I have not been able to do : O untroubled spaces, seldom looked upon by men's eyes, and unmarked by their activities : These clouds over the Mediterranean which will keep moving when I have passed, those deserts in Arabia which I flew over coming out, and again the other night in the dark, You remain pure and unconquered, and the imagination of others shall conquer you.

'We are just commencing the descent, it will be 30 minutes', says the boy steward. Yes, we start dipping to the sea. I have never walked on Malta yet. Seen from a boat in 1915.

EXPLANATORY NOTES

Page 3 Line : 4. *flocks*: Both as in 'flocks of animals' and as in 'woolly tufts' (OED, 'Flock' sb. 1 and sb. 2).

4 5. *my grief:* That is, for the death of his mother on 11 March 1945.

6. *humourous:* Forster probably means by this spelling to bring out the word's older meaning of 'irritable', 'crotchety', 'difficult to please'.

7. *Ould:* Hermon Ould, Secretary of the English P.E.N., Forster's companion on this journey, and during much of his stay in India.

John Beer

FORSTER, LAWRENCE, VIRGINIA WOOLF AND BLOOMSBURY

Some years ago, in an essay entitled 'Keynes, Lawrence and Cambridge', F. R. Leavis discussed and documented Lawrence's recoil from certain intellectuals associated with the Bloomsbury sect, particularly as he had observed them during a visit to Cambridge in 1915; and by the time he wrote *D. H. Lawrence : Novelist*, he was able to write, as a shorthand version of comments in the earlier essay : 'We remember Lawrence's now famous outbursts against Bloomsbury and Cambridge'.[1] More recently there have been signs of a still more sweeping position among critics, whereby Lawrence is seen as a lonely David, standing up to confront a powerful Bloomsbury establishment. In a recent film entitled 'Forster and Lawrence', produced by the Open University, a pair of literary critics discussed the relationship between the two men. Despite their attempts to be fair to both sides, the impression they gradually constructed was of Lawrence, isolated fighter for the voice of the ordinary people, on the one side, and, on the other, a literary establishment dominated by Bloomsbury and far removed from ordinary realities. A portrait of Lawrence at his most intense and vital was juxtaposed with photographs of Forster and Virginia Woolf, both looking more vague, the impression left was of a voice of reality breaking in on a literary scene which had lost contact with it.

When the contrast comes to be put as sharply as that, it is perhaps time to ask questions. In what sense can Bloomsbury be truly said to have represented the literary 'establishment' of that time ? If there was such an establishment, in

the normal sense, it might more fairly be located among the more popular writers and the main reviewers for the journals. The writers most widely admired at the time were figures such as Wells, Galsworthy and Bennett, whose work sold well and received respectful reviews in the press at large. Bloomsbury, by contrast, had to fight for its voice to be heard and met with hostility from reviewers and others. Leonard and Virginia Woolf, though never impoverished, were far from affluent in the early days of the Hogarth Press. Would not the more appropriate hostile label for Bloomsbury, if one were needed, be that of a 'coterie'? And how far is it proper to identify Forster with 'Bloomsbury'? He himself denied on one occasion that he had been a member.[2]

This is not, of course, to suggest that views such as those of the lecturers who took part in the film should be discounted. It is true, for instance, that those who were associated with Bloomsbury usually (if not invariably) came from privileged backgrounds, whereas Lawrence had to fight his way from an obscure mining town in the Midlands and was lucky to secure the backing of Ford Madox Ford at an early stage. If readers were told that the works of only one of these writers could be saved and, moreover, that they must choose which, it is likely that many would opt for Lawrence. His writing is at once impressively spontaneous and based on a wider spectrum of human experience than, say, Virginia Woolf's. Nevertheless we may still question whether it is correct to see him as totally opposed to Bloomsbury and all it represented.

Perhaps we should begin by setting out the case against Bloomsbury as it is often put by those who are hostile to it. The key documents here are the various accounts, by Lawrence and others, of his 1915 visit to Cambridge : this took place a month after his first encounters with Forster, and he looked forward to the new meeting with some trepidation in view of the intellectual reputations of those he was to meet. 'I don't want to be horribly impressed and

intimidated', he wrote to Russell, 'but am afraid I may be.'[3] He also hoped, however, that he might find in Cambridge the nucleus for a new group which might help renovate Europe after the war.

In the event he was disillusioned, finding little to talk about with those whom he met and feeling as if they belonged to some other world. From one point of view this is hardly surprising, since it is clear that the intellectuals he met lived in a somewhat rarefied atmosphere, guarded from the blunter demands of society by leisure and servants. In some ways this assisted their intellectual life, no doubt, but it also alienated them from figures such as Lawrence, brought up on a tradition where directness of speech and straightforward emotional involvement with one's ideas counted for a great deal.

John Maynard Keynes, after hearing an account by David Garnett of Lawrence's reactions, set down his recollections of a breakfast party at which he, Bertrand Russell and Lawrence had been present, followed by a morning's conversation :

> My memory is that he was morose from the outset and said very little, apart from indefinite expressions of irritable dissent, all the morning. Most of the talk was between Bertie and me, and I haven't the faintest recollection of what it was about. But it was not the sort of conversation we should have had if we had been alone. It was *at* Lawrence and with the intention, largely unsuccessful, of getting him to participate. We sat round the fireplace with the sofa drawn across. Lawrence sat on the right-hand side in rather a crouching position with his head down. Bertie stood up by the fireplace, as I think I did, too, from time to time. I came away feeling that the party had been a failure and that we had failed to establish contact, but with no other particular impression. You know the sort of situation when two familiar friends talk *at* a visitor. I had never seen him before, and I never saw him again.[4]

Lawrence himself remembered his visit to Cambridge with loathing. 'I hated it beyond expression', he wrote to Barbara Low, and to Bertrand Russell: 'Cambridge made me very black

& down. I cannot bear its smell of rottenness, marsh-stagnancy. *I* get a melancholic malaria. How can so sick people rise up? They must die first.'[5] Commenting on Keynes's memoir, Dr Leavis wrote: '. . .what Lawrence heard was the levity of so many petty egos, each primed with conscious cleverness and hardened in self-approval.' He went on to quote from a letter of Lawrence's at the time : 'they talk endlessly, but endlessly—and never, never a good thing said. They are cased each in a hard little shell of his own and out of this they talk words. There is never, for one second, any outgoing of feeling and no reverence, not a crumb or grain of reverence. I cannot stand it.'[6]

Leavis comments: 'The kind of triviality that Lawrence describes here is indeed a worse thing than Keynes was able to conceive it.'[7]

An important little discrimination ought to be registered at this point. Although the letter from which Leavis quotes sounds like a description of his visit to Cambridge, it comes in fact from a letter describing a visit from two young men, David Garnett and Francis Birrell to him in Sussex at the time. 'To hear these young people talk fills me with black fury', he wrote. The distinction is not irreconcilable with Dr Leavis's case, since it is clear from Lawrence's correspondence of the time that he associated this experience with the Cambridge visit, but if he had been writing specifically about Cambridge he might have voiced his criticisms in slightly different terms. What he wrote to Garnett on the same occasion was :

> Never bring Birrell to see me any more. There is something nasty about him like black beetles. He is horrible and unclean. I feel I should go mad when I think of your set, Duncan Grant and Keynes and Birrell. It also makes me dream of beetles. In Cambridge I had a similar dream. I had felt it slightly before in the Stracheys. But it came full upon me in Keynes and in Duncan Grant. And yesterday I knew it again in Birrell—you must leave these friends, these beetles. Birrell and Duncan Grant are done forever. Keynes I am not sure—

when I saw Keynes that morning in Cambrige it was one of the crises of my life. It sent me mad with misery and hostility and rage. The Oliviers and such girls are wrong. I could sit and howl in a corner like a chiid. I feel so bad about it all.[8]

It is clear from this that Lawrence associated his feelings about Birrell with those which he had about Keynes and Cambridge; but it should still be borne in mind that the quotation cited by Dr Leavis was not directly about the Cambridge experience and that Lawrence's reaction to that was more complex. Leavis does not, for example, dissociate Bertrand Russell from the Cambridge set which Lawrence was criticising; yet the correpondence of the time makes it clear that Lawrence at that time excluded him, treating him rather as a confidant for his feelings of dismay, and not turning against him until several months later.

It is in any case unwise to place too much emphasis on statements which Lawrence was making in 1915. This was the time when an apprehension of what the First World War was going to mean for Europe was beginning to take hold of the minds of those who could regard it in a sufficiently detached manner, and Lawrence was in an unusually black mood. Russell, too, was feeling a sense of nightmare at current events. The war changed his view of human nature; he said afterwards : as a result of it he came to believe that there was a strong destructive instinct in human civilization.[9] He and Lawrence corresponded for a time, in the hope of forming an association which might assist the creation of a new society after the War, but despite Russell's early admiration it gradually became clear that their attitudes were different, Russell relying basically on the use of reason, Lawrence looking rather for a shift at profounder levels in human nature. When Lawrence declared that his faith was rooted in a belief in the blood as being wiser than the brain, therefore, Russell found himself unable to agree; indeed, his comment, many years later, that the philosophy

Lawrence was preaching was one which led straight to the concentration camps suggests that he never really grasped the true point of it.[10]

The individual quality of this relationship with Russell is a reminder of a point that was often made by those associated with Bloomsbury : that so far from being a tightly-knit movement incorporating people with shared ideals and aims, it was rather an association between various people who enjoyed talking to one another and enjoyed it all the more because they disagreed on so many subjects. Lawrence's own circle in London during the subsequent years was not altogether different : indeed I think it can be argued that Lawrence never wrote more intelligently and powerfully than when he was in touch with the manifold currents that were moving in the London of the time—which must necessarily at some point include Bloomsbury. Quentin Bell, who has looked at the question in his book on the subject, points out that in spite of Lawrence's fierce attack on Duncan Grant as artist he had an embroidery designed by Grant in his own house in Cornwall a year later.[11] We may likewise notice that Lawrence said of another member of Bloomsbury: 'I rather liked Clive Bell—not deeply'; that in 1918 there was some talk of the Lawrences and Woolfs exchanging houses for a time and that in 1922 Lawrence suggested to Forster that Leonard Woolf might be asked if he wanted to publish his translation of Verga.[12] None of this suggests that Lawrence entertained a deep hostility to Bloomsbury, as such.

The point to be emphasized again is that while in one sense Bloomsbury was a loose association of likeminded people, it also covered quite different kinds of achievement. At the more general level it could be inbred and gossippy. Desmond McCarthy may be mentioned as a typical figure here : amusing and entertaining, always good company, but not contributing anything finally distinctive or original. When one thinks of Bloomsbury at this level one can understand why some people felt excluded, and why Lawrence was

impatient at the trifling and twittering. There is something significant perhaps about the fact that Forster and Russell, with their more serious concerns, did not move in the main stream of the association. They visited it, hovered on the outskirts, became friendly with particular members but never quite belonged.

At its best, however, Bloomsbury was more distinctive and attractive. There was, for example, the sense of shared enthusiasm created by the events surrounding Roger Fry's London exhibition in 1910, entitled 'Manet and the Post-Impressionists', which introduced the English public at large to work that had recently been produced in France. The exhibition caused a furore among those who had little knowledge of recent developments in French art, but for some young artists—and particularly those associated with Bloomsbury—it was exciting.[13] In 1913 Fry opened the Omega Workshops in Finsbury Square, where he had young artists designing textiles, furniture and so on according to new principles of design. The effects of what they were doing may be seen in many fields, including the dust-wrappers which Vanessa Bell designed for some of Virginia Woolf's novels, and the decision by Leonard and Virginia Woolf to set up the Hogarth Press; and they can be pursued into Virginia Woolf's fiction itself. Among other things, it was responsible for a new attitude to light, a process of rendering objects by analysing the effects of the light falling upon them, or the light which they emitted, and then, as it were, reconstituting them in those terms. More generally, it fostered a delight in the play of human intelligence itself, exhibited in Bloomsbury conversation at its best. Desmond McCarthy's comment that they were not 'particularly interested in the instincts or the will compared with the play of the intelligence'[14]—is relevant here.

This sense of new possibilities, new directions in art was to be brutally damaged by the impact of the First World War, but in the post-war world it continued to be sustained by a

few people such as Virginia Woolf. She was sometimes described as the high priestess of Bloomsbury, a description which does little justice to her lightness of touch and sense of fun, but which is perhaps accurate insofar as, beneath the element of play, she dedicated herself seriously to her art. By comparison with some writers and artists in Bloomsbury, who were always just about to produce a masterpiece but never quite setting pen to paper, she worked continuously, always reserving some hours of the day for work.[15] And this fact helps to remind one that Bloomsbury had serious antecedents in English cultural life. It had roots as well as energies, and some of the most important extended back into the society known as the Cambridge Apostles, to which many of those associated with Bloomsbury had belonged.

To trace such origins is not quite as easy as one might hope, however. Throughout its history the Apostles was a society which changed in character according to the dominant personalities in it at any one time, so that it is not enough to know that any particular individual was an Apostle; if one is to appreciate its effects on him, one also needs to know *when* he was an Apostle.

The accounts of the rise of the society generally agree in recognising that they represented a conscious elitism in the intellectual life of their time. It has also been noted that several of the early Apostles were deeply impressed by the writings of Coleridge, who at the time of their first peak of intellectual development was still holding forth in Highgate at his weekly gatherings.[16] It has been further noted that the programme of the Apostles, whereby each was marked for some future eminence in the professions—Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Chief Justice, Poet Laureate and so on—was consonant with Coleridge's idea of the 'clerisy', a scattering of the man who were to act as centres of enlightened growth throughout the state.[17]

It is not until one reads the records of the Apostles through their correspondence and the account of their meetings, how-

ever, that one comes to see how pervasive the Coleridgean influence was. To a generation which had become unsure of the grounds of Christian faith, Coleridge's later philosophy, expounded at Highgate to any who came to hear him, had offered new hope. The Coleridge of those years had lost the ebullience of his youth, along with the pantheistic overtones of his earlier thinking. His aim now was to offer a new way of life and thought to those oppressed by the dead forms of thought that surrounded them—a new way based on the assertion that Christianity embodied certain truths which were ratified in the minds and hearts of human beings, if they were willing to look there searchingly enough. One of the attractions of such a philosophy was that it helped meet the desire which young intellectuals had to retain a continuity with the Church of their ancestors while at the same time honouring the contemporary desire to 'prove all things'.[18]

For such young men encounter with Coleridge's teachings could be liberating. Among other things, it reopened the possibility of ordination in the Church to young men who might otherwise have felt such a vocation closed to them. F.D. Maurice, for example, was enabled to develop the Coleridgean ideas into a tolerant religious position. Attractive as these ideas were, however, they were not easily to be aligned with traditional theology, indeed, for those who believed in the supremacy of faith over works, they seemed to allow too much weight to human powers. Maurice's further assertion that subscription to the thirty-nine articles of the Church of England need not involve one's believing in all of them but simply represented a recognition that this was the general set of beliefs by which the Church guided itself, caused even more disquiet. Those who were reluctant to accept Coleridge's position as constituting a basis for religious faith may have been sensitive to a lack of coherence in his position which corresponded to the course of his own development, since the evolution of his teaching involved withdrawal from a youthful philosophy that had been

less near orthodoxy. Earlier, he had been attracted by the idea of a religion of nature—aligned with the precepts of Christianity, to be sure, but also grounded firmly in the sensuous experience of the individual. His early poem 'The Eolian Harp' shows us both the larger process and its limitations : speculation in favour of a human nature that is in communication with all other living things is checked by a fear that such beliefs, acted upon, may lead to libertinism in the individual. This conflict remained essentially unresolved, creating a constant tension between the aesthetic and the moral in his mind. To those less concerned with traditional orthodoxy, on the other hand, the very existence of this other stratum helped both to give a sense of excitement to what he was saying and also to allow room for the play of intelligence. The qualities seem to have contributed in some degree to the intellectual atmosphere of the Apostles.

Although it may at first sight seem strange to pay so much attention to the teachings and personality of a man who died in 1834 when studying the origins of a twentieth-century group, there are good reasons for tracing a continuity. It was over subscription to the thirty-nine articles, after all, that Leslie Stephen, Virginia Woolf's father resigned his Fellowship at Trinity: the tension between the moral and the aesthetic was a presistent feature of thought in such circles, recreating the Coleridgean dilemma over and over again. And a more positive Coleridgean note was kept alive by disciples of his such as F. J. A. Hort, who, living in Cambridge throughout his career, remained in touch with the Apostles until he died in 1892. Others, such as F. D. Maurice and Charles Kingsley who achieved eminence in the world outside, were impressive external witnesses to the potency of his teachings.

At the same time, there was always a tendency for the affable attitudes of the society to veer into simple urbanity, or even clubability. Its history during the nineteenth century shows several movements in this direction, checked by periodical recall to its former principles. One such moment

of revitalization came with the election of Henry Sidgwick. Sidgwick embodied the cultivation of moral earnestness in separation from religion which characterised many notable thinkers of the sixties and seventies. After his time there was another relapse and the society became less concerned with moral and philosophical issues, but in the early nineties it passed into what was perhaps its greatest phase with a membership that included McTaggart, A. N. Whitehead, Russell and G. E. Moore. McTaggart's philosophy represented a final flowering of the transcendental tradition which had been a feature of the society, yet it was a new mutation, for his was a philosophy which was not in touch with the Society's Coleridgean roots. The strong imaginative quality of Coleridge and his links with the nature morality of Wordsworth, were now set aside in favour of the Hegelianism which was currently in favour at Oxford also, setting forth the ideal in a more straightforwardly argued manner.

McTaggart was acknowledged by all who came in contact with him to be a singularly impressive figure. In his autobiography Leonard Woolf declares that he had the most astonishing capacity for profound silence that he had ever known. He goes on to recall how McTaggart, when visited by his friends, would greet them and lie back on a sofa, his eyes fixed on the ceiling, in profound silence. Every five minutes he would roll his head from side to side, stare with his rather protuberant, rolling eyes round the circle of visitors, and then relapse into immobility.[19] Russell comments on his extraordinary shyness, matched only by his own : when McTaggart first called on him as an undergraduate, it was some time before the barrier could be broken down sufficiently for him to come through the door.[20] He also gives a good example of the kind of intense emotion that could be generated :

> I remember the precise moment, one day in 1894, as I was walking along Trinity Lane, when I saw in a flash (or thought I saw) that the ontological argument is valid. I had gone out to buy a tin of tobacco;

on my way back, I suddenly threw it up in the air, and exclaimed, as I caught it : 'Great Scott, the ontological argument is sound!'

During the following years Russell planned to 'achieve a Hegelian synthesis in an encyclopaedic work dealing equally with theory and practice'. But during 1898 he was led away from this. His friend, G. E. Moore, who had also passed through a Hegelian period, now took a different line, based on the assumption that '*everything* is real that common sense . . . supposes real.':

> [Moore] took the lead in rebellion, and I followed, with a sense of emancipation . . . With a sense of escaping from prison, we allowed ourselves to think that grass is green, that the sun and stars would exist if no one was aware of them, and also that there is a pluralistic timeless world of Platonic ideas. The world, which had been thin and logical, suddenly became rich and varied and solid.[21]

It was during this latter period, in 1899 to be exact, that E.M. Forster was elected to the Apostles. In the opening chapter of *The Longest Journey* (which is dedicated to his brother-members) he has left a picture of what some have thought to be a typical meeting of the society—though it is not altogether clear whether the young men are genuine Apostles or simply a group of clever undergraduates with apostolic overtones : perhaps there is an element of both. What is more to the point, perhaps, is the attempt to render a particular kind of magic, which Forster feels surrounded his friends at that time, and which is emblematized partly in their preference for sitting by firelight—creating an atmosphere rudely broken when Agnes Pembroke arrives and immediately switches on the light. Rickie, hero of the book, talks of the years at Cambridge as 'the magic years', a term which is repeated in his short story, 'The Point of It'. The voice that tortures the damned by reminding them of their youth says: 'The years that I dwelt with you seemed short, but they were magical, and they outrun time.'[22]

Forster's sense of a remembered magic reflects, I think, his good fortune in belonging to the society at one of its best moments : the moment when Russell and Moore were reacting against and challenging the Hegelianism of McTaggart. It was exhilarating no doubt to be in the presence of dedicated intellectualism; it was exhilarating, equally, to feel the world become 'rich and varied and solid' again under the impact of Moore's common sense. But once the victory was won something of the magic was bound to disappear, since that sprang from tension between the two forces. If one were delivered back into a common-sense world, with no longer any room for metaphysical discussion, the argument must turn elsewhere. It was in the moment of acute process, when Hegelian ideals were being challenged by Moore's common sense, that the sense of intellectual exhilaration could flourish. *The Longest Journey*, on this reading of the matter, celebrates such a high point among the Apostles.

Russell comments also on the situation which resulted from Moore's ascendancy. His mind was one of remarkable integrity and trenchancy, combining the belief that '*every thing* is real that common sense supposes real' with a belief that it was possible to find the truth and a concentration upon the importance of 'states of mind'—he claimed indeed that the only good that was to be traced in the world was a good state of mind. This belief, a highly altruistic one in Moore's hands, could, however, easily lead to a condition in which one might become more occupied in looking at the states of mind of oneself and others than in looking at the outer world. When he comes to describe the generation ten years younger than himself, in fact, Russell is severe about the condition that ensued :

> It is surprising how great a change in mental climate those ten years had brought. We were still Victorian; they were Edwardian. We believed in ordered progress by means of politics and free discussion. The more self-confident among us may have hoped to be leaders of the

multitude, but none of us wished to be divorced from it. The generation of Keynes and Lytton did not seek any kinship with the Philistine. They aimed rather at a life of retirement among fine shades and nice feelings, and conceived of the good as consisting in the passionate mutual admiration of a clique of the elite. This doctrine, quite unfairly, they fathered upon G.E. Moore, whose disciples they professed to be.[23]

Russell goes on to point out that Moore's attention to morals and his doctrine of organic unities preserved his philosophy from simply degenerating into the advocacy of a life of isolated passionate moments, but that these other elements in his philosophy were ignored by his disciples.

What in fact happened now was that Moore's distinctive principles provided the keynote for a philosophy that differed in many important respects from his own. In his final chapter of *Principia Ethica*, the great work by which he came to be known, he had written,

By far the most valuable things, which we know or can imagine, are certain states of consciousness, which may be roughly described as the pleasures of human intercourse and the enjoyment of beautiful objects. No one, probably, who has asked himself the question, has ever doubted that personal affection and the appreciation of what is beautiful in Art or Nature, are good in themselves . . .[24]

In Moore's personal morality, as Russell remarks, this endorsed a form of conduct fairly conventional in nature; but to a man such as Lytton Strachey it meant a belief less tied to traditional morality—a belief that aesthetic experience and personal relations between them made up the good life. And his belief in this went along with something which the older Apostles would hardly have approved : a willingness to tolerate openly, and even encourage homosexual relationships between individual apostles. So far as the 1890s are concerned, Bertrand Ressell explicitly denies any such indulgences :

After my time the Society changed in one respect. There was a long drawn out battle between George Trevelyan and Lytton Strachey, both members, in which Lytton Strachey was on the whole victorious. Since

his time, homosexual relations among the members were for a time common, but in my day they were unknown.[25]

E. M. Forster, who joined the Society at the end of the decade, supports this view with his recorded comment that while up at Cambridge he thought of homosexuality mainly as something that came up from Eton and went back there.

One result of the new tendency was to make the Apostles a good deal more self-enclosed and self-regarding than they had been—a change which can also be seen as reflecting the shift in the Society's values that had been precipitated by the victorious reaction of Moore and Russell against McTaggart's Hegelianism. That, as we saw earlier, had been a sharper, more rigorous version of the Coleridgean philosophy which had survived in the society during the middle years of the nineteenth century. During that period, it seems, a basic dwelling on serious subjects had been allowed to co-exist with a certain light-heartedness and ease, but seriousness had become gradually more dominant; in the new generation the stress was reversed. Leonard Woolf puts the contrast neatly : 'just as one hesitated in Moore's rooms at Cambridge to say anything amusing which was not also profound and true, so in Bloomsbury one hesitated to say anything true or profound unless it was also amusing.[26] In one sense this was a redressing of the balance towards the earlier allowance for humour, after the more serious years with McTaggart; but in fact the balance now swung very firmly the other way. Something that had been central to the Apostolic tradition was henceforth permanently lost.

It would be easy enough to cast Lytton Strachey as the villain of the piece. It was he, above all, who was leading the new movement. But in many ways he remained closer to the spirit of the original Apostles than some others. When he first arrived in Cambridge at the end of the century he belonged to a group called the Midnight Society, which used

to meet at twelve in Trinity. Meetings usually took the form of a play-reading, after which the participants might walk about spouting favourite passages of poetry, often going on till daybreak.[27] The Society was later killed off, however, partly as a result of regular visits from three former undergraduates, Bertrand Russell, Desmond McCarthy and E. M. Forster. McCarthy, particularly, who was a great raconteur and entertainer, helped to turn it to entertainment rather than seriousness.[28]

Strachey by contrast remained a more dedicated man, even if he lacked the full earnestness of his predecessors. It is surprising at first sight to discover that he once proposed to Virginia Woolf and was accepted (both quickly perceived their mistake and eased themselves gracefully out of the situation)—but it was presumably the purity of his wit and intelligence that drew her.[29] His homosexual relationships, similarly, were initially motivated by a belief that they constituted a more ideal form of human intimacy, since they made it possible to discover in another person something more closely corresponding to one's own aspirations. When Maynard Keynes proved a successful rival to him in the affections of another young man, both Maynard and he seem to have been surprised by the strength of the passions that they found to be involved.[30] The stress at this time was evidently aesthetic, rather than directly physical.

It was likely to make a difference, then, whether one had joined the Apostles, like Forster, at the turn of the century, or five years later, when Lytton Strachey was in the ascendancy. Nor did the changes stop there. A new generation towards the end of the decade which included Rupert Brooke reacted in turn against such tendencies toward self-enclosure, moving rather towards Fabian socialism and political activity.[31] Leonard Woolf, similarly, returning from Ceylon in 1911, contributed a sense of social and political issues and their importance.[32]

All these strands, then, may be argued to have contri-

buted to Bloomsbury, with different emphases in the case of various individuals. Other traits, on the other hand, carried over from the Apostles, remained more constant. One was the respect for candour, unusual in the inhibited English society of that time. Bertrand Russell describes the atmosphere of the Apostles when he was elected in 1892 as follows :

> It was a principle in discussion that there were to be no *taboos*, no limitations, nothing considered shocking, no barriers to absolute freedom of speculation. We discussed all manner of things, no doubt with a certain immaturity, but with a detachment and interest scarcely possible in later life. The meetings would generally end about one o'clock at night, and after that I would pace up and down the cloisters of Neville's Court for hours with one or two other members. We took ourselves perhaps rather seriously, for we considered that the virtue of intellectual honesty was in our keeping.[33]

Russell himself remained always on the borders of Bloomsbury, distrusting those elements in it which gravitated around Lytton Strachey and faithful to his conviction that he must remain connected with 'the multitude'. His chief friendships were with men such as Maynard Keynes who acted from a similar assumption. He became a fervent and outspoken pacifist during the First World War, forfeiting his tutorship at Trinity and later being put in jail; after the war he stood as a Labour Party candidate, and retained a strong interest in social matters for the rest of his life. But in certain respects he could be closely associated with Bloomsbury particularly in his regard for candour and for the free play of mind. Just as A. N. Whitehead (who had originally recommended him for membership of the Apostles on the strength of the intellectual calibre displayed in his entrance scholarship papers)[34] could write a book entitled *Adventures of Ideas*, so Russell found enjoyment in intellectual exploration. But in Bloomsbury the range of such exploration was sometimes restricted not, as elsewhere in English society, by conventional moral taboos, but by a dislike of moral earnestness.

Forster, aligned so confidently with Bloomsbury by some commentators, stood to it in a like ambiguity. He was in it rather than of it. Some members distrusted what they called his mysticism—and even prided themselves on having drawn him away from it.[35] They commented on his way of appearing and disappearing from meetings, and Lytton Strachey nicknamed him 'the Taupe' on account of his habit of burrowing away from a conversation and then re-emerging with some pregnant observation.[36] He enjoyed associating with members of the group, and cultivated a similar lightness of touch in his own writing at times. Yet there remained a more serious and committed strain in his writing, which may be associated with the spirit that survived among the Apostles when he first knew them.

And Virginia Woolf herself was in touch with that older tradition. It was perhaps an ambiguous stance, associated as it was with the personality of a father who, though not an apostle himself, had something of the same attitudes as Henry Sidgwick. She could respect that kind of seriousness, but feared it when it veered into earnestness, preferring then to circumvent it by her own lightness of touch; yet at the deepest level her vision had a similar integrity.

As a result of this it can be argued that her personality existed at two levels : a social self which existed primarily in relation to her sister and friends and a deeper self which had been most active about the turn of the century, when she had been in touch with the Apostles. There is a good example of the deeper strain in a letter written in 1928, describing her nephew Julian at Cambridge :

> He is however by no means as confident of immortality and happiness as we were at his age. The truth is there's no one to beat down in argument. They talk love where we talked God. I think our age though ossified was of the two the more sublime. But Julian has still many years before him. Only Cambridge will never be to him what it was, even to me. Oh the sound of Grace coming through Adrian's windows in Nevilles Court in the summer when we were young! But no more. You will laugh.[37]

This comment reminds us again that Virginia Woolf was the daughter of Leslie Stephen; and that Stephen belonged to that older Cambridge which Russell and others had experienced: a Cambridge characterised by seriousness and sincerity. Stephen himself had shown the quality of his sincerity when he resigned his fellowship at Trinity Hall through inability to subscribe to the thirty-nine articles and condemned himself to intellectual labours which often degenerated into drudgery as he toiled to support his wife and large family.[38]

In addition to her nostalgia for an earlier age Virginia Woolf sometimes voiced her distaste for what had happened to the Apostles in the following decade. By 1912 she could write to Lytton Strachey,

> How difficult it is to write to you! It's all Cambridge—that detestable place; and the apostles are so unreal, and their loves are so unreal, and yet I suppose it's all going on still—swarming in the sun—and perhaps not so bad as I imagine. But when I think of it, I vomit—that's all—a green vomit, which gets into the ink and blisters the paper.[39]

And so to our surprise we find her taking a line on Cambridge which is very close, in its imagery of disgust, to Lawrence's only three years later. Her distaste for the exclusive love-affairs among the Apostles was compounded, one suspects, by her general dislike for the male-dominated society of her time; and it was this in turn that gave a sharp edge to some of her comments on Forster.

Now that, through the publication of letters and journals, we can see what Virginia Woolf and E. M. Forster said about each other in private as well as in public, it becomes clear that there were areas of irritation as well as of respect. Forster, off to stay with the Woolfs for the weekend, writes in his commonplace book: '*Visit to Virginia*, prospects of, not wholly pleasurable. I shall watch her curiosity and flattery exhaust themselves in turn. Nor does it do to rally the Pythoness.'[40] Virginia Woolf, equally, writes to Vanessa

of one of his visits, that he was 'limp and damp and milder than the breath of a cow.'[41]

But if they did not always get on as people, they respected one another as writers. Virginia Woolf was first visited by Forster when he had published four novels; apart from Henry James and George Meredith, he was the first novelist that she had met. Her favourite image for him was that of a butterfly: 'I felt as if a butterfly—by preference a pale blue butterfly—had settled on the sofa; if one raised a finger or made a movement the butterfly would be off.'[42] The image was repeated several times. In 1915 she had found him timid and mouse-like, but when he returned from his war-work in Alexandria, she warmed to him more. In her diary of 1919 she wrote: 'I like Forster very much, though I find him whimsical and vagulous to an extent that frightens me with my own clumsiness & definiteness.[43]' To make Virginia Woolf feel clumsy and definite was a rare achievement; two weeks later she wrote: 'To dominate the talk would be odious to him. He subsided in a chair; or strolled about the room, turning over the pages of a book.'[44] One interesting point about that remark is that it corresponds to what people said about Virginia Woolf herself in her Bloomsbury evenings: she would tend not to talk publicly but to speak to her next-door neighbour.[45] And for something of the same reason, she and Forster did not find it easy to communicate at a critical level; their best criticisms of each other tended to take place more impersonally, by way of mutual reviews, supplemented by subsequent letters.

She always greatly respected his judgment. When any of her books appeared she could not feel happy until Forster had pronounced his opinion. On one occasion, commenting on the lack of understanding that greeted her novels, she wrote, 'Nobody, except perhaps Morgan Forster, lays hold of the thing I have done.'[46] She was equally willing to criticize his work searchingly. Reviewing *A Passage to India* she concluded,

> . . . though it is still true that there are ambiguities in important places, moments of imperfect symbolism, a greater accumulation of facts than the imagination is able to deal with, it seems as if the double vision which troubled us in the earlier books was in process of becoming single. The saturation is much more thorough. Mr Forster has almost achieved the great feat of animating this dense, compact body of observation with a spiritual light. The book shows signs of fatigue and disillusionment; but it has chapters of clear and triumphant beauty, and above all makes us wonder, what will he write next?[47]

Such judgments, one may observe, throw less light on Forster's aims as a novelist than on her own. It is she, rather than Forster, who aims at animating a dense, compact body of observation with a spiritual light and who finds herself falling into fatigue and disillusionment when she fails.

Yet in making them she catches an aspect of Forster which has eluded many critics, a feeling for the translucency of certain experiences, particularly when expressed in moments of human radiance. Consider this account of a statue of Hermes in the British Museum:

> . . . that wonderful boy with the broken arm—who I suppose is to be called sugary because he's neo-Attic—stands all the afternoon warm in thick yellowy sunshine. He simply radiates light: I never saw anything like it. Right across the Assyrian transept he throbs like something under the sea. He couldn't have done it in Greece.[48]

Judith Herz, who has drawn attention to this passage, has also commented on Forster's fondness for the god Hermes at other levels—not only as the beautiful young friend and guide but also as the trickster who 'operates outside the fixed bounds of custom and law', the 'hoverer-between-worlds who dwells in a world of his own'. In the short stories she traces him in the guise of the joker who can allow the narrator to think that he is telling a story of his own when in fact the story that is revealing itself is one that he does not understand.[49]

This fondness for making connections in every sphere of life mark him off from Virginia Woolf. He shared with

her the mixture of seriousness and lightness which we have noted, but made certain criticisms of her success in rendering 'life' :

> Life on the page she could give; her characters never seem unreal, however slight or fantastic their lineaments, and they can be trusted to behave appropriately. Life eternal she could seldom give; she could seldom so portray a character that it was remembered afterwards on its own account.[50]

Virginia Woolf had not been able to see the point of this criterion when Forster used it in relation to other novelists. 'Always their failure is some failure in relation to life', she commented, and went on: 'What is this "Life" that keeps on cropping up mysteriously and so complacently in books about fiction? Why is it absent in a pattern and present in a tea party?' She felt that more ought to be said about the art of the novelist; less about 'life'. Forster replied in a letter that he found the Continentals greater than the English 'not because Flaubert got hung up but because Tolstoy etc could vitalise guillotines etc. as well as tea tables, could command certain moods or deeds which our domesticity leads us to shun as false.'[51] One senses the presence of a question between them which they never quite cleared up.

And the difference is more complicated than it might at first look. It would be easy to associate Forster's invocation of 'life' with his high praise for H. G. Wells, whom he compares favourably to Dickens at one point in *Aspects of the Novel*.[52] Virginia Woolf, as we know, was less impressed by Wells. Yet we also find her criticising Forster on the grounds of his fondness for 'the teapot and the pug dog.'[53] 'Life', it seems, was missing from his work too.

One might well argue that the kind of specification which we come to expect in the novels of Wells is not a central feature of Forster's fiction, but is that really what is at issue? I think not. The function of Hermes in Forster's work is not a work of connection in the Tolstoyan sense : it does not connect up the external universe for us. To understand its

nature we need rather to pay attention to his comment on *Howards End* and *Maurice:* 'My defence at any Last Judgement would be "I was trying to connect up and use all the fragments I was born with".[54] This work of connection (as with the 'only connect' of *Howards End*) was a work in the psyche; it was a work which enabled Forster to appreciate the most sensitive and original members of Bloomsbury; and it enabled him equally to range beyond Bloomsbury and to see the points at which it connected with some who might seem to have no obvious links with it. Here we return to Lawrance.

I have written at length elsewhere of the relationship between Forster and Lawrence. There was, I have argued, a common interest in 'paganism', and in the belief that the ancient gods might correspond to unpropitiated elements in the psyche of modern man. Forster could not commit himself to the dark gods in the way that Lawrance did; he remained fascinated but detached. Yet his fascination gave him an insight into Lawrence's purposes which was denied to Virginia Woolf. It may be relevant here that whereas Forster managed to retain a loose relationship with Lawrence for many years she contrived always to avoid him. Her wariness is shown on several occasions. Early in 1918 she and Leonard Woolf negotiated for the lease of the house in which the Lawrences had lived in Zennor and Cornwall, but apparently without concluding the business.[55] Later that summer S. S. Koteliansky tried to persuade her to come and meet him; her reaction, as described to Lady Ottoline Morrell, was: 'I'm in two minds—tempted, but alarmed. I sometimes wonder why the intelligent people are so made that one can't see them without quarrelling—but it seems a law. I'm thinking of the Murry's and Lawrence, not of you and me.'[56] In the event she never met him, but did see him twice. On the first occasion he was swinging a spirit-lamp in a shop at St Ives, on the second he was glimpsed from a train in Italy:

> Looking out of the carriage at Civita Vecchia, whom should we see, sitting side by side on a bench, but D.H. Lawrence and Norman Douglas—unmistakable: Lawrence pierced and penetrated; Douglas hoglike and brindled—They were swept off by a train one way and we went on to Rome.[57]

Her reactions to him as a writer were various. Her main published discussion of Lawrence during his lifetime was in a review of *The Lost Girl* for the *Times Literary Supplement* and there she was forced to criticise him for having been seduced into the world of Arnold Bennett, while praising him for the occasional 'single phrase which we may liken to a glow or a transparency';[58] at the same time more positive comments which she made in letters and her diary showed her to be a perceptive and admiring reader. When she wrote her essay 'Mr Bennett and Mrs Brown' in 1924, she was still thinking of *The Lost Girl* and grouped him with Forster in her attack on the methods of Bennett, Galsworthey and Wells. 'Many (of the young writers)' she argues, '—I am thinking of Mr Forster and Mr Lawrence in particular—spoilt their early work because, instead of throwing away those tools, they tried to use them. They tried to compromise. They tried to combine their own direct sense of the oddity and significance of some character with Mr Galsworthy's knowledge of the Factory Acts, and Mr Bennett's knowledge of the Five Towns.' Nevertheless she grouped Forster and Lawrence firmly with Lytton Strachey, Joyce and Eliot as 'Georgians' and against Wells, Bennett and Galsworthy.[59] In a letter to Dorothy Brett after his death, on the other hand, she claimed never to have read more than half of two of his novels;[60] if so, the review of *The Lost Girl* just mentioned was based only on a partial reading. In an account a little later, however, she admitted to a somewhat wider acquaintance : *The Trespasser*, 'The Prussian Officer', some of the Italian travel sketches and two volumes of his poems. She was then particularly affected by reading *Sons and Lovers*, pointing out how the main scenes often had little to

do with character or story but rather with 'some rapture of physical being.'[61]

The ambivalence of her feelings about Lawrence during his lifetime can neatly be illustrated from her successive reactions to *Women in Love* when she first read (or at least began) it in 1921. As she related to Molly McCarthy, she was first drawn on by the portrait of Lady Ottoline Morrell :

> She has just smashed Lawrence's head open with a ball of lapis lazuli —but then balls are smashed on every other page—cats—cattle—even the fish and the water lilies are at it all day long. There is no suspense or mystery: water is all semen: I get a little bored, and make out the riddles too easily. Only this puzzles me: what does it mean when a woman does eurythmics in front of a herd of Highland cattle?[62]

A few days later, however, she was responding a good deal more positively to the book :

> I am reading *Women in Love*. It is much better than the *Lost Girl* I think, and I wish I had reviewed it in the Times instead of the man who did—for I thought him stupid and unfair. I can't help thinking that there's something wrong with Lawrence, which makes him brood over sex, but he is trying to say something, and he is honest, and therefore he is 100 times better than most of us. (*Letters*, II, 476)

Later in the decade she was still more torn in her attitude. Impatience at his 'philosophy' was now uppermost :

> But his letters are wildly phallic and philosophical; and mad, and I don't see much point in renewing that. All germs are devils which attack us because we lower our selfishness, and women can only live in the imaginations of men, and Ottoline lived once in his, and his so on— what damend but conceited nonsense it all is, but it seems he is dying, and is I suppose a genius and so on. (Ibid., *III*, 508)

After Lawrence's death on the other hand, her attitude changed —particularly toward *Sons and Lovers*. In a letter to Ethel Smyth she blamed Murry 'with his obscene objurgations' for having kept her off him and continued (with a neat metaphor presumably based on her glimpse of him at Civitavecchia) :

> Now I realise with regret that a man of genius wrote in my time and I never read him. Yes, but genius obscured and distorted I think: the fact about contemporaries (I write hand to mouth) is that they're doing the same thing on another railway line: one resents their distracting one, flashing past, the wrong way—something like that: from timidity, partly, one keeps one's eyes on one's own road. (Ibid. *IV*, 315)

In a subsequent article she expanded her praise of *Sons and Lovers*, commenting favourably on the effects of Lawrence's lack of tradition : 'The thought plumps directly into his mind; up spurt the sentences as round, as hard, as direct as water thrown out in all directions by the impact of a stone. One feels that not a single word has been chosen for its beauty, or for its effect upon the architect of the sentence.[63]' She came closest to defining her feeling towards him, perhaps, when she was reading the *Letters* in 1932 :

> I am also reading D.H.L. with the usual sense of frustration: and that he and I have too much in common—the same pressure to be ourselves: so that I don't escape when I read him: am suspended: what I want is to be made free of another world. This Proust does. To me Lawrence is airless, confined: I don't want this, I go on saying. And the repetition of one idea. I don't want that either. I don't want 'a philosophy' in the least: I don't believe in other people's reading of riddles. What I enjoy (in the Letters) is the sudden visualisation: the great ghost springing over the wave (of the spray in Cornwall) but I get no satisfaction from his explanations of what he sees. And then it's harrowing: this panting effort after something: and 'I have £ 6.10 left' and then Government hoofing him out, like a toad: and banning his book: the brutality of civilised society to this panting agonised man: and how futile it was.

She returns to the theme of his systematizing : 'Art is being rid of all preaching; things in themselves: the sentence in itself beautiful: multitudinous seas; daffodils that come before the swallow dares: whereas Lawrence would only say what proved something. I haven't read him of course.'[64] By now the insistence that she has 'not read him' is surprising; it suggests rather a capacity for forgetting Lawrence's work; and this, we might say, sprang from a blind spot in her own nature which could not apprehend and gather up

what Lawrence was doing. Dame Ethel Smyth actually suggested that she was jealous of him: enumerating her faults she claimed that she was 'Absolutely self-absorbed and (no wonder), jealous of literary excellence; (could't see the point of D. H. Lawrence until he was dead) . . .'[65]

Perhaps there was something in this, but it seems more likely that Virginia Woolf's wariness concerning Lawrence was motivated rather by an awareness of elements which she could not include in her own literary vision. She herself is known to have suffered from sexual frigidity—though this of course did not mean that she did not talk or think about sex a great deal. The liberating moment when Lytton Strachey started the sisters off talking about it one evening may be apocryphal but certainly it came to play a considerable part in Bloomsbury conversation.[66] And it was the Hogarth Press, after all, which published Freud's works in the 1920s. Yet in spite of all this discussion Virginia Woolf seems to have remained basically unimpressed by the role of the sexual instinct. Sex was something to be frank about but also to be amused by. Intellectually it was an absorbing topic, but she seems never to have thought of it as entering importantly into her own philosophy of life. She remained, resolutely, bent on cultivating illumination rather than the instinctive and spontaneous. Yet she was linked to Lawrence by her belief that there was a significance to life which could be discovered through the intensity of one's own experience, that moments of illumination might also be 'moments of being'. Bloomsbury sex, while often uninhibited and promiscuous, did not usually rise to that level.

It was perhaps Julian Bell, in the next generation, who came nearest to reconciling the Bloomsbury view of sex and Lawrence's. John Lehmann characterizes his attittude as follows:

> To act from reasonable motives that were clear to oneself and to avoid confused irrational emotions; to treat chastity and the sense of sin in sexual matters as relics of the barbarous dark, as uncivilized as religious superstition or any of the fashionable mumbo-jumbo mysticisms; to be a pacifist because war was futile and absurd as well as painful and

destructive of beauty—all these principles were already inscribed on his banner, which he waved demonstratively in one's face during his first year at King's. And yet he had a passion for nature at its wildest . . . It was the non-rational intuitive side of his temperament that Julian was finding in nature.[17]

Julian Bell's qualities, as described here, remind one irresistibly of Lawrence—the Lawrence who had grown up in a literary world which stressed the virtues of paganism and who had taken such ideas as a guide to his philosophy of life. In the early days of the century, Lawrence had even belonged to a group, the Pagans, in his hometown, who were exploring the new ideas that were coming to the fore all around them. The candour of Eastwood was at once more callow and more abrasive than the candour of Bloomsbury no doubt, but members of both were willing to explore at points where their contemporaries did not care to look.

It is to Forster's credit that he knew this, and would therefore have understood why Lawrence was not an uncompromising opponent of Bloomsbury. Lawrence and Virginia Woolf might not have been able to appreciate one another's achievement to the full, but they were the two English writers of their time who were most aware of the way in which the human consciousness of their contemporaries had been restricted by the culture that surrounded them. Virginia Woolf embodied the more serious element in Bloomsbury with her insistence that art could transfigure life by interpenetrating it with suffusing vision; Lawrence, by contrast believed that that transfiguration could take place only as the consciousnesses of individuals allowed themselves to be moved and unsettled by insurgence of their own instinctual powers. Forster was not willing to follow either of them to a logical conclusion; he had no desire for his novels to be totally transfigured by the light of imagination, since he believed imagination to be a dangerous power as well as a key one; nor would he offer the instinctive as more than a possible key. He went as far as he could towards recon-

ciling the two in his portrayal of the imaginative Rickie and the pagan Stephen in *The Longest Journey*. But he had gone far enough along each road to know what each writer was doing. In honouring both of them he was pointing to the subterranean link between Lawrence and Bloomsbury and also looking back to that brief period of intellectual ferment which they had all known in England at the turn of the century, when various groups, ranging from the Pagans in Eastwood to the Apostles in Cambridge, had been willing to ask about the nature of human life and knowledge with an openness of mind and a sense of discovery that, however transitory, remind one of the times of greatest efflorescence in English culture.

Peterhouse, Cambridge

NOTES

General Note : References to Virginia Woolf's *Diary* are to the edition edited by A. O Bell, 1977—; those to her *Letters* are to that edited by Nigel Nicolson, 1975—. S. P. Rosenbaum's collection *The Bloomsbury Group* (1975), abbreviated as BG below, collects a number of important recollections of Bloomsbury and has been of considerable assistance to me, particularly in the later stages.

[1] *Scrutiny*, XVI, 242-6, reprinted in *The Common Pursuit* (London, 1952), pp 255-60; *D. H. Lawrence: Novelist* (London, 1955) p. 251.

[2] K. W. Gransden, 'E.M. Forster at Eighty', *Encounter*, January 1959, XII, 77 (B. G. 24). For a brief but telling study of the relationship between Forster's style, particularly in his essays, and that of 'Bloomsbury' writers, see P.N. Furbank, 'Forster and "Bloomsbury" Prose', *E. M. Forster: A Human Exploration*, edited by G. K. Das and J. B. Beer (London, 1979) pp. 161-6.

[3] *The Collected Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, edited by Harry T. Moore (London, 1962), I, 328.

[4] J. M. Keynes, *Two Memoirs* (London, 1949), pp. 78-9. Keynes, of course, also acknowledges that there may have been some justification for Lawrence's reaction.

[5] Edward Nehls, *D. H. Lawrence: A Composite Biography* (London, 1957-9) I, 290.

[6] Letter to Lady Ottoline Morrell, 19 April 1915: *The Letters of D. H. Lawrence*, edited by Aldous Huxley (London, 1932), p. 224.

[7] 'Keynes, Lawrence and Cambridge', *The Common Pursuit* (London, 1952), p. 259.

[8] Letter of 19 April 1915, quoted David Garnett, *The Flowers of the Forest* (London, 1955), pp. 53-4 (BG 369).

[9] Bertrand Rassell, *Autobiography* (London, 1967-9) II, pp. 17-18.

[10] Ibid., II, 22.

[11] Quentin Bell, *Bloomsbury* (London, 1968), p. 75. The whole discussion (pp. 70-8) is relevant here.

[12] See *Ottoline at Garsington: Memoirs of Lady Ottoline Morrell, 1915-18*, edited by R. Gathorne-Hardy (London, 1974), p. 75; Lawrence, *Letters* (Moore), I, 536-7; ibid., II, 716.

[13] Accounts of the first post-impressionist exhibition of 1910 by Desmond McCarthy (from *Memories*, 1953, pp. 178-83) and of the second by Leonard Woolf (from *Beginning Again*, 1964, pp. 93-6) may be found in BG 68-73 and 115-17.

[14] *Portraits I* (London, 1931), p. 165 (BG 31).

[15] Leonard Woolf, *Downhill all the Way* (London, 1967) pp. 148-53, etc.

[16] For an extended account of the Apostles during this and the subsequent period, see Peter Allen, *The Cambridge Apostles: the Early Years* (London, 1976).

[17] See Ben Knights, *The Idea of the Clerisy in the Nineteenth Century*, (Cambridge, 1978), for a further account.

[18] Coleridge's position (set out particularly in his *Aids to Reflection* (1825), and its influence are discussed at length in C. R. Sanders, *Coleridge and the Broad Church Movement* (Durham, N. C., 1942).

[19] Leonard Woolf, *Sowing: An Autobiography of the Years 1880-1914* (London, 1960), pp. 132-3.

[20] Russell, *Autobiography*, I, 63.

[21] 'My Mental Development' in *The Philosophy of Bertrand Russell*, edited by P. A. Schilpp (New York, 1963), pp. 10-12. Cited by M. H. Abrams in *Coleridge's Variety*, edited by J. Beer (London, 1975), pp. 112-13.

[22] E. M. Forster, *Collected Short Stories* (London, 1948), p. 178.

[23] Russell, *Autobiograbhy*, I, 70-1.

[24] G. E. Moore, *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge, 1903), sect. 113, p. 188.

[25] Russell, *Autobiography*, I, 74.
[26] From an unpublished MS leaf by Leonard Woolf, quoted BG 122.
[27] Michael Holroyd, *Lytton Strachey: A Critical Biography* (London, 1967), I, 103.
[28] Ibid., p. 123.
[29] Ibid., pp. 452-6.
[30] Ibid., pp. 212-19.
[31] Desmond McCarthy, *Portraits I* (London, 1931), p. 65 (BG 31).
[32] This is shown throughout his autobiographical volumes; see also Noel Annan's review of these in *Political Quarterly* (London, 1970), XLI, 35-41 (Reprinted BG 187-94)
[33] Russell, *Autobiography*, I, 69
[34] Ibid., I, 56. Russell may have known Whitehead earlier, however (ibid. I, 29),
[35] See e. g. David Garnett, 'Forster and Bloomsbury' in *Aspects of E.M. Forster*, edited by G. Stallybrass (London, 1969), p. 33 (BG 166-7) and Roger Fry's comment recorded in Virginia Woolf, *Roger Fry: A Biography* (London. 1940), pp. 240-1.
[36] David Garnett, ibid., 32; Leonard Woolf, *Sowing*, p. 172.
[37] Virginia Woolf, *Letters* III, 555.
[38] See Noel Annan, *Leslie Stephen: His Thought and Character in Relation to His Time* (London, 1951) for a full account.
[39] *Letters* I, 498.
[40] Quoted by H. K. Trivedi, 'Forster and Virginia Woolf: the Critical Friends' in *E. M. Forster: A Human Exploration*' edited by G.K. Das and J. B. Beer (London, 1979), p. 218. Trivedi's article should be consulted for a fuller account of the relationship.
[41] May 1926, *Letters* III, 266.
[42] *Moments of Being*, edited by J. Schulkind (London, 1976) p. 176, quoted H. K. Trivedi, loc. cit., 217. Cf her *Diary* for 1919, I, 291, 295.
[43] *Diary* I, 291.
[44] *Diary* I, 295.
[45] Vanessa Bell records this but also claims that she was less silent after 1907, when she became 'hostess' with Adrian Stephen. See her 'Notes on Bloomsbury', first published in BG 75-84.
[46] To Gerald Brenan, 1925, *Letters* III, 189.
[47] 'The Novels of E. M. Forster', *Atlantic Monthly*, 1927, CXV, 642-8. Reprinted *Collected Essays*, I, 342-51.
[48] P. N. Furbank, *E. M. Forster: A Life* (London, 1977-78) I, 110.
[49] Judith Herz, 'The Narrator as Hermes: a Study of the Early Short Fiction', in *E. M. Forster: A Human Exploration*, edited by G. K. Das and J. B. Beer (London, 1979), pp. 17-27.

[50] 'Virginia Woolf' (The Rede Lecture 1941) In *Two Cheers for Democracy* (London, 1951), p. 258. As examples of characters who did have 'life eternal' he cites Emma, Dorothea Casaubon, and Sophia and Constance in *The Old Wives' Tale.*

[51] *Collected Essays*, II, 51; Quentin Bell, *Virginia Woolf* (London, 1973), II, 134.

[52] *Aspects of the Novel*, Abinger edition, edited by O. Stallybrass (London, 1974), pp. 10-11, 50, 132-3.

[53] *Collected Essays*, II, 54. Quoted Trivedi, loc. cit., 225.

[54] See his letter to Forrest Reid of early 1915, quoted in P. N. Furbank's introduction to *Maurice* (London, 1971), p. viii.

[55] See aboev.

[56] *Letters* II, 264

[57] Ibid., III 361, IV, 166.

[58] *Times Litrerary Supplement*, 2 December 1920; Reprinted *D. H, Lawrence: The Critical Heritage*, edited by R. P. Draper (London, 1970), pp. 141-3.

[59] *Collected Essays*, I, 333; 320.

[60] *Letters* IV, 167.

[61] 'Notes on D. H. Lawrence', *Collected Essays* I, 352.

[62] *Letters* II, 474.

[63] 'Notes on D. H. Lawrance', loc. cit., I, 355.

[64] *A Writer's Diary*, edited by L. Woolf (London, 1953), p. 188.

[65] Bell, *Virginia Woolf*, II, 151-2.

[66] Ibid., I, 124. In the original MS, however. Virginia Woolf suggests that the story is not necessarily true: 'I do not know if I invented it or not' *(Moments of Being*, p. 173*)*.

[67] John Lehmann, *The Whispering Gallery* (London, 1955) p. 142.

Z. A. Usmani

E. M. FORSTER— THE QUEST FOR TRANSCENDENCE

Besides E. M. Forster it is not easy to think of a novelist who, by telling a story in simple prose and in the vein of social comedy, can compel the recognition that the novel, like all art, is an exploration of values. Our novelist does well by showing no disrespect to the realistic tradition, though the hard-boiled realist, who cannot see beyond a mere 'image' of life, would have him follow it blindly. From this tradition Forster has learnt his lesson—the lesson of verisimilitude to life, which is the only lesson that matters for an artist. For in fact art explores values only in their living and lived concreteness. So, as he proceeds on this serious business of exploration, Forster would say to the hard-boiled, perhaps placard-bearing, realist 'Yes—oh dear yes—the novel gives us a sense of life'.

Forster who would see life as a whole is so much weighed down by a crushing sense of its chaotic welter, 'mystery' and 'muddle' that in his case the exploration of values means the quest for transcendence. This quest remains a quest because Forster discovers that no state of transcendence can be absolute or final, for both in point of its genesis and its validity it is conditioned by contingency. Indeed, relativism holds true not only in the intellectual, but also in the moral, the social and the spiritual sphere.

The shift from the cult of the absolute to the cult of the relative would push Forster towards the moderns in spite of his links with the romantics and the Victorian liberals, which are established by his aspirations for transcendence, unitary vision and right reason. But if he is a romantic and a Vic-

torian liberal, he knows what the difficulties of romanticism and Victorian liberalism are, and if he is a modern, he knows what modernism means. He belongs to 'the fag-end of Victorian liberalism', as he himself puts it; but 'the fag-end', it must be recognized, also extends into the modern sensibility. Forster's 'betweenness' which critics have sometimes failed to appreciate, is both his weakness and his strength. It gives him a 'spinsterish inadequacy' for the evocation of experience, particularly of love, in its deeper intensity—from the inside, as it were. But it also gives him his non-sentimental view of a total reality, in all its 'mystery' and 'muddle'. He can turn his 'betweenness' to good account by proceeding on his quest between a symbolic-poetic mode that is reaching out to a transcendental and unitary vision and an ironic-comic mode that is belittling the justification of this vision by bringing in the problems and difficulties of the contingent world. In fact a balance between these two modes should be one of the measures of his success in fiction.

Forster's short stories and novels testify to his persistent and developing concern with transcendence that also implies wholeness of being. It reaches artistic maturity in *A Passage to India*, on which we shall dwell at some length after taking note of the other works in passing.

Most of the short stories are directly or indirectly related to the problems of transcendental wholeness which is the beginning and the end of our journey in time ('On the Other Side of the Hedge'). It is discovered that although people cannot be divided into 'sheep' and 'goats' those who have a vision of transcendental wholeness and those who have not inhabit different worlds and do not understand one another ('The Celestial Omnibus'). The latter, whom modern civilization has cut off from the sources of life and vitality —sometimes symbolized by the terrifying Pan—with which the spirit of a place (*genius loci*) helps the visionary to commune, become the 'garrulus opponents' of the former

('Albergo Empedocle'; 'The Story of a Panic; 'The Road from Colonus'). But the moment of vision is transient; It cannot stay simply because it is succeeded and extinguished by another moment in which both the external and the internal realities undergo a change. After the vision one may revert to spiritual blindness, as Mr Lucas does in 'The Road from Colonus', or as it happens with Micky in 'The Point of It', one's love may be modified into sympathy and sympathy may be modified into compromise. It would have been better if one had died after the moment of vision. Of course the 'eternal remembrance of the vision' can make 'life seem, endurable and good' ('The Eternal Moment'), and Wordsworth (in *The Prelude*) and Eliot (in *Four Quartets*) work out schemes of redemption on the basis of the memory of, and desire for, the lost moment of vision, but memory and desire themselves can fail. There is mystery—which is also muddle —within and without man, which is symbolized by the Siren in 'The Story of the Siren'. The worldly people and the priests, who are in league with them, have banished mystery from their familiar, manageable world, and so the Siren lives in the sea over which they have no control. It is prophesied that the world will be saved by the child that is born of a man and a woman who have seen the Siren.

The novels explore the possibilities of transcendental wholeness in wider and more complex fictional contexts. *A Room with a View* as the title suggests, symbolizes the realization of an inclusive mode of existence. A facile, touristy attitude to life cannot lead to such a realization. For Death sprinkles blood on the Alinari prints of Lucy Honeychurch in the Piazza Signoria in Florence ('the Florence of Dante and Savonarola'), and throws the fainting girl into the arms of young George Emerson, who has offered her 'a room with a view' in exchange for her own in the pension. Death reminds her of life, which holds the possibility of love, ('Death destroys man but the idea of death saves him'). And it is through love that an inclusive mode of existence can be

realized, though the realization of love itself, its distinction from what is not love, is not simple and easy. But first Lucy must realize life in its physical beauty. It gushes upon her consciousness—the violets running down 'in rivulets and streams and cataracts irrigating the hill-side with blue'—as she tumbles again into the arms of George—this time led through a misunderstanding by the coachman Phaeton whose name has an enforced symbolic significance. She is whisked away from Florence by her chaperone, Miss Bartlet; gets engaged to Cecil, who loves her, not as a person, but as a work of art; and joins 'the vast armies of the benighted' who follow neither the head nor the heart by pretending to George that she does not love him and to Cecil that she loves no one. But her sense of contrast between life and anti-life saves her. In contrast to George she associates Cecil with a room without a view; and, ultimately, the scales fall from her eyes when, at a tennis party, she realizes that Cecil is one of those 'chaps who are no good for anything but books'. She breaks off her engagement with Cecil and finds her way out of self-deception to the realization of love. It is what George's father says so frankly: 'Love is of the body not the body but of the body'. Lucy marries George, and while honey-mooning in 'a room with a view in the same pension at Florence discovers that love is also an elemental force, which transcends personal desire.

The life and anti-life theme is again taken up in *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, the former symbolized by Italy which, notwithstanding its crudeness and messiness, remains true to life, and the latter by Swaston which, notwithstanding its shrewdness and wordly wisdom treats human beings as business items. As the novel works out their conflict it discovers certain new dimensions of transcendental wholeness, through the alternation of vision and experience which illuminate one another. The visions which have become more intense, make a plea for transcending parochial and personal concerns, for regarding a human being—even a

baby—as an individual instead of an object, and for realizing the divine incarnated in the human. Thus Philip, who has been sent by his mother, Mrs Herriton, to Italy to rescue Lilia's baby from the influence of its 'savage' father, Gino, has an aesthetic vision of Caroline (who has come for the same purpose on her own initiative), the newly-bathed baby and Gino as 'the Virgin and Child, with Donor'. In his state of passive detachment he does not fight it off with his sister Harriet who steals the baby, and the baby is killed in an accident. As the sense of 'all the mystery, all the persistency of woe' together with a sense of 'the vast apparatus of pride and pity and love' comes upon him he understands the meaning of his aesthetic vision and realizes his own fault. He decides that he and no one else must take the news to Gino. His next vision passes 'through the aesthetic to the existential'.[1] He sees Caroline, who has rescued him from torture and death at the hands of Gino, as a goddess consoling Gino, who clings to her like a child, with her hands 'folded round the sufferer, stroking him lightly, for even a goddess can do no more than that'. 'Quietly without hysterical prayers or banging of drums, he underwent conversion. He was saved'. Later he is able to transcend even his desire for personal happiness when, on the point of proposing to Caroline, he learns from her that she loves, 'crudely' as she puts it, Gino—who is going to marry another woman—and would have given herself to him if he had asked her. This love has saved Caroline. The landmarks in the way of her salvation are: her realization of the beauty of life at the theatre, followed by a vision of Swaston as a 'Joyless, straggling place, full of people who pretended'; her realization of the baby, who has been just a word for her, as 'so much flesh and blood' and a being in his own right; her realization of Gino's passionate love for his son; her turning against the Herriton plan of 'rescuing' the baby; and her own physically passionate love for Gino, who on his part regards her as a goddess.

The Longest Journey and *Howards End*, though they are artistically less successful because of sacrificing verisimilitude to symbolic intentions, explore the possibilities of transcendental wholeness on a larger scale. In *The Longest Journey* Rickie, through a false sense of reality, marries Agnes whose capacity for love has died with Gerald. He fails to combine imaginative values symbolized by Cambridge with life-affirming values symbolized by Wiltshire, Swaston, the symbol of pettiness, snobbery and business-morality, being the negation of both. On a visit to Wiltshire he learns from his aunt that the coarse, pagan youth, Stephen, whom he dislikes, is his half-brother. The influence of Agnes and of the unreal world of Swaston prevents him from owning Stephen and making a wholesome response to life, and sets him on the 'dreariest and longest journey' that Shelley envisaged. The novel deals with his struggle to change the course of this journey. He thinks Stephen is his father's son, and he also hates his father for wronging his mother. But his false values are shattered when his Cambridge friend Ansell in a declamatory speech before the assembled Swaston School reveals that Stephen is his mother's son. Rickie learns to love Stephen and to see him as a man in himself, though he neglects his wife and the conventions: and in company with Stephen, and aided by the *genius loci* of different places in Wiltshire, he has certain visions of transcendental wholeness. In the end he rescues Stephen who has got drunk in violation of his promise and is lying on the railway line but himself gets fatally injured and dies. But Stephen who gets married and is happy with his wife and child and house and farm realizes that Rickie who has died making a heroic struggle 'in agony and loneliness' has 'bequeathed him salvation'. The spirit of redemptive love enkindled by Rickie between himself and his brother is symbolized by the 'rose of flame' of the burning paper boat that 'was still afloat, far through the arch, burning as it would burn for ever'. This vision of transcendental wholeness which unites imagination and affirmation of life in

love remains valid in spite of Rickie's personal tragedy. It is perpetuated in Stephen whose house is the realistic emotional equivalent of the 'rose of flame'.

Since the visionary moments are transient their significance must be assimilated (as Wordsworth and Eliot recognize) to some general and enduring pattern of life. Forster would assimilate it to some realistic symbol. To the house itself in *Howards End*, which is not merely a house but 'a spirit' for which Ruth Wilcox would seek a 'spiritual heir'. She bequeathes it to Margaret Schlegel—who does not know it—for she has discovered a spiritual kinship with her, and dies. The Schlegels, who are impotent in dealing with practical life, stand for humane, liberal culture and the cult of personal relations. The Wilcoxes, who are materialistic, unscrupulous and egotistic, are the people who run the world with their cult of practicality and impersonality and business and wealth. The former symbolize 'inner life' and the latter 'outer life'. They are the top-most and the next to top-most layers of the middle class. Below them and at the extreme verge of gentility is Leonard Bast; he is 'one of the thousands who have lost the life of the body and failed to reach the life of the spirit'—still 'aspiring for culture and never acquiring it genuinely'. But the house also symbolizes England, and the question is : Who must inherit it ?

Margaret who inherits it is one who is able to realize transcendental wholeness by connecting 'outer life' and 'inner life'. She, not unaware of the Wilcoxian obtuseness, appreciates the Wilcoxian grit, loves Henry Wilcox and marries him, overcoming his impersonality with her harmonizing power. The house, which the Wilcoxes, in utter disregard of the dead woman's wish, did not give her comes to her through the marriage, witch-elm and all. In spite of sadness, the house with the bright sun, the thrush and the children playing 'uproariously in heaps of golden straw' induces 'a feeling of completeness' ; here 'one might see

life steadily and see it whole, group in one vision its transitoriness and its eternal youth, connect—connect without bitterness until all men are brothers'. Margaret, who sees 'only the music' in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, goes for wholeness and harmony. Her sister Helen, who sees 'heroes and shipwrecks in the music's flood' makes a heroic bid to unite herself, impersonally, with the absolute—by fighting the Wilcoxes who she thinks are responsible for 'panic and emptiness' and for Leonard Bast's ruin, and by giving herself to Leonard Bast. In the end Margaret gives shelter in Howards End to her and her child with Leonard Bast, who is the future symbolic inheritor of Howards End. The 'goblins' Helen sees in Beethoven incite her to heroic struggle to unite with the absolute. But Margaret, who ultimately turns away from the sordid Basts, would see infinity only in form. She who has seen a negative vision of formless infinity in London—to which even the inside of St. Paul's points—can realize transcendental wholeness only within a limited, controllable sphere, to the exclusion of the impersonal and sordid elements of the luggage civilization, which is nevertheless threatening to encroach upon it with its 'goblin footfalls'.

In *A Passage to India* the quest for transcendental wholeness, which was not very convincingly realized through character and situation in *The Longest Journey* and *Howards End*, becomes a fairly convincing business because character and situation along with *genius loci*, are brought into a dynamic inter-relationship in the context of a vast, incomprehensible universe of impersonal forces, not only of nature and history, but also of infinity. India is a metaphor of this universe which is as much a 'mystery' as a 'muddle'. In the context of the Indian multiverse the Indians, who have adapted themselves to the divisions and confusions of their country, have an attitude of passive comprehensiveness which permits lethargy, emotionalism and mysticism; whereas the Swastonian English, whose 'undeveloped hearts' get

cramped and dried up because of their experience in India in the position of rulers, are rationalistic, haughty and generally distrustful of Indians. However, the novel, as Forster himself admits, 'is not really about politics but about the search of the human race for a more lasting home' ('Three Countries'). It leads us to ultimate issues. In fact the socio-political implications of the plot extend into religio-mystical ones, and even the physical landscape extends into the moral and spiritual landscape. But the 'lasting home' is not an absolute ideal, which makes the Whitmanesque title ironical. It is only a radiant promise infinitely receding into the unknown, and leaving instead a nullifying cave, 'where everything exists, nothing has value', where the Friend is only an illusion—like the other flame that 'rises in the depths of the rock' on striking a match—a mere reflection or echo of the lonely Self. There is 'a curious backwash as though the universe had displaced itself to fill up a tiny void'. And the Forsterian virtues of personal relations, of good will plus culture and intelligence become ineffectual, or at best make only a 'dwarfish' movement towards 'connection'.

The Forsterian virtues fail because personal relations would always have us see reality as a form, whereas reality has a formless dimension too. And the formless or the unknown which lurks within—in the unconscious—and without us can reduce our formal structures of meaning to a nullity ('boum') as the universe contracts and reveals its smallness and horror.

In *A Passage* the affirmation of form is symbolized by the Mosque, the negation of form by the Caves, and the muted and more comprehensive affirmation of reality, which accepts as well as denies form, by the Temple. Thus we have three movements: Mosque, Caves and Temple, which are also associated with the Cold Weather, the Hot Weather and the Rains. Each movement has its own dominant theme, though it is also counter-pointed with the themes of the other

movements (Cf. the structure of *The Longest Journey*).

The cult of form having its basis in personal relations and humane, liberal culture is represented by Aziz and Fielding. In the case of Aziz it is consecrated into a vision of beauty in his experience at the mosque. His religion, Islam—with the ninetynine names of God—and his culture—the poetry of Hafiz and Ghalib and Iqbal with its yearning for the Friend—encourage the realization of this beauty of form in life. But, though a 'secret understanding of the heart' has been established with Mrs Moore, the Marabar reduces his structure to a 'boum' and instead of leading him to a symbolic friendship with the English leads him to his arrest on charge of attempt at rape. He fails because his creed is too simplistic to deal with a complex universe in which form-denying forces writhe like snakes. Fielding too, though he is an atheist, fails in the face of the form-denying echo—forgetting 'the beauty of form among idol temples and lumpy hills' of India—for the echo 'belonged to the universe that he had missed or rejected. And the mosque missed it too. Like himself, those shallow arcades provided but a limited asylum. "There is no God but God" doesn't carry us far through the complexities of matter and spirit . . .' Reality, be it physical, social or spiritual, lies in circles beyond circles, arches beyond arches, stretching out into the unknown. Even the overarching sky which seems to hold the promise of unity extends away infinitely into the unknown and unknowable region 'beyond colour . . . last freed itself from blue' (Cf. the sky under which Maurice and Alec embrace each other in *Maurice*). Mrs Moore intuitively understands it all. To her 'outside the arch there seemed always an arch, beyond the remotest echo a silence'. God, the total reality, is ultimately ineffable. All Things and Nothing—the silence beyond the ninetynine names. And ultimately, Mrs Moore herself is drawn, through the arches, through the echoes, into silence.

The human spirit has been trying to structure meaning.

But the Marabar Caves are 'older than all spirit', 'older than anything in the world', and in their outlines the sun 'may still discern . . . forms that were his before our globe was torn from his bosom'. In league with the hot sun, who has risen on that fatal day belying all promise of glory, they confuse the sense of reality (Cobra? or tree-stump?), nullify values and generate suspicions in the mind. Under their influence Adela, obsessed with the prospect of her loveless marriage with Ronny and the unreality of their relationship, apprehends that Aziz has made an attempt at assaulting her in the Cave. On her accusation Aziz is arrested, and the English administrators join forces to persecute him.

In the preceding novels Forster often fails to evoke experience sufficiently from the inside with the result that, as F. R. Leavis puts it, 'though we are interested and sympathetic, we are hardly worried'[2] about the business of his characters. But the business of Aziz really 'worries' us. It is realized deeply from the inside—perhaps because it is not concerned with love, regarding which Forster behaves with 'spinsterish inadequacy', and certainly because character and situation are inter-related so essentially and so deeply as to take us to the very heart of the experience. Aziz is acquitted in the end; but the Marabar has done its damage, and it leaves him full of bitterness and hatred against Anglo-India, and smouldering with suspicion even against his friend Fielding.

Mrs Moore has an intuitive conviction that Aziz is innocent. But the Marabar has 'undermined her hold' on life, and she cannot fight against his antagonists who pack her off to England. She could not realize the vision of transcendental wholeness she once saw in association with the formal beauty of the mosque when a 'sudden sense of unity . . . passed into the old woman and out'. She 'wanted to be one with the universe. But there was always some little duty to be performed.' The difficulty with her was that she had a developed heart but an undeveloped head,

and the two did not 'connect'. 'And while she was pottering about the Marabar struck its gong'. It reduced all values to a 'boum', and defeated the formalist in her by robbing 'infinity and eternity of their vastness, the only quality that accomodates them to mankind', and revealed 'the horror and the smallness of the universe . . . at the same time'. 'What had spoken to her in that scoured out cavity of the granite' was something 'very old and very small; something which was 'before time . . . before space also', something 'snub-nosed, incapable of generosity—the undying worm itself'.

Yet the cult of form is not entirely invalidated. As Mrs Moore passes Asirgarh on her way to England the Mosque reappears to remind her of her mistake in taking 'the Caves as final', to remind her of the faith in form and personal relations which in spite of their failure to redeem nature and history, are not entirely insignificant for personal salvation. Mrs Moore attains it, and becomes a spirit—'Esmiss Esmoor'. It is as a spirit that she exercises a benign influence on the minds of others, particularly on those of Adela and Aziz. Her memory coupled with the sight of the naked, god-like Pankah-wallah—a Pan figure—restores Adela's sense of reality, makes her withdraw the charge against Aziz and cures her of self-deception and of the terrible echo in her head. It also makes Aziz renounce his claim of damages against Adela. For that moment in the court Adela's head connects with her heart. But she remains a creature of the head; her behaviour rests on 'cold justice and honesty'; she feels no passion of love for those whom she has wronged; and her sacrifice, though it comes 'from her heart, does not include her heart'. It is rightly rejected by the Indians. For truth is not truth unless love goes with it, 'unless the Word that was with God also is God'.

It is predominantly through the Hindu idea of incarnation that the concluding movement, Temple, seeks to comprehend the 'mystery' and the 'muddle' of the universe—the 'mystery' that Fielding ignored and the 'muddle' that Mrs Moore did

not like, and the 'mystery' and the 'muddle' that Aziz could not see as co-existing. The Temple balances the Mosque and the Caves, just as the Rains balance the Cold and the Hot Weather. To it we come after realizing that in view of the vast multiverse the cult of form and personal relations is not enough. For 'nothing can embrace the whole of India'. 'The countryside was too vast to admit of excellence. In vain did each item in it call out: "Come, come". There was not enough god to go round'. Fielding, who forgets the beauty of form 'among idol temples and lumpy hills' of India and rediscovers it in Italian churches, thinks that the 'Mediterranean is the human norm'; beyond it lies 'the monstrous and the extra-ordinary' before which he has failed. He has given up fighting for the cause of Indians against 'the Oppressors of India' and has even 'come into line' with them, to some extent'. Fielding has failed because his creed cannot embrace the formless. The concluding movement seeks to comprehend a total reality which takes form and yet remains formless.

The Hindu idea of incarnation invests all existence with divinity. Islam, in its zeal against idolatory, has rejected the idea of incarnation and divested the universe of divinity, though it has retained the supernatural (see 'The Mosque' in *Abinger Harvest*)[8]; while Christianity has restricted the idea of incarnation to the purely solemn career of Christ. Nothing like the all-embracing Unityism of the Hindu conception which sees God both as All things and Nothing—*neti, neti*—and does not shirk even from 'the inclusion of merriment'—for 'all spirit as well as all matter must participate in salvation'. '"God si love". There is fun in heaven. God can play practical jokes upon Himslf . . . steal His own petticoats when He bathes'. The personal-ethical religions would see His existence only in His presence. But presence and absence, good and evil are 'aspects of my Lord', says Godbole, 'absence implies presence, absence is not non-existence, and we are therefore entitled to repeat: "Come,

come, come. come."' Godbole's cult, though it blurs the outlines of value and may lead either to disinterested God-like action or to passive indifference to moral issues, is more comprehensive because it is personal as well as impersonal, form-affirming as well as form-denying. And Godbole, half-clown, half-philosopher and totally enigmatic to Aziz and Fielding—as enigmatic as 'Ancient Night'—rises above moral and political involvement (or does he cleverly evade it ?) to participate eventually in the ritualistic celebration of cosmic unity on the occasion of the Mau festival of Gokul Ashtami. The participants in the ritual 'love all men, the whole universe, and scraps of their past, tiny splinters of detail' emerge 'for a moment to melt in the universal warmth'. As they are transported into an ecstatic sense of oneness with all things Godbole perceives a vision of transcendental wholeness. Unlike Fielding Godbole aims at 'completness, not reconstruction'. He remembers Mrs Moore—she an Englishwoman and a Christian, he an Indian and a Brahmin, but it makes no difference; he loves her like God Himself; then he remembers a wasp 'seen he forgets where, perhaps on a stone. He loved the wasp equally . . . he was imitating God. And the stone where the wasp clung—could he . . . no, he could not . . .' He cannot be so much impersonal as to include the stone which is something formless for him, having its links with the Marabar Caves.

But the ritual of Gokul Ashtami is accomplishing more than an individual's vision can. It is celebrating the Birth of Infinite Love in the form of Shri Krishna—the 'Universal Lover' who saved the world. With this Birth 'all sorrow was annihilated, not only for Indians, but for foreigners, birds, caves. railways, and the stars; all became joy, all laughter'. At midnight the conch announces to the devotees that the God is born. But they know 'He has also been born centuries ago, nor can He ever be born, because He is the Lord of the Universe, who transcends human processes. He is, was not, is not, was', All Things and Nothing—All forms and All

Attributes (*sakar* and *saguna*) and No-Form and No Attribute *nirakar* and *nirguna*). In the ritual He is worshipped in this or that image; but then any image would signify Him, and all images are ultimately transcended—even a saint, Tukaram, is addressed as 'Thou art my father and mother and everybody'. 'No definite image survived; at the Birth it was questionable whether a silver doll or a mud village, or silk napkin, or an intangible spirit, or a pious resolution, had been born. Perhaps all these things! Perhaps none ! Perhaps all birth is an allegory!' He is born: becomes visible even in this or that living child who 'becomes for a moment the World's desire'; 'bounds hither and thither through the aisles, chance, and the sport of chance, irradiating little mortals with His immortality'; and then He is carried to the tank and thrown away into the water, not in the form of the silver doll but in the form of some substitute symbol that serves the purpose (perhaps all death, too, is an allegory!). All these 'imitations' and 'substitutions' suggest that He is All Things and Nothing. And so, while He is carried to the Tank in a procession 'a wild and beautiful young saint with flowers in her hair can sing the praises of 'God without attributes' and others can join her.

Forster discovers that the ritual is an advance on the vision. It makes a whole community momentarily live trancendental wholeness on the plane of cosmic unity, investing all the participants with a radiant beauty 'in which there [is] nothing personal, for it [causes] them all to resemble one another during the moment of its Indwelling, and only when it [is] withdrawn [do] they revert to individual clods'. Through a collective participation in the incarnation of the 'Universal Lover' it signifies that 'the human spirit had tried by a desperate contortion to ravish the unknown, flinging down science and history in the struggle, yes, beauty itself'.

Of course the cult of form and personal relations is not entirely invalidated. Its protagonists are not entirely unjustified in calling for 'the Friend who never comes yet is not

entirely disproved'. But in their way—as it happens with Aziz and Fielding—contingency throws up barriers of nature and history. 'The earth sends up rocks through which riders must pass single file' and in its hundred voices says: 'No, not yet', and the sky says: 'No, not there'. They are still looking forward, with Rumi, to 'the Caaba of Union', though it has receded farther into the unknown. The Pilgrims may die among 'the thornbushes' of contingency 'before they have seen the Friend'. But it does not mean that their quest should not go on.

Department of English
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] J. B. Beer, *The Achievement of E. M. Forster* (London, 1963), p. 74.

[2] *The Common Pursuit* (London, 1953), p. 264.

[3] Islam, in a deep sense—missed not only by Forster but also by so many of the common Moslems—does see divinity in the universe, and this not because all things are God but because they are Signs (*Ayat*) of God and are related to Him, not in extensity, but in intensity. See Iqbal's *Six Lectures on the Reconstruction of Religious Thought in Islam* (Lahore, 1930).

C. T. Indra

LABOUR IS BLOSSOMING : E. M. FORSTER AND THE PASTORAL FORM

Though critical of Henry James and not unqalified in his appreciation of Virginia Woolf Forster is often associated with the modernist movement in fiction. We may, therefore, be a little surprised when we discover in him a life-long preoccupation with such traditional oppositions as Country vs City, Nature vs Nurture, Idyllic living vs the sophistication of modern civilisation. A close reading of the novels from *Where Angels Fear to Tread* down to *Howards End* testifies to this and even a cursory reading of short stories like 'Pan' confirms that this preoccupation could not have been a fanciful addiction or an isolated phenomenon. It is the aim of this paper to establish from a study of three of Forster's novels—*A Room with a View, Where Angels Fear to Tread* and *Howards End*—that not only has he used the formal elements of the pastoral in his novels but has also fused them together communicating an essentially modern sensibility.

Most scholars would agree that a movement from complexity to simplicity constitutes the heart of the pastoral. Such a movement implies an oblique criticism of what is abandoned. The two poles round which the pastoral revolves are the concept of the Golden Age or Arcadia and the fallen world of various denominations, pagan as well as Christian. Kermode has envisaged the conflict in terms of the polarities of Nature and Art. William Empson has shown with all his ingenuity how there is the pastoral element even in proletarian literature.

The pastoral has always been suspect to the sophisticated imagination as escapist since we associate it more with the

'Arcadian' tradition of a non-existent Golden Age than with the bucolic which implies a moral framework. As John W. Loofbourow points out, 'Bucolic pastoral, by contrast, with its origin in agricultural precepts (deriving from Virgil's *Georgics*) is primarily concerned with man's relation to nature, with the order of "natural" processes which man can cultivate and with the communal order which is man's own Bucolic "nature" and which enables him to achieve a reciprocity with the "natural" context in which he lives.'[3] The task of projecting a pastoral ideal has become more difficult since the nineteenth century, for the modern artist who has no common myth to exploit.

It is, however, surprising to note that far from being reduced to the status of a fossil in the tradition of literary forms, the pastoral has found eloquent exponents in George Eliot and Thomas Hardy. But even the best renderings of the pastoral have implied a certain inescapable limitation. The *contrast* between town and country is central to the convention and when that ceases to matter, the bottom is knocked out of the art. 'The impulse to pastoral, as Marinelli well observes, 'universal as it is, must inevitably suggest the desire of the weary soul to escape, but the escape, it will become clear, is only temporary and only a prelude to a return'. Marinelli clinches the argument saying, 'If we have no continuing city, still less do we have a continuing garden'.[4]

Curiously enough it is here that Forster seems to be giving a fresh dimension to the pastoral in order to achieve a range of suggestions which is far beyond the traditional claims. He aims, in short, at a coalescing of 'the city' and 'the garden'. This preoccupation with 'connecting' is evident even in his essays like 'What I Believe'.[5] For example, in this confessional essay, after affirming his faith in Love (as far as human relationships are concerned), Forster concludes : 'The above are the reflections of an individualist and a liberal who has found liberalism crumbling beneath him and at first felt ashamed. Then looking around he decided there was no

special reason for shame since other people, whatever they feel, were equally insecure'.[6] We read Forster's writings not without a sense of uneasiness. He does not have the satirist's overt prickly thorns.[7] One would even be put off by the easy, chatty, worldly-wise manner of his and conclude that he has neither the zeal of a reformist nor the apocalyptic blaze of a D. H. Lawrence.[8]

What is the elusive goal that Forster is trying to reach ? Is it a mystery or a muddle ?

Lionel Trilling, long ago in his monograph on Forster, chose to call this attitude an 'unremitting concern with *moral realism* which is not the awareness of morality itself but the contradictions, paradoxes and dangers of living the moral life.' Quoting Forster himself, Trilling concludes that it is 'not the knowledge of good and evil but the knowledge of good-and-evil'.[9]

Here is a humane attitude which has nothing naive about it. It has the 'invulnerability' of 'Irony' as I. A. Richards would describe it. It includes Mercutio in its wit.[10] It would rather 'interpose' than 'impose' as Forster himself would say. Thus Forster's commitment to Liberalism would not prevent him from playing it often as a game only to mock at it.

John Beer, taking up a more idealist and transcendental stance than Trilling, placed Forster in the central romantic tradition of Europe. He put him in 'the visionary company' of Blake, Coleridge, Shelley, of Beethoven and Wagner. For, Beer points out, Forster 'shares their aspirations and their struggles counterpoising them with his grasp of human affairs'.[11]

Forster's enlightened liberalism had thus a mystical visionary aspect too which we may regard as hopelessly muddled coming from a man who constantly warned people of the danger of muddle. Here is where, I feel, an analysis of the form of most of the novels gives us a clue.

Radical cultural encounters have been Forster's speciality. In *A Room with a View* and *Where Angels Fear to Tread*[12]

we find a confrontation of English society and its middle class morality and etiquette with Italy and its infectious, breezy, vivacious, charmingly loose standards. In *Howards End* it is the efficient practical Anglo-Saxon mind and its dubious strength pitched against the intellectual, speculative and transcendental German spirit. Of course we have the classic instance of the East-West encounter in *A Passage to India*.[18] This fascination with the clash of cultures (sometimes subculture against the main culture) reminds us of Henry James who was a master in depicting the phenomenon. While James's approach is cerebral, D. H. Lawrence's way is through the solar plexus. Forster stands in between, musing over the problem of 'how to connect'.

We could trace the development of this rainbow bridge from *A Room with a View* to *Howards End*. In *A Room with a View* and *Where Angels Fear to Tread* Forster pitches Italy against England and the former evidently triumphs over the latter and yet one feels uneasy that the problems remain in spite of the telling lessons learnt. In *Howards End* Germany collides with England and curiously enough England has the last word which is not a mere rhetorical gesture of bravado.

A Room with a View affirms Forster's faith in the Lawrentian ideal of personal relationships, in choosing sincerity and flying in the face of propriety. We see the case of Lucy Honeychurch as a young girl, exposed to the air of Florence. The zealous protection that her chaperon Charlotte gives her is torn in no time by the irresistible vitality of Italian life. It is here that she meets George Emerson and his father who is an eloquent spokesman for free, spontaneous relationships. On her return from Italy she is once again shielded by the morality and security of home which precludes a free view. But with that morality and security goes lack of vitality and anemia. The heroine perceives soon that it is not only not enough but it is positively revolting. At the end of the novel, she affirms her faith in the sanctity of the heart.

But the novel, with all the comedy and satire remains

rather too lyrical, idyllic to be exact. George and Lucy in Italy are typical pastoral figures, twice, even thrice, removed from reality. The rumblings of evil (in the form of Beebe, Cecil and others) are heard. But they roll innocuous over the heads of the hero and the heroine whose fleece is nevertheless kept dry, to borrow happy phrases from Charles Lamb. Credibility is won through convention (of Jack having Jill at the end), rather than through an accommodation of the pressures of reality. George and Lucy are passive mostly. In this respect this novel belongs to the traditional Arcadia.

Where Angels Fear to Tread is much more complex and crisp. The grasp of reality is far more convincing. In fact, given its framework, the novel is a sure success. In no uncertain terms Forster juxtaposes Sawston, the ugly English society with its repressive morality, comfortable religious scruples, its militant suppression of life-instincts—all this personified by Mrs Herriton and her daughter Harriet —with the Italian city of Monteriano. It is, however, no more a simple naive antithesis. Monteriano is presented in all its beauty and coarseness. Its cruelty, lethargy and vulgarity cannot be evaded while experiencing its charm, mystery and irresstibility. Gino, the idle and warmblooded Italian is its incarnation. In between these poles we find Lilia, a young widow going through a tragic education. She is swept off by her instinctive vivacity, and attracted by the similar force in Gino and his Monteriano. She achieves a sort of freedom from her domineering mother-in-law Mrs Herriton and the middle-class priggishness that Sawston embodies. But Lilia is too ill-equipped to stand the tide that her marriage with Gino releases. She dies in childbirth. Apart from the pathetic figure of Lilia we find two very interesting people troubled by the conflicting forces. One is Philip Herriton, Lilia's brother-in-law, who comes to Monteriano with the avowed aim of rescuing poor Lilia from the perils of a licentious, though aesthetically-oriented society.

But he undergoes an experience which violently disturbs his surface self. It jolts him out of his complacency and compels him to recognize the inadequacy of the values his society upholds. Philip's interaction with Gino is not without its rude shocks but it is an eye-opener. Philip wins the battle paradoxically because he loses it.

It may be mentioned that Gino is not at all idealized, for all his genuine attachment for the child after Lilia's death. In fact, he is seen at the end of the novel as the same old exuberant self that he was—he is to marry some one else soon.

The other person who is caught up in this drama is Caroline Abbott who is also from Sawston but who is sensitive, open to experience like Lilia without any of latter's vulnerability. Caroline goes to Italy as an escort for Lilia only to find herself miserably failing in her duty and returns to England, a much puzzled and disturbed person. But after sometime, when she hears of the motherless child of Lilia ('the lital cousin' of Irma Herriton at Sawston!), her moral sense compels her to make another trip to Italy in the hope of retrieving the child from an apparently degenerating environment. But it is Caroline who responds fully to the central experience of the novel—the relationships between Gino and the child which affirms the supremacy of the instinctual bond which no force can tamper with. The most exalting of the pastoral moods is evoked here in the novel when Gino and Caroline give a bath to the baby in a touching domestic scene. Caroline has her education so fully that at the end we find her lost in love for Gino though he is hardly aware of it.

The kidnapping of the child by Harrist and the subsequent death of the child in the accident in the valley of violets are a jarring antithesis to the scene of supreme domestic felicity. Forster balances with great care sentiment with genuine tragic effect. At the end of the novel both Phllip and Caroline have had their epiphanies which have ennobled them. They have

stepped out of the suburbia to peep into the garden though the garden is not without its snares. Thus the novel to a great extent bridges the gap and makes the pressures of reality alive.

It is, however, in *Howards End* that Forster manages not only to assert the ideal but make the novel earn credibility for itself.

Written as it was before the Second World War and before the tremendous political and social changes that usherd in the Technological Age, *Howards End* is truly prophetic. It is a permanently relevant work as an exploration of human interactions at the personal as well as the social level. It is a great novel because Forster here is not considering abstract issues on an absolute plane but presents them so that they are tested, felt and realized in the lives of a few people.

Forster juxtaposes, in apparently simple contrast, the Wilcoxes against the Schlegels. The Schlegels are partly German. Again there is the professed contrast between the comfortable, smug upper middle class (the Wilcoxes and the Schlegels representing it) and the working class (represented by the clerk Leonard Bast).[14] But Foster is too subtle to allow the obvious antagonistic pattern to remain so and to concede to naive idealism. Hence we find that the first Mrs Wilcox hardly shares anything with her family and she feals an instinctive identity with Margaret Schlegel. In the other camp, similarly, the sisters are typical Schlegels but not so their brother Tibby who has more of the Wilcox trait in him.

Like an expert chess player Forster moves the figures across on the chequered board. Forster has often been identified with the Schlegel ideals and such an identification is true to a great extent. But the Schlegels are presented objectively with no sentimentality though with great warmth. The inadequacies of their idealism, untested by the hard, harsh realities of life, is one of the chief interests of the novel. Witness, for example, their discussion of social issues. Even the case of Bast is, to begin with, a matter for an

academic debate which is a kind of superior amusement for all its seriousness of purpose. The test lies in undertaking to promote the aspirations of Bast and give him 'culture'. The sisters realize that such programmatic courses do not succeed all that easily.[15] But Forster would not like us to abandon the idea because it is not easily 'realized'.

An ironic parallel can be seen emerging: Margaret's holy text—it is Forster's too—is 'only connect'—connect the prose and the poetry, the monk and the beast, the seen and the Unseen. But Len Bast is firm that he should never attempt to connect the squalor of his daily life and the 'Romance' which is represented for him by the Schlegels, the books that he reads and the concerts that he attends. In some way he seems to have the shrewd common sense which the Schlegels, particularly Helen, deplorably lack. Both Margaret and Bast, however, for all their disillusionment, don't become cynical but develop a surprisingly new tenderness. Margaret is determined to love Henry Wilcox at all costs. So with Bast: after the affair with Helen, he learns to look at his wife, the shoddy Mrs Bast, with a new tenderness and identity. After all he is no better than her in spite of his craze for culture.

Forster's art and perception are seen in profound operation here. Helen, with her impulsiveness, plunges into a blitz-like swift course of action to retrieve the Basts. But her passion is suicidal and injurious to Bast himself. For with her passion goes the attendant danger. Margaret, on the other hand, is not the less serious but can look at the whole issue with greater gravity, self-possession and far-sightedness. Hence her actions and moves, instead of precipitating a crisis, uprooting pose and dissipating energy, are more constructive.

But she too has to learn from Henry (and the Wilcoxes), not so much from what Henry is as from what-he-is-and-what-he-is-not-and-what-he-can-be. Henry won't have anything to do with the muddle that the life of emotion is.

He would look at everything—even personal problems—just point by point as if he were working in a committee. Thus Margaret would appear to him to be hopelessly muddled because she would like to see life steadily and as a whole. Given her flexibility and anxiety to widen her awareness, she would acknowlege to Helen with genuine appreciation that it is men like the Wilcoxes who build the Empire and enable people like her to sit smugly and indulge in intellectual pursuits. She would no more be complacent or critical.

The one riddle that has puzzled the readers of the novel is this: Does Henry Wilcox deserve all this richness of response, all this self-giving? What could Margaret have possibly found in him to think of accepting his proposal of marriage? It can't be mere fascination for the opposite sex—love is the ruling passion in Arcadia—nor romance entertained rather late in life. (Margaret is well past prime—one of the Wilocox children refers to her as 'that toothy woman'.) She is too dignified for such trivial motivations. Forster is making his protagonist strive for—grope, flounder and yet strive for—an inclusive awareness, a response to life rooted in the centrality of perception, profound in its ramifications. It is to be a creative harmonizing response. Indeed it includes the best of the Bloomsbury ideal which Forster shared with the members of the group. As J. K. Johnston points out, the Bloomsbury idealists did not believe that 'a few first principles were sufficient basis for a rational system: rationalism and sensibility, reason and intuition, must go hand in hand, for there were always fresh discoveries to be made'.[16] Thus Margaret learns the value of inclusive love through disillusionment and doubt. She perhaps combines Forster's ideal of the union of the hero and the civilised man.

It is evident that Margaret is a successor to the first Mrs Wilcox and Howards End in ways unforeseen even by Mrs Wilcox when she leaves the house to Margaret in her will. But a closer reading of the novel reveals something

subtler in the relationship which throws light on the whole form of the novel.

Mrs Wilcox with her love of the country, the earth, the hay and the ancestral home with its wych-elm and pig's teeth, symbolizes that life which is rooted, organic, stable, poised and creative. But her awareness is something instinctive and not begotten by labour. Margaret, on the other hand, rootless, driven out of her London home, Wickham Place, forced to find a new house, has a knowledge of life which is conceptual and theoretical. What Forster does is to create a rainbow bridge between the subconscious-instinctual-mystical on the one hand and the conscious-intellectual on the other. Margaret's education leads her towards that direction.

It is in this sense that the novel could be seen as a *modern pastoral*, if we could redefine the term 'pastoral.'

The pastoral has always been an antithesis to civilisation and sophistication. But the pastoral has become a worn-out convention, symbolizing, more often than not, the sentimental, the escapist, the nostalgic, the ivory tower and moonshine. The pastoral has been in literature, invariably, a world where it is all blossoming and no labour. Forster seems to be dangerously near yielding to its seductive appeal when with obvious warmth he dwells on the beauty, the serenity and the simplicity of the country. He looks at the metropolis with alarm, calling its shapelessness 'a caricature of the Infinite.'

But it may be noted that Forster does not fully indentify the house Howards End with the countryside (which was fast vanishing even in his time). Again it is not for nothing that he makes Margaret succeed Mrs Wilcox and come to inhabit Howards End. Margaret is to give a new meaning and dimension to life in Howards End, coming as she does from her London background. (Incidentally, her London home is described as backwater shielded from the bustle and sordidness of the city life by a huge, multistoried flat!) And

there is Helen and her child too to reinforce the meaning. Margaret carries with herself a complex attitude and a longing for a life rooted in fully realized personal relationship, a life which would be a nucleus radiating love and self-giving. With the Wilcoxes, it is all labour and no blossoming, which is just as odious as all blossoming and no labour (of the conventional pastoral)! Forster seems to me to be projecting a Yeatsian ideal, through Margaret living in Howards End, of a labour which would be blossoming. This pastoral ideal will have the flexibility of the willow with all its toughness and endurance. It will be a precious, delicate poise and would answer to the varied calls of life. It certainly does not mean that at the end Margaret has solved all the problems. Nor does it claim that Henry has learnt to connect. No, not at all! The city *is* closing in on the suburb and Henry still has learnt only to see and that too inadequately. But Margaret is now firmly rooted and can face life's 'mere complexities.'

Lionel Trilling declared that '*Howards End* is a novel about England's fate' and concluded that it asks the question 'Who shall inherit England'?[17] That indeed is only one half of the question. The other half would be something like this: what kind of England should one inherit? Extending the question further, one may ask: what kind of world shall mankind inherit? Thus Howards End, the house Margaret comes to live in, is a paradigm of human relationship at all levels, verily a modernist Arcadia.

Department of English
University of Madras
Madras

NOTES

[1] *English Pastoral Poetry from the Beginnings to Marvell*, edited by Frank Kermode (London, 1952).

[2] William Empson, *Some Versions of Pastoral*, third impression (London, 1968).

[3] John W. Loofbaurow, 'Realism in the Anglo-American Novel : The Pastoral Myth,' in *The Theory of the Novel: New Essays*, edited by John Halperin: (New York, 1974), p. 262.

[4] Peter V. Marinelli, *Pastoral*, The Critical Idiom series (London, 1971), p. 15.

[5] *Two Cheers for Democracy* (London. 1951).

[6] Ibid, p. 85.

[7] George Orwell would be a fine foil to Forster in this.

[8] It is well known that D. H. Lawrence was dissatisfied with Forster's treatment of the issues in *Howards End*.

[9] Lionel Trilling, *E. M. Forster: A Study* (London, 1969), pp. 12-13.

[10] See R. P. Warren, 'Pure and Impure Poetry,' in *Critiques and Essays in Criticism: 1920-1948*, edited by R. S. Stallman (1949).

[11] John Beer, *The Achievement of E. M. Forster* (London, 1962), pp. 14-15.

[12] Though *A Room with a View* was published later than *Where Angels Fear to Tread*, Forster scholars tell us that the draft of it was written much earlier. And we have internal evidence to show that Forster's art is far more mature in *Where Angels Fear to Tread* than in *A Room with a View*.

[13] *A Passage to India* and *The Longest Journey* are not taken into consideration in this paper.

[14] William Empson would call it the proletarian element in the pastoral.

[15] Compare Forster's remark in *Two Cheers for Democracy*, p. 57: 'I have lost all faith in positive millitant ideals . . . Phrases like 'I'll purge this nation', 'I will clean up this city,' terrify and disgust me. They might not have mattered when the world was emptier; they are horrifying now, when one nation is mixed up with another, when one city can't be organically separated from its neighbours'.

[16] J. K. Johnston, *The Bloomsbury Group* (London, 1954), p. 38. The book contains one of the most rewarding discussions of Forster's values.

[17] *E. M. Forster*, p. 102.

A. A. Ansari

HOWARDS END: THE PATTERN OF ANTINOMIES

Howards End is built round a major antithesis—the contrast between the Wilcoxes and the Schelegels, and this contrast is sustained throughout the novel till the former are vanquished towards the very end. The Schelegels, having lived through the process of naturalization, have ceased to be pure Germans and now belong as much to England as the Wilcoxes who are English to their very backbone. What distinguishes the Wilcoxes, Henry as well as his two sons, Charles and Paul, is their complete absorption into things of the body rather than of spirit, their purely commercial interests and commitments, and their dedication to the ideal of making money breed more money. Like business executives they are shallow, egoistic and ruthlessly practical, and success is their watchword and objective in life. They are moved by their acquisitive urges and their personalities are cast into an almost identical mould. Latent in them is a vein of coarseness whereas the Schelegels are custodians of humane liberal culture and look at things in the light of their inward vision and feeling for music. For Forster the principle of polarity operates equally among individuals, social groups and traditions, and he is engaged in focusing upon the two opposed modes of life which may be designated as Wilcoxism and Schelegelism. The former is brought out in making and controlling of things, in obtaining power and wealth and is above all a symbol of energy and assertiveness; Schelegelism, on the contrary, is exhibited in making contact with art and nature, in contemplation of the

absolute and is symbolized by consciousness. The two Schelegel sisters, Helen and Margaret, though sharing alike the overriding concerns of their family, are yet highly differentiated. Helen is imaginative, potentially heroic and impulsive in the sense of pursuing certain goals without bothering about the consequences of such a pursuit. Having lived with the Wilcoxes, though only briefly, she

> had liked being told that her notions of life were sheltered or academic, that Equality was nonsense, Votes for Women nonsense Socialism nonsense, Art and Literature, except when conducive to strengthening the character, nonsense. One by one the Schelegel fetiches had been overthrown, and, though professing to defend them, she had rejoiced (p. 24)[1].

Helen, attracted by Paul's masculinity and falling in love with him impetuously, had allowed herself to be dominated by the Wilcoxian cliches and did not mind her peculiar fads being pooh-poohed. The novel does in a way project the juxtaposition of the effrontry of commercialism represented by the Wilcoxes and culture and sophistication as embodied in the Schelegels.

Ruth Wilcox—ambiguous and shadowy as she is—looks like an exception, and in her supreme unconcern for the loves and betrayals of other members of her family, seems to stand apart with her indefinable wisdom and her enigmatic gaze turned towards her immediate environment. We get an early glimpse of her thus:

> She approached just as Helen's letter had described her, trailing noiselessly over the lawn, and there was actually a wisp of hay in her hands. She seemed to belong not to the young people and their motor, but to the house, and to the tree that overshadowed it (p. 22).

She shares with the Wilcoxes their lack of interest in ideas and in the context of the luncheon-party the merely amateurish is pitted against her shy aestheticism thus:

> Her tastes were simple, her knowledge of culture slight, and she was not interested in the New English Art Club, nor in the dividing-line between Journalism and Literature, which was started as a conversational hare . . . Clever talk alarmed her, and withered her delicate imaginings; it

was the social counterpart of a motor-car, all jerks, and she was a wisp of hay, a flower. Twice she deplored the weather, twice criticised the train service on the Great Northern Railway (p. 74).

She finds in Margaret a kindred spirit and is drawn towards her as if by a kind of magnetic attraction. She has an uncanny perception of the role Margaret is to play in effecting a *rapprochement* between the Wilcoxes and the Schelegels. She extends her an invitation to visit Howards End and finally bequeathes it to her and this explodes on the lawful inheritors as a bombshell:

Has the soul offspring? A wych-elm tree, a vine, a wisp of hay with dew on it—can passion for such things be transmitted where there is no bond of blood? No; the Wilcoxes are not to be blamed. The problem is too terrific, and they could not perceive a problem (p. 99).

Both the Wilcoxes and the Schelegels belong to the upper strata of society with this difference that whereas the former are the architects of their own islands of money the latter continue to prosper on their inherited fortune. Their preoccupations, partialities and commitments set them apart as two distinct entities. Helen and Margaret are engrossed by the music of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony in the Queen's Concert Hall and their response to it reflects their appetite for culture. They are fond of Meredith and Ruskin and in the private debating forum they tend to examine, with all the academic heat and exuberance at their command, how best the poverty and squalor of the lower middle classes may be eradicated. 'When your Socialism comes, it may be different . . . Till it comes give people cash, for it is the warp of civilization, whatever the woof may be' (p. 127). They are both exponents of charity to be doled out to the poor and the destitute. The relation of culture and money as well as the ethics of work are subsidiary though intriguing problems in the novel. It is however worthwhile stressing that the music Helen listens to in the Hall is not an exhilarating experience in itself alone, for it evokes a terrifying sonic phantasmagoria in which the image of the goblins goes beyond itself.

> The goblins really had been there. They might return—and they did. It was as if the splendour of life might boil over and waste to steam and froth. In its dissolution one heard the terrible, ominous note, and a goblin, with increased malignity walked quietly over the universe from end to end. Panic and emptiness! Panic and emptiness! Even the flaming ramparts of the world might fall (p. 34).

This ominous refrain reflects the vision of chaos, futility and muddledness and sets up reverberations of the same kind as the word 'Baum' does in *A Passage to India*. It not only mirrors the traumatic experience of Helen with Paul but also threatens the Wilcoxian fortress of security with imminent collapse.

The Wilcoxes are attracted more by the chance of improving their material prospects and extending their house-building activity in the suburbs of London. Their business is flourishing, their economic schemes are forming new tentacles and they are being firmly entrenched in the soil. It would be a fair summing up to maintain that whereas the Schelegels are devotees of the inner life which is irradiated by moments of self-transcendence, charity and human understanding, with the Wilcoxes it is the breezy, practical, outer life of 'telegrams and anger,' and of cramping submission to conventions that counts most. And Margaret's chief function in the novel is te bring about consonance of both these forms and levels of existence.

> 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. There love means marriage settlements, death, death duties. So far I'm clear. But here my difficulty. This outer life, though obviously horrid, often seems the real one—there s grit in it. It does breed character (p. 27).

Helen and Margaret lived and breathed though in a 'politico-economical-aesthetic' atmosphere in which the life of the spirit, with its focus on the scrupulous integrity of vision, held the greatest credibility.

Leonard Bast, living on 'the extreme verge of gentility' and imbued with an aspiration for culture, is smuggled into the action of the novel like a goblin footfall, quite unobtrusively. He is 'one of the thousands who have lost the life of the body and failed to reach the life of the spirit.' He does not care so much for money as for culture and is lured by the marsh-lights of the unseen and the infinite, and this inspite of his conspicuous sordidness. Both Helen and Margaret are drawn to him because of discovering a grain of honesty in him, his adventurousness and because he is prepared to take risks for improving his position. He has been ruined by uncritically accepting Henry's advice conveyed to him by the Schelegel sisters and now his case is taken up very ardently by Helen. He is not only to be rehabilitated economically but pushed up the social and cultural ladder. He 'did believe in effort and in a steady preparation for the change that he desired. But of a heritage that may expand gradually, he had no conception: he hoped to come to Culture suddenly, much as the Revivalist hopes to come to Jesus' (pp. 50-51). And yet the problem as to how best people like Leonard may be accommodated in the machinery of daily living already disorganised by the inequality of income is the crux of the matter which is discussed at the meetings of the Forum. Helen, in particular, champions the cause of the Basts, for she is actuated by the abstract ideas of Justice and Truth and wishes all unconsciously to turn the squalor of Leonard's life into the dimensions of a tragedy. Tibby, the typical Oxford intellectual, who cares for books, pictures and music and seems to combine in himself the good and bad points of both modes of living—the inner and the outer—and tends to luxuriate in philosophic speculation, keeps himself, unlike the two sisters, out of the fray. He seems to have 'an undeveloped heart' and this is pretty damning for a Forsterian character.

The incident of the removal of Leonard's umbrella mistakenly by Helen becomes the barest excuse of their coming

into contact with each other, and Helen, moved by instinctive sympathy, tries her level best to promote his interests and lift him out of the abyss of poverty and insecurity. Another probable cause may be that she wishes to transfer her attraction for masculinity from Paul to Bast. She exerts herself to the fullest to educate him in the graces of living and the pre-requisites of culture. But culture can hardly be acquired and fully assimilated into the fabric of one's being unless it rests upon a sound economic base:

> She admitted that an overworked clerk may save his soul in the super-terrestrial sense, where the effort will be taken for the deed, but she denied that he will ever explore the spiritual resources of this world, will ever know the rarer joys of the body, or attain to clear and passionate intercourse with his fellows (p. 128).

For this Henry's help is sought and he is supposed to have a firm hold on things and possess the necessary expertise:

> As the lost umbrella had spoilt the concert at Queen's Hall, so the lost situation was obscuring the diviner harmonies now. Death, Life, and Materialism were fine words, but would Mr Wilcox take him on as a clerk? Talk as one would, Mr Wilcox was king of this world, the superman, with his own morality, whose head remainad in the clouds (p. 239).

Henry Wilcox, the bully and the righteous blunderer, with obtuseness as his besetting sin, is parodied here in his capacity as the presiding genius of the business world. He is looked upon as the Messiah but ironically enough it is he who advises Leonard to give up his job in the bank without securing an alternative one elsewhere because the bank he is employed in at the moment is about to sink. This wrong piece of advice communicated to Leonard through both Helen and Margaret results in his being shipwrecked. At long last he is abandoned both by Henry and Margaret and it is Helen alone who keeps her hand over the ropes of his life. What makes things degenerate further is the disclosure of Henry's nasty clandestine affair with Mrs Bast who was harboured as a mistress by him for quite some time. This

deeply shocking revelation brings for Leonard another spot on a love whose surface was already considerably stained. It also leads to Margaret's alienation of sympathies for Leonard and to the eruption of the temporary emotional breakdown between Henry and Margaret. Helen, however, continues to champion the cause of Leonard with persistent devotion and tenderness though she fails to enlist Henry's sympathies in his behalf. Later, perhaps under the stimulus of an unconscious impulse of vengeance against Paul, she lets herself be seduced by Leonard and they copulate in the inn when they meet together to attend Evie's wedding party. Helen's pregnancy with Leonard and the fortuitous killing of him by Charles Wilcox come upon the reader with such precipitance and seem to be so insufficiently motivated as to leave one simply puzzled and horrified. They however yield some iota of meaning on the symbolic level though it must be admitted that there is no firm line of congruence between the literal and the symbolic planes. In fact the latter seems to be superimposed upon the former and does not seek relevance from the logic of dramatic enactment in the novel. The birth of the child—the product of the sexual union of Leonard and Helen—prefigures the emergence of the fertility *motif* towards the end, for the child is the most effective symbol of that innocence which may cement the sundered relations among the adults. Leonard dies partly of heart trouble and partly by the falling of the bookcase on him or symbolically he is done violence to by the incubus of the same culture he had been hankering after for so long. Or it may suggest the annihilation of the primitive (Leonard) by the boorish and the heartless (Charles).

Some point of intersection between Wilcoxism and Schelegelism has to be discoved and the process of adjustment initiated. Tibby is a fair representative of the inadequacies of both whereas Margaret is destined to play the role of the harmonizer. On one who is to bring about the reconciliation of the opposites Forster makes a very telling

comment thus :

> To Margaret this life was to remain a real force. She could not despise it, as Helen and Tibby affected to do. It fostered such virtues as neatness, decision, and obedience, virtues of the second rank, no doubt, but they formed our civilization. They form character too; Margaret could not doubt it; they keep the soul from being sloppy. How dare Schelegels despise Wilcoxes, when it takes all sorts to make a world? (pp. 103—104).

But at the same time it needs to be stressed that these virtues may acquire an exclusive and paramount importance and may lead to some kind of extremism and imbalance. And for this ant-like energy of the Wilcoxes, their single-minded pursuit of naked power which successful commercialism brings in its wake and for the inhuman rigidity that this grittiness of character engenders the most objective correlate is London:

> Certainly London fascinates. One visualizes it as a tract of quivering grey, intelligent without purpose, and excitable without love; as a spirit that has altered before it can be chronicled; as a heart that certainly beats, but with no pulsation of humanity . . . A friend explains himself: the earth is explicable—from her we came, and we must return to her. But who can explain Westminster Bridge Road or Liverpool Street in the morning—the city inhaling, or the same thoroughfares in the evening—the city exhaling her exhausted air? (p. 108).

This evokes analogy with Blake's 'London' and Eliot's 'unreal city,' both of them characterized by lack of freedom, indistinction and inhumanity born of growing materialism or, in one word, the 'infinity of formlessness.'[2] And the counter symbol to the city—emblem of rigidity and opacity—in both Forster and Eliot is obviously the country or the garden. Leonard Bast and the like of him—representatives of the present day nomadic civilization—have to be fitted into the ideal pattern of culture. But Leonard remains obdurately outside the pattern and resists entrance into the ordered symphony of life. As pointed out shrewdly by John Beer he is one of those characters who are not possessed of their individual or unique accent of style.[3] 'Never mind what

lies behind Death, Mr Bast, but be sure that the poet and the musician and the tramp will be happier in it than the man who has never learnt to say 'I am I' (p. 238).

True that in *Howards End* the two families and their distinctive attitudes and styles of being are juxtaposed, yet this diversity has been put under concentrated gaze through projecting the inner drama of Margaret's life. The antagonist in this case is Henry Wilcox whose life has fallen into shambles consequent upon the incredibly sudden and treacherous death of his wife, Ruth Wilcox, and who is anxious to get himself rehabilitated. Having a flourishing business and inspite of being a man of tepid emotionality he manoeuvres to worm himself into Margaret's affections rather quickly. Margaret has the bluestocking quality in her and has the natural gift of placing things in the correct perspective. She is intelligent but not exuberant, full of initiative and sympathy but also poised and restrained, and yet she is capable of throwing tenderness—the 'central radiance' as she puts it—into the call of sex. Unlike Helen, she is neither pretty nor given to romanticizing things, and her unclouded vision and her penchant for clarity and perspicacity makes her live up to her symbolic role as a harmonizer. In a way she is eminantly fitted to fill the vacuum in Henry's troubled and dislocated existence. 'He desired comradeship and affection, but he feared them, and she, who had taught herself only to desire, and could have clothed the struggle with beauty, held back, and hesitated with him' (p. 165). And Margaret's assessment of their relationship conveyed to Helen in rather muted and apologetic tones runs like this:

> Yours was romance; mine will be prose. I'm not running it down—a very good kind of prose, but well considered, well thought out. For instance, I know all Mr Wilcox's faults. He's afraid of emotion. He cares too much about success, too little about the past. His sympathy lacks poetry, and so isn't sympathy really (p. 174).

Henry tends to reduce human beings to mere categories, has the knack of concentrating all his energies upon a single

point and thus attaining his objectives without making any fuss about it. He is not stirred by emotions and would be contented with comradeship alone which is a very pallid substitute for love. His inner chaos is betrayed by his rigid exterior and his asceticism is really a cloak for his fear of passion. He is inordinately ambitious and his pursuit of his designs is attended upon by his squeamish sense of moral superiority and thus detracts from warmth in personal relationships.

> As is Man to the Universe, so was the mind of Mr Wilcox to the minds of some men—a concentrated light upon a tiny spot, a little Ten Minutes moving self-contained through its appointed years. No Pagan he, who lives for the Now, and may be wiser than all philosophers. He lived for the five minutes that have past, and the five to come; he had the business mind (p. 249).

This cool and calculating machine, with a streak of morbidity in him, once it sets about moving, achieves a large measure of success. Margaret's is an open-eyed acceptance of him, with all his loop-holes and subterfuges, and she also starts smoothing the jagged edges of his personality. Only once is he outwitted to the extent of losing his nerve (because not prepared for such an eventuality), and is exposed thorougly in the scene when Helen, actuated possibly by a venegeful motive, drags Leonard Bast and his wife down at his country house. He wrongly suspects that the whole situation had been engineered by Margaret to bring about his utter discomfiture. After a shameless confession of love for him and after Henry had been addressed with disarming intimacy by Jacky, Henry's defences begin to give way:

> He thought he was trapped. He saw his whole life crumbling. 'Don't you indeed? he said bitingly. 'I do. Allow me to congratulate you on the success of your plan' (p. 232).

Towards the very end Helen and Margaret are thrown together while they are in strangely identical frames of mind: Helen under the strain of her brief unsettling experience with Leonard, and Margaret feeling rather sadly shaken in her attempt to bring about a sea-change in Henry's psychic make-

up. Helen is impelled by her keen desire to spend just one night at Howards End along with her sister to be able to hoard up those 'spots of time' from which she might draw sustenance in future. Taking up a very rigid attitude Henry rejects Margaret's appeal on behalf of Helen on the insinuated plea that the house might become desecrated on account of the latter's sexual lapse in relation to Leonard. But he blatantly closes his eye to his own culpability in his involvement with Mrs Bast and to the fact that he had been so generously forgiven by his own wife. Margaret's savage indignation, which had been brewing steadily, reaches the breaking-point thus :

> Stupid, hypocritical, cruel—Oh, contemptible!—a man who insults his wife when she's alive and cants with her memory when she's dead. A man who ruins a woman for his pleasure, and casts her off to ruin other men. And gives bad financial advice, and then says he is not responsible. These, man, are you. You can't recognize them because you cannot connect. I've had enough of your unweeded kindness, I've spoilt you long enough. All your life you have been spoiled. Mrs Wilcox spoiled you. No one has ever told you what you are—muddled, criminally muddled' (p. 308).

Undoubtedly there is an element of blackmail in all this but this brutal exposure also betrays the brittle foundations of Henry's life—the bastion of his superiority he has been displaying to the world. The difference between the technical and the imaginative attitudes towards the stay of Helen and Margaret for just one night at Howards End may be formulated thus: technically it is not permissible because the house belongs to Charles's mother whose sacred memory is likely to be outraged thus; imaginatively it is entirely wholesome and adeqeate because such a gesture of grace may contribute to the well-being of Helen who has already had a nerve-wracking experience.

> But Matgaret was a loyal wife. Inspite of imagination and poetry—perhaps on account of them—she could sympathise with the technical attitude that Henry would adopt. If possible, she would be technical too. A night's lodging—and they demanded no more—need not involve the discussion of general principles (p. 302).

Margaret demonstrates very clearly the ambivalence between the two attitudes and ultimately the imaginative registers a triumph over the merely technical.

All the primary themes of the novel converge on and are mediated through the pattern of its symbolism. Howards End is not a house made of brick and mortar but is possessed of an identity of its own and this is tenuously connected with the destiny of England itself. The *motifs* of survival and fertility which begin to loom large towards the end are increasingly explored with Howards End as the single point of focus. It reflects the vision of continuity which persists through all the cataclysmic changes effected by time. After Margaret had been invited by Ruth Wilcox to visit it—a unique and unanticipated privilege as it was—and she had failed to grasp this opportunity, she is flooded over by a sense of remorse and comments to this effect.

> 'Another day' will do for brick and mortar, but not for the Holy of Holies into which Howards End had been transfigured. Her own curiosity was slight. She had heard more than enough about it in the summer. The nine windows, the vine, and the wych-elm had no pleasant connections for her, and she would have preferred to spend the afternoon at a concert. But the imagination triumphed (pp. 85-6).

Ruth Wilcox is a bizarre and shadowy figure and Howards End continues to be haunted by her even when she comes to assume a posthumous existence. In this she has probably more in common with Mrs Ramsay in *To the Lighthouse* than with Mrs Moore in *A Passage to India*. Contrary to Lionel Trilling's belief that 'she is more successful as a real person than as a symbol'[4] it looks as if her symbolic role is more convincing precisely because she is lacking in the Jamesian solidity of specification. She continues to hover over the fringes of the novel as a 'vague pervasive suggestion of mystery' even when she is no longer alive and none of the principal characters can afford to move out of the charmed circle of her identity. And it is through Miss Avery that the fact of Ruth Wilcox continuing to survive in the depths of

Margaret's being and Howards End retaining its symbolic value is insinuated to the reader in a rather tangential way. Unlike other houses owned by the Wilcoxes—'creators of the civilization of luggage'—Howards End was turned into a home by Ruth Wilcox and now it becomes a symbol of the continuity of the past with the present. And she is believed to have an uncanny grasp over the facts of the human situation and is able to see through what is hidden from the visible eye.

> I feel that you and I and Henry are only fragments of that woman's mind. She knows everything. She is the house, and the tree that leans over it. People have their own deaths as well as their own lives, and even if there is nothing beyond death, we shall differ in our nothingness. I cannot believe that knowledge such as hers will perish with knowledge such as mine. She knew about realities (pp. 313-4).

If Ruth Wilcox is the symbol of vitality and organic growth the wych-elm that overshadows the house is the hidden source of that vitality.

> Margaret thought of them now, and was to think of them through many a windy night and London day, but to compare either to man, to woman, always dwarfed the vision. Yet they kept within limits of the human. Their message was not of eternity, but of hope on this side of the grave. As she stood in the one, gazing at the other, truer relationship had gleamed (p. 206).

The enigmatic principle of interfusion and disentanglement of the house and the tree is symbolic of the getting together of Helen and Margaret and the fear of their ultimate separation, even when they are resting in momentary peace in Howards End.

> They passed upstairs, kissed, and amidst the endless iterations fell asleep. The house had enshadowed the tree at first, but as the moon rose higher the two disentangled, and were clear for a few moments at midnight. How incomprehensible that Leonard Bast should have won her this night of peace (p. 315)l

Another symbol central to the action is the rainbow bridge and through it is intuited the 'need to connect' the disparate components of experience, to help facilitate the

emergence of order in the midst of our chaotic world. What is to be harmonized in the interest of wholeness is the outer with the inner life, thought with action, emotions with intellect, the monk with the beast in man and the feminine with the masculine principle operative in the universe. And Margaret has both the passion and the gift for achieving this cohesiveness.

> 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. With it love is born, and alights on the highest curve, glowing against the grey, sober against the fire. Happy the man who sees from either aspect the glory of these outspread wings (p. 186).

Helen is fascinated with the absolute but Margaret is better equipped to build the bridge between the infinite and the finite because of her flair for harmony and her inarticulate wisdom.

One of the *leitmotifs* in the novel is the triumph which the imagination achieves over reason and the bodily passion. The guiding principle with the Wilcoxes is a too rigid conformity to the premises of reason, their practicality and the utter indifference tothe finer impulses of the human spirit. Hence their inability to emerge out of chaos and move towards ultimate coherence. Ruth Wilcox is a notable exception to this rule and has therefore been rightly identified with the myth of salvation in the novel.[5] The closed universe of the moneyed Wilcoxes seems to be broken by the entrance of Margaret who succeeds in making some indents into it. Little by little the liberating touch of her personality makes itself felt and the rigidity of attitudes of the Wilcoxes begins to be dissolved. She becomes the means of harmonizing the prose and the passion of life and their basic opposition is neutralized by the lineaments of love. Besides, the symbols of the city and the country are also juxtaposed and we become sensitive to this juxtaposition as we move from the

first half of the novel to its later half. The demonic city is characterized by the accumulation of wealth and the pursuit of materialistic ends in general, whereas the country—an extension of the farmyard—is related to the release of creative possibilities. Leonard, Helen and Margaret are all equally involved in the quest for wholeness but Leonard's quest ends in utter and meaningless disaster, and Helen remains a quixotic idealist. It is Margaret alone who is capable of perceiving the sphinx-like emergence of life out of the ashes of Leonard though it should be conceded that she too is haunted by the spectre of uncertainty and the sense of precariousness in life. Towards the end the wounds are healed by the cycle of day and night, the absorption of Helen and Margaret in the natural potencies of tha earth and by 'the hidden laughter/of children in the foliage,'

> Every summer she would fear lest the well should give out, every winter the pipes should freeze: every westerly gale might blow the wych-elm down and bring the end of all things, and so she could not read or talk during a westerly gale. The air was tranquil now. She and her sister were sitting on the remains of Evie's rockery, where the lawn merged into the field (pp. 355-6).

It has been perceptively pointed out that the imagery of change and flux is recurrent and pervasive in the novel[6]—the flux in which the blocks of London flats and houses are caught as also the flux which runs like a tidal wave in the subterranean depths of men and women. Within this context Howards End may be treated as a spatial symbol—'the still point of the turning wheel'—the vision of stasis subsisting at the heart of ceaseless agitation.

> The sense of flux which had haunted her all the year disappeared for a time. She forgot the luggage and the motor-cars, and the hurrying men who know so much and connect so little. She recaptured the sense of space, which is the basis of all earthly beauty, and starting from Howards End, she attempted to realize England (p. 204).

While Helen and Margaret are resting at Hawards End, despite the stern orders of Henry to the contrary, the past

and the present appear to their vision to flow together and to be interfused into an inconceivable unity, a kind of simultaneity of existenace.

> The present flowed by them like a stream. The tree rustled. It had made music before they were born, and would continue after their deaths, but its song was of the moment. The moment had passed. The tree rustled again. Their senses were sharpened, and they seemed to apprehend life. Life passed. The tree rustled again (p. 315).

Not unlike Howards End the tree here becomes the symbol of continuance and stability, and more than that, it is the frozen image of Eternity which is opposed to the moving image of time.

The resolution of the tangle is initiated by the breaking up of Henry's inflated egohood first. He is inwardly torn and bruised and the citadel of his self-confidence is smashed into bits when he gets news of the prosecution and imprisonment of Charles for the alleged murder of Leonard. As Margaret sustained Helen in the nadir of her fortunes so does she come to the rescue of Henry in his darkest moment of crisis. Being enmeshed in the flux Helen and Margaret doubtless lose a good deal of their vivacity, initiative and resourcefulness. The effort to reconcile the irreconcilables has indeed sapped every ounce of Margaret's energy but she does not lose her grip over things altogether. One may therefore find it difficult to agree with Wilde when he maintains that 'it is a lesser Margaret who sits quietly sewing near the shadow of Howards End, a Margaret whose aim is no longer a search for harmony, but a sewing of things together, a patching and binding of worn and wasted lives.'[7] Further, that 'both Helen and Margaret recognize the dominant tendency of their civilization. But they refuse to believe what they see. Still their hope is not sufficiently sure or triumphant (nor is Forster's) to make the possibility of another future convincing.'[8] At least Margaret believes in the therapy of renewal which Time holds in the palm of her hand. She voices this conviction in

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tones which may appear subdued on the surface but which are nevertheless reassuring and arise out of the innermost recesses of the heart.

> Helen took up a bunch of grass. She looked at the sorrel, and the red and white and yellow clover, and the quaker grass, and the daisies, and the bents that composed it. She raised it to her face.
>
> 'Is it sweetening yet?' asked Margaret.
>
> 'No, only withered.'
>
> 'It will sweeten tomorrow.' (p. 338)

The withered bunch of grass which is bound to sweeten in the course of time reflects Margaret's continuing faith in things to come. And the integrative process—the process that turns all dissonances into divine harmonies—is again imaged in terms of the cycle of seasons by Margaret thus: 'Oh, we merely settled down. You and Henry learned to understand one another and to forgive, all through the autumn and the winter' (p. 338).

Department of English
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh

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Harish Raizada

THE DOUBLE VISION OF LOVE-HATE RELATIONS IN *A PASSAGE TO INDIA*

I don't think I understand people very well. I only know whether I like or dislike them. *(A Passage to India)*

I

The faith in the holiness of the heart's affections and personal relationships is fundamental to Forster's considered values of life. In the declaration of his beliefs in an articie, 'What I Believe', he writes : 'I certainly can proclaim that I believe in personal relationships. Starting from them, I get a little order into the contemporary chaos. One must be fond of people and trust them if one is not to make a mess of life, and it is therefore essential that they should not let one down.'[1] He thinks that 'Not by becoming better, but by ordering and distributing his native goodness, will Man shut up Force into its box.'[2] Forster's preoccupation with the sanctity of personal relationships is reflected in his epigraph to *Howards End*, 'Only connect . . .' which is further elaborated by him thus : 'Only connect ! That was the whole of her sermon, Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height. Live in fragments no longer. Only connect, and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation that is life to either, will die.'[3] 'Only connect . . .' would be as apt a motto of *A Passage to India* as it is of *Howards End*. Fielding and Mrs Moore, two of the main characters in the novel, represent their author's faith in the efficacy of good will and happy relations among men to drive away evil and

violence from human life. The former believes that the world 'is a globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of good-will plus culture and intelligence',[4] and the latter exhorts her embarrassed son Ronny who has grown callous because of his consciousness of the White Man's burden : 'W're not out here for the purpose of behaving pleasantly! . . . W're out here to do justice and keep the peace' (p. 39).

In his earlier novels Forster has explored the means of communication between individuals, social classes, or sexes, which do not pose barriers difficult to overcome. In *A Passage to India*, he, however, chooses circumstances which because of the clash of race, religion and colour, present the most formidable and challenging human predicament[5] in the work of a writer pre-eminently concerned with the possibilities of personal relationships. The complex milieu of India seems to defy any attempt to build 'the rainbow bridge that should connect the prose in us with the passion.'[6] We are told that 'India is a muddle' (p. 54), and life there 'is a mystery if not a muddle' (p. 208). It defies man's orderly hopes and his desire for meaning. It 'is the country, of fields, fields, then hills, jungle, hills, and more fields . . . . How can the mind take hold of such a country?' (p. 107). It is also a country of contradictions, the changeless land of constant changes, the land of multiplicity and oneness. It is 'a continent and unity' (p. 83), but there are also 'a hundred Indias' (p. 11). Its inhabitants, however, have the 'calm assurance . . . that India was one' (p 82). 'Perhaps the hundred Indias which fuss and squabble so tiresomely are one, and the universe they mirror is one' (p. 208). At the same time 'the fissures in the Indian soil are infinite' (p. 231), so that 'every street and house was divided against itself' (p. 83). 'There is something hostile' in its 'soil' too. It either yields and the foot sinks into a depression. or else it is unexpectedly rigid and sharp, pressing stones or crystals against the tread' (p. 14). We are thus led to realize that 'Nothing

embraces the whole of India, nothing, nothing' (p. 114).

Even the inhabitants of India are divided among themselves, for there broods over them 'The spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments' (p. 100). The Hindus bore or disgust the Muslims. They consider Hindus 'slack' pleople who 'have no idea of society' (p. 54), or unsanitary people from whom 'All illness proceeds' (p. 82). The Hindu religion seems to them a dark confusion of dung and double talk. The Hindus have feelings of distrust for the Muslims and think 'Some Muslims are very violent' (p. 211). It requires a very tactful handling by the administration to prevent bloodshed between the two communities during preparations for the Mohurram procession. Sometimes a common cause such as the trial of Aziz brings them together but the understanding thus reached is a temporary one. There are conflicting stresses and strains even among the Hindus such as the cleavage between Brahman and non-Brahman. 'Hinduism, so solid from a distance, is riven into sects and clans, which radiate and join, and change their names according to the aspect from which they are approached' (p. 231).

The muddle of the Indian scene is further increased by the presence of the alien English rulers who because of their racial arrogance consider the Indians 'monstrous'. Natives give them 'creeps' and in their view 'the kindest thing one can do to a native is to let him die' (p. 21). Forster sums up the haughtiness of the British rulers by pointing out that 'Where there is officialism every human relationship suffers' (p. 167). It is not so much the racial and cultural differences which create a chasm between the rulers and the subject race as the 'undeveloped hearts'[7] of the Englishmen who come to rule over India. Indians in their turn hate and distrust white men. They think it is not possible to be friends with them and therefore want to 'drive every blasted Englishman into the sea' (p. 255).

Notwithstanding these differences there pervades also a

spirit which seeks to embrace the whole of India, even its foreigners, its wasps and very stones in universal love. At the Mau festival of the birth of God all differences are submerged in the religious ecstasy which surcharges the whole atmosphere with spiritual 'completeness' (p. 226). At the human level too there are persons like Mrs Moore, Fielding, Aziz and Godbole who try to transcend all racial and cultural barriers through personal relationships. A sense of oneness and separateness, of centripetal and centrifugal forces pervades the novel and gives rise to a kind of 'double vision' of attraction and withdrawal, benevolence and hostility, love and hatred. This recurring pattern of alternating love-hate relations is central to the novel and subsumes all other issues, political or ethnic.

Forster has tried to reinforce this juxtaposition of love-hate relations by the corresponding symbolic pattern of opposites. There is a dualism of black and white colour in the mosque. 'where the ninety-nine names of God on the frieze stood out black, as the frieze stood out white against the sky' (p. 14). A similar contrast is visible in the general play of light and darkness, for the dark mosque is illuminated by a lamp and the moon. Later on we are again referred to this dualism of black and white when during the picnic to the Marabar caves, Aziz is reminded of his first meeting with Mrs Moore, 'the black bullets of his eyes filled with soft expressive light' (p. 113). The dichotomy of love and hate is further represented in the tension between sky and earth, the sky benevolent, the earth hostile, or the soothing moon and the oppressive sun, or the sun at the sunrise and the sun which beats down on noonday. The earth itself is dichotomized between the hostility of the rocks and the benevolence of the plains. The main symbolic pattern to highlight the dialectic of love-hate relations is, however, provided by the titles of the three sections of the novel, Mosque, Caves, Temple, which are also related to the three seasons of the Cold Weather, the Hot Weather, and

the Rains, which divide the Indian year.[8] In terms of action these sections represent the cyclic process of the establishment of relationship (Love), the breakdown of relationship (hatred), and the reestablishment of relationship with the possibility of further breakdown as indicated by the end of the novel.

II

The action in the Mosque section takes place in the natural setting of the cool spring when the sky is white in the day and blue in the night. The moon shines brightly and floods the atmosphere with its pleasant light. The sun which has not yet acquired its hostile posture, infuses the sky with strength which makes it rain 'glory' or pass 'benediction' 'from horizon to horizon' (p. 6). In the backgrond of this benign mood of nature, the mosque which is itself a symbol of unity holds promise of communion among men. Most of the friendships such as those between Mrs Moore and Aziz, Aziz and Fielding, Aziz and Godbole, and Adela and Ronny, are formed in this section. The most intimate and lasting of these friendships, the one between Mrs Moore and Aziz, is established inside the mosque and acquires its sanctity from 'the spirit of place'. Later on Aziz tells Mrs Moore, 'friendships last longest that begin like that' (p. 113). In the bginning Aziz does not take kindly to Mrs Moore when he first sees her in the mosque. Having been bullied by his English officer earlier he is full of hatred against the white rulers. In a fit of anger he shouts at her for trespassing on the place of worship. But when she says, 'God is here' (p. 15), and demonstrates the 'Oriental' spirit by her 'Secret understanding of the heart' (the phrase in a Persian quatrain which Aziz wishes to be inscribed on his grave, p. 16), he moves towards her in friendship bypassing the ablution tank which divides them. They are soon united in a permanent and intimate bond of love like the black names standing out on the white frieze of the mosque. Their kinship springs

from the recognition that both of them bring to their personal relations the same kind of direct, intuitive, emotional response. The quality of their friendship is defined by the image of the flame: 'the flame that not even beauty can nourish was springing up, and though his words were querulous his heart began to glow secretly' (p. 18). Later when Mrs Moore remarks, 'We shall be all Moslems together now', Aziz is overwhelmed by his love for her, 'All the love for her he had felt at the mosque welled up again, the fresher for forgetfulness. There was nothing he would not do for her. He would die to make her happy' (pp. 103-104).

One of the important results of Mrs Moore's contact with Aziz is the bringing together of Aziz, Fielding, Adela and Godbole. The friendship which develops between Aziz and Fielding dominates the whole action of the novel and holds the promise of a bridge between the races. Fielding believes in 'teaching people to be individuals and to understand other individuals' (p. 95). He has 'no racial feeling' (p. 48) and finds it convenient and pleasant to associate with Indians. Fielding and Aziz meet at the tea party the former gives for Mrs Moore and Adela, and they soon take to each other. 'Fielding was not surprised at the rapidity of their intimacy. With so emotional a people it was apt to come at once or never' (p. 51). Fielding who has liked Aziz at their first meeting, hopes for the development of their friendship but is disappointed by his churlishness when he calls on him during his illness. As he is about to leave he feels that his friendship with Aziz has come to an end. This happens when 'April, herald of horrors, is at hand' and 'the sun was returning to his kingdom with power but without beauty—that was the sinister feature' (p. 90). But the sun 'was not the unattainable friend' not was Aziz. The sudden turn of events brings them together again. Aziz asks him to stay and shows him the photograph of his dead wife, saying, 'You are the first Englishman she has ever come before': 'All men are my brothers, and as soon as one behaves as such he may see

my wife.' . . . 'And when the whole world behaves as such, there will be no more purdah?' (p. 91). Overcome by Fielding's response Aziz tells him;

> It is because you behave well while I behave badly that I show it to you. I never expected you to come back just now when I called you. I thought. "He has certainly done with me: I have insulted him". Mr Fielding, no one can ever realize how much kindness we Indians need, we do not even realize it ourselves. But we know when it has been given. We do not forget, though we may seem to. Kindness, more kindness, and even after that more kindness' (pp. 91-2).

This demand for 'kindness' is similar to Godbole's call of 'come to Krishna' ('I say to Him, Come, come, come, come, come, come. He neglects to come', p. 63), or to the need for 'the Friend who never comes yet is not entirely disproved' (p. 83), the reference in this case being to a poem of Ghalib, recited by Aziz before Fielding's arrival into his sick room. 'The Friend' is 'a Persian expression for God', we are told afterwards (p. 219).

Fielding is moved by Aziz's exuberant affection and wishes 'that he too could be carried away on waves of emotion' (p. 92), but even though in comparison to other white men he has a 'good heart' (p. 49), he is emotionally inhibited. He is a rationalist and brings to his relationship with Aziz the goodwill which is dependent on understanding of the head rather than of the heart. Reflecting on his friendship with Aziz, he recognizes that he cannot 'really be intimate . . . with anyone' (pp. 92-3). He is unable to respond to Aziz's call of friendship with the same intuitive understanding of heart as Mrs Moore does and hence their friendship lacks the 'completeness' of Aziz's friendship with Mrs Moore. Aziz, however, gives the same place to Fielding in his affections as he does to Mrs Moore. 'These two had strange and beautiful effects on him—they were his friends, his for ever, and he theirs for ever: he loved them so much that giving and receiving became one. He loved them even better than the Hamidullahs' (p. 112).

Aziz's relationship with Adela and Godbole is formal and lacks the warmth and depth of his friendship with Mrs Moore or Fielding. Adela likes Aziz because she believes that when she knows him better 'he would unlock his country for her' (p. 54). Aziz appreciates her for her informality. He tells her, 'You are absolutely unlike the others, I assure you. You will never be rude to my people' (p. 115). Though not favourably inclined towards the Hindus in general, Aziz likes the enigmatic and queer Godbole and always feels 'like a baby in that strange presence, a baby who unexpectedly receives a toy' (p. 241). When he is angry with Godbole for not telling him the truth about Fielding's marriage, the latter replies, 'Never be angry with me. I am, as far as my limitations permit, your true friend' (p. 241).

Adela's shifting relationship with her fiance Ronny reveals the uncertainty of friendship between persons who are ruled by the head than by the heart. We learn that they 'are not dissimilar, as humans go' (p. 67). Both are rational and their attitude to love and marriage is fundamentally unromantic. Adela, we are told, is 'a dry, sensible girl' (p. 141). She is not 'convinced that love is necessary to a successful union' (p. 120). In withdrawing the charge against Aziz her behaviour rested on cold justice and honesty, it did not include her heart' (pp. 193-4) The Public-school education has made Ronny also upright, just and devoid of emotions. What divides him from Adela is not his character but experience, particularly his experience in India, which has made him intolerant, censorious and self-complacent. It is this streak of his nature that makes him intrude upon Fielding's tea party and behave grossly. Adela is appalled by it and breaks her engagement off when she tells him, 'I've finally decided we are not going to be married, my dear boy' (p. 65). But as they travel together in a car and darkness envelops the atmosphere marking the decline of the daylight, symbolic of the reason by which they live, they hazard some 'timid descents' into the dark of their passions. Adela's hand touches Ronny's owing to a jolt, 'and one of the thrills so

frequent in the animal kingdom passed between them, and announced that all their difficulties were only a lovers' quarrel. Each was too proud to increase the pressure, but neither withdrew it, and a spurious unity descended on them, as local and temporary as the gleam that inhabits a firefly' (p. 69). Their reconciliation is, however, 'spurious', for they are inhibited by their rationalism which makes emotions and passions suspect. The image of gleam (reason) modifying the darkness of night (passions) symbolizes their psychological condition (p. 69). A little later as they approach Ronny's bungalow his hand 'touched Adela's again; she caressed it definitely, he responded, and their firm and mutual pressure surely meant something' (p. 74). Adela then says nervously to him, 'Ronny, I should like to take back what I said on the Maidan' (p. 74). Ronny assents and they become 'engaged to be married in consequence'.

III

Hostility is the keynote of the second section of the novel. Caves symbolize the failure of all communication, the collapse of human relationships. The cool spring of the earlier section gives way to the hot summer here and with it we are removed from the benign influence of moonlight which has helped to establish the atmosphere of human kindness and are led to feel the dominating presence of the hostile sun. Even the sunrise which is generally associated with joy and new life lacks its usual rejuvenating vitality and splendour here : 'The sun rose without splendour. He was presently observed trailing yellowish behind the trees, or against sky, and touching the bodies already at work in the fields' (p. 108). The 'false dawn' soon gives way to the oppressive noon when the sky seems 'unhealthily near' (p. 111) and the sun 'crashes' (p. 115) on the back of the visitors of the ill-fated expedition to the Marabar caves.

There is something monstrous about the caves themselves: The Marabar Hills which contain them are 'flesh of the sun's

flesh'. 'They are older than anything in the world' (p. 97), 'older than all spirit' (p. 98). They represent non-human or primal India and as such are set against all human aspirations and endeavours. They negate all idea of harmonious relationship, for 'They rise abruptly, insanely, without the proportion that is kept by the wildest hills elsewhere, they bear no relation to anything dreamt or seen' (p. 97). Their menacing 'fists and fingers' thrusting above 'the advancing soil' (p. 98) image their hostility to human friendship. The idea of negation conveyed by the hills is strengthened by the caves which are dark and in strong contrast to the reconciliation of light and dark that characterizes the mosque. The caves are a divisive force and reveal the futility of all that which 'strives to unite'. 'The two flames approach and strive to unite, but cannot, because one of them breathes air, the other stone. . . . The radiance increases, the flames touch one another, kiss, expire' (p. 98).

The sense of isolation is further increased by the echo which is the voice of the caves and reduces everything to a dull 'boum', or 'bou-oum', or 'ou-boum'. It negates all attempts to make meaningful distinctions: 'Whatever is said, the same monotonous noise replies, and quivers up and down the walls until it is absorbed into the roof' (116). Its sinister effect is conveyed by the image of snakes writhing: 'And if several people talk at once, an overlapping howling noise begins, echoes generate echoes, and the cave is stuffed with a snake composed of small snakes, which writhe independently' (116). It is not surprising that in this stifling atmosphere people lose faith in human intercourse; and personal relations so highly valued by them are seriously questioned. Adela pained by Fielding's apathy towards her during the trial says to Ronny 'What is the use of personal relationships when every one brings less and less to them?' (p. 155), and Fielding shocked by the callous attitude of Aziz's friends towards Adela loses 'his usual sane view of human intercourse', and feels 'that we exist not in ourselves

but in terms of each other's minds' (p. 197).

Mrs Moore who sets out for the expedition to the Marabar caves with beaming delight and in close friendliness with other members of the party, loses 'Aziz and Adela in the dark' as she enters the first cave and is alarmed by its terrifying echo. Though on emerging from the cave she assures Aziz, 'Yes, I am your friend' (p. 117), she is so exhausted mentally and physically that she wishes to be left alone. The frightening echo over-powers her and begins 'in some indescribable way to undermine her hold on life.' She realizes that 'she didn't want to write to her children, didn't want to communicate with anyone, not even with God'. As she sits 'motionless with horror', she loses 'all interest, even in Aziz, and the affectionate and sincere words that she had spoken to him seemed no longer hers but the air's' (p. 118). Later on when Aziz is arrested for an alleged criminal assault on Adela, Mrs Moore remains indifferent to the fate of Aziz even though she believes him to be innocent.

The relationship between Mrs Moore and Adela also suffers a similar strain after their experience in the Marabar caves. Adela has always been sure of her friendship with Mrs Moore. She has considered it so deep and real that she has thought it will last, whatever happens. She is, however disconcerted to find on her return to Ronny's bungalow that Mrs Moore does not get up to greet her and even withdraws her hand when she takes it. The meaninglessness of existence or the world as *maya* (illusion) dawns on her through the 'boum'[9] of the echo. 'Pathos, piety, courage—they exist, but are identical, and so is faith. Everything exists, nothing has value' (p. 118). Even Religion to her mind 'appeared poor little talkative Christianity, and she knew that all its divine words from "Let there be light" to "It is finished" only amounted to "boum" ' (p. 118).

The dialectic of love-hate characterizes Adela's relations with the English community of Chandrapore also. Even

though she has not made herself popular with the English officers, they feel concerned about her when they learn that she has been insulted by an Indian. 'What can we do for our sister?' (p. 142)—is their common anxiety. Mrs Turton, the wife of the Collector, who has earlier called her 'not pukka' now considers her 'my own darling girl' (p. 142). They all rally behind her during the trial of Aziz and boost up her courage. But when Adela on being released from her frenzied hallucination by listening to Mrs Moore's Indianized name 'Esmiss Esmoor' being chanted outside the court, realizes her mistake and withdraws her accusation against Aziz, her countrymen are outraged and begin to hate her. Adela's recantation strains irreparably her relations with Ronny also. Even during her visit to the Marabar caves Adela is in a confused state of mind regarding her marriage with Ronny The discovery that she does not love him, comes to her 'so suddenly that she felt like a mountaineer whose rope had broken' (p. 120). She, however, decides not to break her engagement off because she is not convinced if love is necessary to a successful union. After the trial the gulf between them widens and they are separated for good.

After Adela's allegation that Aziz has attempted to molest her, there remains no chance of communication between them. Even when she, at a great personal cost, testifies to his innocence before her angry countrymen, her sacrifice fails to arouse any sympathy for her in his heart. 'Truth is not truth in that exacting land unless there go with it kindness and more kindness and kindness again. . . . And the girl's sacrifice—so creditable according to Western notions—was rightly rejected, because though it came from her heart, it did not include her heart' (pp. 193-4).

Adela by strange coincidence comes between Aziz and Fielding and turns out to be the cause of misunderstanding between them. Aziz and his Indian friends are beholden to Fielding who breaks away from his countrymen and gives

unreserved and courageous support to Aziz throughout the period of his trial. But when Fielding shelters Adela who is alienated from the English community because of her recantation, gossips about their intimacy spread. Aziz also begins to suspect Fielding even though he has no evidence in support of his views. 'The sequence of his emotions' decides 'his beliefs' and leads 'to the tragic coolness between himself and his English friend' (p 214). When Aziz meets Fielding he does not hesitate to attack him directly, 'So you and Madamsell Adela used to amuse one another in the evening, naughty boy'. Shocked by the rumours being taken seriously Fielding replies angrily; 'You little rotter. Well, I'm damned. Amusement indeed. Is it likely at such a time ?' (p. 216). Then regaining his usual calm he explains to Aziz, 'You see Aziz, the circumstances . . . also the girl was still engaged to Heaslop, also I never felt . . .' (p. 217). Aziz is sorry and begs his pardon, 'Oh, I beg your pardon, I'm sure. The licentious Oriental imagination was at work' (p. 216). It is however, Oriental suspician and not the licentious Oriental imagination which brings about the rift between them. 'Suspicion in the Oriental is a sort of malignant tumour, a mental malady, that makes him self-conscious and unfriendly suddenly; he trusts and mistrusts at the same time in a way the Westerner cannot comprehend. It is his demon, as the Westerner's is hypocrisy' (p. 221). Though Aziz realizes his mistake and his heart bleeds inwardly for hours, he is unable to clear his mind of suspicions regarding Fielding's relations with Adela. His fancy builds a 'satanic castle' and leaves him 'trembling with misery'. Fielding is conscious of something hostile and because he is really fond of Aziz, 'his optimism' fails him. Later when Fielding goes away to England and Aziz gets the news of his marriage, his suspicion burgeons monstrously and leads him to believe that Fielding has committed the ultimate betrayal of marrying Adela, having first cunningly persuaded him to renounce the compensation money she owed him.

The Marabar caves thus undo what the Mosque has been able to achieve. The mosque has reconciled different races and religions like the dualism of black and white on its frieze, and established kinship and love among strangers. The caves generate hatred and by their divisive force ruin personal relationships among people. The only relationship which is established in this section is between Fielding and Adela but since this friendship represents the triumph of rationalism over the reasons of heart and takes place in the background of the disruptive forces of the caves, it is as of 'dwarfs talking, shaking hands' (p. 209).

IV

The third section 'Tempie' depicts the vision of 'completeness' ('completeness, not reconstruction', p. 26) of human relationships or the universal oneness attained through spiritual love. The Temple and the Marabar caves are antithetical in the extreme, for they symbolize the presence and non-existence of God or all-embracing love and stark desolation. That is why Forster has said that the Hindu festival represents the same thing as the scene in the cave 'turned inside out'.[10]

The 'Temple' section opens with the festival of the birth of Lord Krishna, the God of Love, at the shrine in the palace of Mau. 'All spirit as well as matter' participate 'in salvation' (p. 229) thus brought about by the birth of God. The divine removes differences, annihilates distinctions. At midnight 'Infinite love took upon itself the form of SHRI KRISHNA, and saved the world. All sorrow was annihilated, not only for Indians, but for foreigners, birds, caves, railways, and the stars; all became joy, all laughter; there had never been disease, nor doubt, misunderstanding, cruelty, fear' (pp. 227-8). All creation is one and shares in joy. The hearts of the people participating in the ceremony are filled with the bliss of universal love. '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' (p. 226). As Godbole is lost in divine ecstasy and tries to imitate God, he remembers an 'old 'Englishwoman' (Mrs Moore) and 'one little, little wasp' (p. 230), whom he feels to be part of infinite love. Human and divine are interchangeable; no one and nothing is rejected. Godbole connects everything not through head or heart but through spiritual love.

The Hindu festival takes place in the background of the rainy season which is related to this section. The air was thick with religion and rain' (p. 236). Rain water is symbolic of love, for it brings relief to the scorched and suffering body of the earth. It is also the source and sustenance of all life, for it rises to the heaven, falls upon the earth, and enters the bodies of men, animals, and of plants, generating new life in them. Like the Mau festival rains also hold the promise of universal love, earth and sky trying to unite in ecstasy: 'Reflecting the evening clouds, it filled the netherworld with an equal splendour, so that earth and sky leant towards one another, about to clash in ecstasy' (p 242).

The 'Temple' section which is surcharged with the atmosphere of human and divine love marks the release of Aziz from the hatred which has confined him since his trial and brings about his reconciliation with Fielding and Adela. Aziz, who feels betrayed by Fielding, is cold towards him when he meets him in the old fort of Mau after two years on his return from England. Even when he discovers that Fielding is in fact married to Mrs Moore's daughter Stella and not to Adela, as he had supposed, he is not inclined to be friendly with him. In a fit of rage he bursts out, 'what does it matter to me who you marry? Don't trouble me here at Mau is all I ask. I do not want you, I do not want one of you in my private life, with my dying breath I say it' (p. 239). Mrs Moore's name, however, makes him uneasy and stirs memories of chanting of 'Esmiss Esmore' outside the court. He feels as though she was coming to help him. Aziz personally takes to the Guest House the embrocation which

he had promised to send over for Ralph's bee-stings. As Fielding and Stella had gone out to witness the Hindu festival he finds Ralph alone. While diagnosing Ralph's wounds Aziz is startled to hear him say, 'Your hands are unkind' (p. 245). He realizes his roughness towards Ralph and asks him:

> 'Can you always tell whether a stranger is your friend?'
> 'Yes'
> 'Then you are an Oriental.' (p. 246)

Aziz shudders as he utters these words he had earlier spoken to Mrs Moore in the mosque 'in the beginning of the cycle, from which, after so much suffering, he had got free.' Though inclined to be Ralph's friend, Aziz is unable to forget that he is Ronny's brother too:

> 'But you are Heaslop's brother also, and alas, the two nations cannot be friends,'
> 'I know. Not yet.' (p. 147)

The memory of Mrs Moore who has been his 'best friend' and whom he once promised to 'entertain' her 'other children' (p. 113), however, makes Aziz overcome the reasonings of his head. He befriends Ralph and takes him in a boat to Mau tank[11] to show the Hindu religious ceremony. Their friendship is further strengthened as Aziz listens to the chanting of 'Radhakrishna, Radhakrishna . . .' and is reminded of 'the syllables of salvation that had sounded during his trial at Chandrapore' (p. 248). Mrs Moore and the Hindu festival thus hasten their reconciliation. A little later as Aziz's boat collides with Fielding's and the four outsiders plunge into water (symbolic of purification), they torget their differences and emerge absolved of their ill-will and hatred. 'After the funny shipwreck there had been no more nonsense or bitterness, and they went back laughingly to their old relationship as if nothing had happened' (p. 251). Aziz is sorry for misunderstanding Fielding and confesses to him: 'I have been so disgracefully hasty, thinking you meant

to get hold of my money; as bad a mistake as the cave itself' (p. 252). In a bid to 'wipe out the wretched business of the Marabar for ever,' he decides to make it up with Adela and writes to her, 'Through you I am happy here with my children instead of in a prison, of that I make no doubt. My children shall be taught to speak of you with the greatest affection and respect' (p. 252).

Though 'friends again' Aziz knows that they cannot remain friends for ever till India is free from the English rule. As they go for a 'last ride' together in the Mau jungle Aziz tells Fielding excitedly: 'We shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea and then . . . and then . . . you and I shall be friends' (p. 255). Forster here seams to imply that it is politics which divides them. But when a little later in reply to Fielding's earnest appeal 'Why can't we be friends now?. . . It's what I want. It's what you want', we learn that the houses, the earth, the temple, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Great House do not want it for they said in hundred voices, 'No, not yet', and the sky said. 'No, not there' (p. 255-6), it appears that the divisive force lies elsewhere. It is the universe which repudiates the bond of their friendship because they have failed to be one with it. The universal oneness can be attained only through love, i.e. the submergence of one's individuality and the realization of one's oneness with others. This unifying force is represented by the temple and its ritual and those who participate in the ceremony, experience it. Godbole[18] experiences this spiritual bond when he includes even a little wasp in his ecstatic vision. The villagers experience it when they break cordon for a glimpse of the silver image for 'a most beautiful and radiant expression came into their faces, a beauty in which there was nothing personal, for it caused them all to resemble one another during the moment of its indwelling' (p. 225). Fielding and Aziz try to establish a personal relationship by preserving their individuality and this frustrates the attempt at the achievement of a lasting spiritual oneness. It

is only once when they plunge into the Mau tank that they submerge their individuality and experience a spiritual kinship between them. Aziz establishes a permanent spiritual relationship with Mrs Moore and therefore politics does not divide them. 'She had not borne witness in his favour, nor visited him in the prison, yet she had stolen to the depth of his heart, and he always adored her' (p. 247). She remains 'his best friend in all the world'.

Forster said that the Hindu festival in *A Passage to India* 'was architecturally necessary'.[1a] It is necessary both architecturaliy and thematically. The religious ceremony of the birth of Krishna, God of Love, impresses upon us the importance of 'God si (the unintentional slip for 'is') Love' (Mrs Moore's tentative words spoken to his son two years back, p 40), which is the final message of India and means that God is all men united in love. It is a microcosmic image of the brotherhood of man. For a lasting and meaningful relationship to exist among men, there must be a spiritual bond, 'that link outside either participant that is necessary to every relationship' (p. 252).

Department of English
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] E.M. Forster, *Two Cheers for Democracy*, Penguin Books (Harmondsworth, 1965), p. 76.
[2] Ibid. p. 83.
[3] Forster, *Howards End*, Penguin Books. (Harmondsworth, 1946), pp. 140-41.
[4] *A Passage to India*, Penguin Books, (Harmondsworth, 1941), p. 48.

[5] In the programme note for the 1962 production of the play adapted from the novel by Santha Rama Rau, E. M. Forster pointed out that in *A Passage to India* he 'tried to indicate the human predicament in a universe which is not, so far, comprehensible to our minds'. The note is cited in K. Natwar Singh, *E. M. Forster: A Tribute* (New York, 1964), p. 50.

[6] *Howards End*, p. 140.

[7] Analysing the defects of the English officers in India, Forster explains that their failure arises from the 'undeveloped heart'. English public-school men go forth into India 'with well-developed bodies, fairly developed minds, and undeveloped hearts. And it is this undeveloped heart that is largely responsible for the difficulties of Englishmen abroad.' See *Abinger Harvest* (London, 1936), p. 13.

[8] Forster confirms this in his notes to the Everyman edition of the novel (1942), p. xxxi.

[9] Glen O. Allen has pointed out that the echo is similar to the syllable 'OM', the pronouncing and meditating upon which is an important part of the discipline of the Hindus seeking Brahman. See Glen O. Allen, 'Structure, Symbol and Theme in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*, *PMLA*. IXX (1955), 942-43.

[10] See George H. Thomson, *The Fiction of E. M. Forster* (Delroit, 1967), p. 247.

[11] Forster refers to a tank in each section of the novel—'the ablution tank' in the Mosque, 'the Tank of the Dagger' in the Caves, Mau tank' in the Temple, symbolic of the general atmosphere of their respactive sections.

[12] A. A. Mendilow is of the opinion that just as there is a misprint of 'God si love' for 'God is love' in the temple, so is there a similar 'unfortunate slip' in the transposition of two letters in the name of Godbole: GODLOVE, GODVOLE, GODBOLE. Sae A. A. Mendilow, 'Triadic World of E. M. Forster', *Studies in English Language and Literature*, Vol. XVII, edited by Alice Shalvi and A. A. Mendilow (Jerusalem, 1966), p. 289.

[13] 'E. M. Forster', in *Writers at Work: The 'Paris Review' Interviews*, selected by Kay Dick, Penguin Books, (Harmondsworth, 1972), p. 10.

Evelyne Hanquart

FORSTER ON CONTEMPORARY ENGLISH LITERATURE*

Versty, a journal printed for the Russian emigrants who lived in England and edited by Prince D. S. Mirsky[1], published an essay by E. M. Forster in its second issue for 1927. This essay, entitled 'Contemporary English Literature', appeared, of course, in a translation into Russian by Mirsky himself. Interestingly enough this is the only 'original' text of the essay now surviving, as the review was a short lived one and its archives were destroyed during the second World War. The present study of Forster's contribution to *Versty* is thus based on a recent translation back into English by G. S. Smith of Birmingham University.

However, we are sure that the genuine original was by Forster, as the novelist wrote to his intimate friend J. R. Ackerley in a letter dated 22 September 1926 : 'Now I have to do an article about English Literature for a Russian Prince.' But, to our knowledge, this is the only allusion to the essay, which escaped even Miss Kirkpatrick's attention when she compiled her excellent bibliography of Forster's work.[2]

The novelist's aim was to introduce English literary tradition and life to a group of newly settled people belonging to another cultural tradition, to act, as it were, as the ambassador of his own literature.

In spite of the double translation it underwent, the text

* I wish to thank the Trustees of the Forster Estate—the Provosts and Scholars of King's College, Cambridge, for their permission to quote from copyright material, and Dr G. S. Smith for his permission to quote from his translation.

consisting of some two thousand words, shows the same debunking, zestful irreverence as well as the profound generosity which made Forster's interviews on the B. B. C. so famous and so enjoyable. The picture of English literature he is trying to convey to his readers contrasts, with a mild sense of humour, the writers he considers as the great figures of the late Victorian literary scene with his own contemporaries :

> I picture contemporary English literature as a large untidy room. Disorder is everywhere—curtains faded from the sun, gramophone needles scattered about the carpet—but along the walls stand six massive cupboards whose workmanship witnesses to the demands of the recent past. The names of the six are Hardy, Bennett, Wells Galsworthy, Kipling and Shaw; I do not propose to discuss them in this article, since everyone knows where they stand and what they are doing. We know that Galsworthy is an imposing, if somewhat unstable, piece; that Wells has been placed where he is so that everyone should bump into him; that Bennett's right-hand drawer knows not what is in his left-hand one, and that in the right-hand drawer there are some good things.

Here the novelist does not analyse at all the contents of these 'six massive cupboards' which stand 'on the Victorian carpet' now smeared with contemporary untidiness, but he acknowledges solemnly their stable and everlasting value. He especially mentions *The Dynasts*, *The Old Wives' Tale*, and *Major Barbara* as probable survivors of most of the more recent books. But eminent though these Victorian writers are, one should beware of the spontaneous temptation to regard these impressive figures as a natural source of inspiration for the younger generation, for whom they are, in fact, 'a source of annoyance'.

This rash statement seems at least partly justified as far as Forster himself is concerned. Indeed, he remains silent on Shaw whose Fabian outlook should have been rather sympathetic to him. Silence also marks his reaction to Galsworthy, which is even more surprising in so far as various critics had heralded Forster as Galsworthy's successor after the publication of *Howards End*.[8]

The few allusions he makes to Bennett's work in his journalistic essays or in *Aspects of the Novel* show a complete lack of sympathy with it. A very reciprocal attitude, for Bennett is even more intense in his annoyance at Forster's accomplishment in both *Howards End* and *A Passage to India*.[4]

Kipling's case is more clear-cut. Both in 'The Boy who never Grew up'[5] and in an unpublished talk delivered at the Weybridge Literary Society, roughly contemporary to the paper under examination, Forster expresses how utterly repellent and nauseating Kipling's human ideal is to him :

> In the blind worship of vitality lies Kipling's own danger and ... it often leads him to msitake violence for strength, lust for manliness, and impudence for truth—we shudder when we read about the Race with a big R, the Blood with a big B and the Trail with a big T—He does not deny the inner life in so many words—no educated man has the pluck to do that—but he pushes it far into the background and brings material strength and material organisation to the front.

Forster's attitude to Wells is made clear in *Aspects of the Novel* and the lengthy review of *The Outline of History*[6] which appeared in *The Athenaeum* in November 1920. It displays admiration and sympathy towards Wells's intelligence, richness and zest, but also acute irritation for what Forster considers as his vulgarity and the crude naivety of his reactions.

Among the six novelists,[7] Hardy is certainly the most congenial to Forster, and probably also the most akin to his spirit, given the poetical and prophetic quality of his novels. The analysis of Hardy's work which Forster presents in the chapters devoted to plot and prophecy in *Aspects of the Novel* clearly shows his sympathy and his tempered admiration. The reserve comes from Hardy's tendency to 'force' his characters' fate in the name of some superior transcendent reality which, however, Forster says, he fails to make clearly perceptible to the reader.

In fact Hardy's work, as well as that of the other 'massive' novelists', corresponds to the definition of Victorianism

Forster was then giving in a talk entitled 'English Literature since the War'. The characteristics of Victorianism he there stresses are in striking contrast with the main features of the modern period (i. e. the twenties) he was to bring out later on in the talk :

> For what did the Victorian era stand ? For aspiration. That was its great characteristic. The Victorian writer believed that the world could be perfected, either through God, or through Science, whom he accepted as a beneficient power. The individual might doubt or fail, but the goal, though he might not see it or reach it, remained, and would be achieved by his successors. . . . Aspiration was always desirable, there was always a goal, life was always a pilgrimage. Such beliefs were essential in Victorianism and gave it its solidity and value.

To go back to *Versty*, Forster then opposes to the 'six massive cupboards' 'the chaos of baskets and brooms, sofas and pouffes, which almost hide the Victorian carpet on which they stand'. Through this playful imagery, he points to the impression of disorder, belittlement, and variety, which pervades the contemporary achievement of literature.

In striking contrast with Victorian 'aspiration', the spirit of the age, affected by the war is characterized by disillusion: 'disillusion with everything—but without any kind of tragic element. Duty, will power, inner discipline devalued, mysticism and unselfish awareness suspect, and the ideal of the younger writers . . . an observant and refined idleness'. This negative definition of the spirit of the age seems to account for some aspects of the general Edwardian ethos which the literature of the period has brought to the foreground.

The writers who express this outlook are very different indeed, but they still have a common denominator : 'they are all agreed—they have no intention of perfecting either themselves or the world.'

In this respect, they are the spiritual heirs of Samuel Butler whose novel, *The Way of all Flesh*, foretells and epitomizes the 'ethics of contemporary England'. Indeed

Forster never hid his thorough admiration for Butler who deeply influenced his own attitude to established religion and money. Modern 'immorality', with its disregard for chastity and its 'hatred of cruelty', is to be found in the writers who embody the spirit of the twenties. Their list may be a surprise to the reader of the second half of the century, as it gathers so eclectically Norman Douglas, George Moore, Virginia Woolf, Stella Benson, Max Beerbohm, Lytton Strachey, David Garnett, the Sitwells, whose achievements have now received the sanction of posterity in rather diverging ways.

But Forster's choice remains, nevertheless, a very good illustration of what he meant by 'the spirit of the age', although it limits its implications to a particular outlook significant of his own cultural sphere. Not all of them are connected with 'Bloomsbury', strictly speaking (though three out of eight is a good proportion !), but they are all children of the Victorian upper middle class *intelligentsia* who had been so prominent and influential by the end of the nineteenth century. They are the fashionable writers of the twenties and, in a sense, typify eccentricity rather than generality.

This restricted conception of the gist of his own age leads Forster to rank as exceptions a good many of the now famous names of the period. For him, the older poets, W. B. Yeats and Robert Bridges, have retired into worlds of their own and they 'adorn our age without expressing it'. A. E. Housman is too triumphant in his passion and despair, D. H. Lawrence too much of a prophet crying in the wilderness, to be representative. Among the other exceptions to the spirit of the age, we notice Walter de la Mare, John Masefield, James Barrie, G. K. Chesterton, Hillaire Belloc, Naomi Mitchison, as well as two writers particularly dear to Forster's heart, the Irish novelist Forrest Reid and Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, the author of *The Magic Flute :* 'Each one of these writers is following his inner light, which

could turn out to be the very one that would illuminate our untidy room; but this has not yet come to pass'. Hence they remain idiosyncratic, though sometimes very congenial utterances on the banks of the main stream of contemporary literature, at least as Forster with his own background and personal achievement could visualize it.

However, from this constellation of exceptions, two figures emerge outstandingly: T. S. Eliot and James Joyce, to whom Forster grants a special status, a philosopher's status, as they endeavour not only to use the contemporary world of chaos in their literary enterprise, but above all to express and understand it.

After acknowledging his own difficulty in understanding T. S. Eliot's poetry which 'resembles a rebus. and . . . is profound', and reproaching the author of *The Waste Land* for his 'streak of mystification' ('why when the world is difficult to understand anyway, should a poet compound the difficulty still further with his own crossword puzzles?') Forster praises the mantic dimension in Eliot and expresses admiration as a humanist for the poet who, though knowing that the world will end 'not with a bang but with a whimper', stresses, both in his work and in his life, that humanity riddled with the terrible cancer of modern disillusionment and chaos will remain 'cultured and attractive to the very last minute'.

As for Joyce, charged with 'inverted Victorianism' in which 'malice and dirt' have replaced the Arnoldian 'sweetness and light', he is left aside—a 'black sheep on a grand scale'—in so far as he deliberately ignores the 'good' element in modern chaos.[8]

If we go back to the writers Forster has singled out as representatives of the spirit of the age, we are rather surprised to find that he particularly selected two novelists as different from each other as Norman Douglas, the author of *South Wind* and *They Went*, and Virginia Woolf, the author of *Jacob's Room* and *Mrs Dalloway*. They seem to epitomize

the post-war situation at its best, and to embody the two complementary aspects of contemporary attitude.

Norman Douglas, in his detached, cynical and amused reaction to his fellow-beings, in his sensual dilettanism and bitter irony when confronted with modern life, offers a striking contrast with his deep and knowledgeable interest in the non-human world: 'He is an imposing figure and beside him a writer like Aldous Huxley seems no more that a juvenile poseur.'

Virginia Woolf does not share Douglas's cynical and lax view of life, but she embodies another facet of the spirit of the age in so far as she looks for what is human, but human in its lack of stability, in its fragmentary aspect. The bursting out, and the atomization of personality are the main characteristics of her approach to life. The artist in her aims at an aesthetical, organic building up of the literary work, and this—linked with the absence of any moral judgment—is the converging point where both Norman Douglas's and Virginia Woolf's works meet. The two writers also share a trait that Forster would later define in one of his lectures as the motto of the twenties: 'curiosity' in observant neutrality.[9]

Forster's choice of the representatives of the spirit of the age does not seem a very convincing one to posterity, even if one agrees thoroughly with his definition of it. Norman Douglas is a rather forgotten writer; his work which did not attract much attention for many years has only recently become slightly more read. And if Virginia Woolf's achievement has actually won her a much envied place in modern English literature, she is regarded rather as the representative of one of its streams, one of its *coteries* even, than as the representative of the whole era.

Though there is nothing comparable here to Forster's aim in *Aspects of the Novel* for instance, and the tone is never more than that of a pleasant conversation yet this sketchy

assessment may not be totally discarded, and we may also keep in mind that his remarks were only intended as introductory ones whose 'narrowness' was obvious to the writer himself, as some reading guide-lines for cultured people who were not however professional literary men, but only curious about the intellectual life of the country they had come to inhabit. and eager to discuss it in fashionable salons.

Besides, his reaction is interesting to those who may wonder why he remained silent after *A Passage to India*. Through his description of the spirit of the age, we perceive some of the trends which run across the pervading atmosphere of the novel whose statement he felt he could not go beyond. The spirit of the time was not Forster's. He could lucidly though partially apprehend it, but he himself fell short of expressing it.

Forster's distinction between the stability, the massive robustness, and the meliorist hope of the great late Victorian writers on the one hand, and the sense of fugacity, of fragmentation, the disillusioned curiosity of the following generation on the other, are no doubt characteristic ot their respective apprehensions of life in the individual, social and political aspects. The faith in the universal progress of the world, which sustained one generation, was followed, in the other, by a civilisation of disappointment. Forster's contemporaries had been jeered at for their inherited ideals, and their works express their bafflement at the world they inhabit, which they consciously and lucidly see in the process of disintegration.

University of Paris-Sorbonne

NOTES AND REFERENCES

[1] *Versty*, II, 1927, p. 240-46.

[2] I thank here Miss N. Lavroukine, of the University of Paris-Sorbonne who drew my attention to this article which had escaped all bibliographical treatment until then.

[3] In Forster's first three novels critics had perceived affinities with Meredith's work. *Howards End* was favourably compared with *The Man of Property* in the anonymous review of *The Observer* (8 November 1910) and in R. A. Scott-James's, 'The Year's Best Novel', *Daily News* (9 November 1910). See also *E. M. Forster: The Critical Heritage*, edited by Philip Gardner (London, 1973).

[4] See *New Age*, January 1911. The article is signed 'Jacob Tonson': 'Mr Forster is a young man . . . If he continues to write one book a year regularly, to be discreet and mysterious, to refrain absolutely from certain themes, and to avoid a too marked tendency to humour, he will be the most fashionable novelist in England in ten years time. His worldly prospects are very brilliant indeed'. See also diary dated 25 January: '[*P. T. I.*] All details are good: but the ensemble is fuzzy, or wuzzy. Although I only finished the book three hours ago, I don't recall now what the purport of the end of book is.' *The Journals of A. Bennett* (London, 1933).

[5] *Daily Herald*, 9 June 1920.

[6] *Athenaeum*, 19 November 1920.

[7] It is interesting to note that Forster only chooses novelists to illustrate the Victorian era, whereas his examples for the modern period take other literary *genres* into account.

[8] See *Aspects of the Novel* (London, 1974), p. 84.

[9] 'In the Early Years . . .', an unpublished talk by Forster dating from the years immediately preceding the second World War, is now deposited in King's College Library, Cambridge. 'I'll give it as a motto "curiosity" . . . It's a civilisation of disillusioned people. The civilisation which sprang up was not interested in social work like its predecessors, not interested in moral or questions of belief and disbeliefs. It was a private civilisation, if you like a selfish one . . . The post-war people are out strong in both these ways. They enjoyed themselve and they tried to understand.'

BOOK REVIEWS

E M. Forster : The Personal Voice : By JOHN COLMER (London : Routledge & Kegan Paul), 1957, 227 pp.

Post-war criticism of Forster and a reassessment of his works by eminent scholars has not only established him as one of the greatest creative writers of the present century but also as a thinker, a liberal and an individualist. In the wake of the fresh revival of interest in Forster on both sides of the Atlantic, commendable studies throwing light on different aspects of the novelist have come out. Professor John Colmer's book *E. M. Forster : The Personal Voice* is one of the most comprehensive, well-documented and uptodate critical studies on Forster. Besides the critical material on Forster, Colmer has also taken note of the newly published memoirs and biographies of his friends and contemporaries that present sidelights on the novelist's personality.

E. M. Forster : The Personal Voice is a significant contribution to Forster criticism because without being too formal or too abstract, Colmer has tried to present the creative writer, the liberal, the anti-Nazi pacifcist, the mystic, the homosexual and the 'freedom' fighter from a fresh point of view. As a result of his enquiry the whole man emerges in full view, though somewhat individualistic and even enigmatic but human to the very core. The book 'aims to place Forster's various works in their appropriate social and cultural context, using as far as possible, Forster's own account of the climate of thought in which his powers as a writer developed.'

Colmer follows the Trilling-Beer tradition but adds something new and original to it in his study. Trilling's *E. M. Forster : A Study* (1944) is valuable for offering intel-

lectual and political background to Forster's work and Beer's *The Achievement of E. M Forster* (1962) stresses the romantic and moral aspects of Forster's art. John Colmer's book supplements these studies by unifying the visionary and aesthetic aspects with the personal modes and attitudes of the artist in his creative writings.

The first chapter 'Life and Times' provides sufficient biographical sidelights on the novelist's formative years—'the female-dominated world', initiation into the life of 'comeradeship' ('to be loved and even hurt') and the urge for 'continuity', realised in the wake of sudden exile from his rural paradise. References to Forster's reactions to the shallowness of middle class culture and his hatred of the conventional values have been made by eminent critics. Colmer records Forster's early impressions and underscores the importance of Cambridge on the development of the young author. According to him Forster felt liberated in Cambridge but scepticism leading to agnosticism further deepened his urge for 'continuity' and 'personal salvation'. While emphasising the influence of nineteenth-century liberalism, Romanticism, the Cambridge Apostles, and Bloomsbury, and the general socio-political milieu, the author appropriately reminds us of the novelist's insistence 'that a writer's development is internal' (p. 19).

Before discussing 'Italian Novels' Colmer analyses the beckground of the short stories and the 'germination' of Forster's early novels. He refers to the influence of the series of *Guides* and volumes of *Sketches* on Forster's nascent mind and concludes that the short stories (including his homosexual stories, published later) form an ideal introduction to Forster's fictional universe. They not only introduce us to his characteristic blend of poetry and realism but also explore themes and motifs more amply developed in the novels—salvation, the 'rescue party', the past, the personal relations, nature, money and the attacks on conventional ideas of good form.

A Room with a View provides the framework of contrasting values ideally suited to novels of domestic comedy in Jane Austen's manner. Though Colmer is not blind to Forster's excessive concern with the art, architecture and local colour of Italy, he believes that in this novel Forster comes closest in spirit to Jane Austen : 'It celebrates the victory of Love and Truth over 'Muddle' (p. 43). The analysis of the dramatic value of scenes and situations in the novel is abundantly suggestive. The critic very rightly remarks that in this early novel Forster explores the interaction of the different levels of consciousness in a manner that foreshadows *Howards End* and *A Passage to India*.

Like the earlier novel, *Where Angels Fear to Tread* also evokes the atmosphere and spirit of Italy with special intensity. But the theme is that of 'the rescue'. Colmer refers to Forster's simple time-table of the rescues in the manuscripts, now in the British Museum. Every reader of the novel knows that *Where Angels Fear to Tread* is a novel about being saved. The critic, however, observes that two different ideas of being saved are played off against each other : 'One is the idea of spiritual salvation, of saving one's inner integrity, of achieving wholeness of being . . . The other is saving face, the whole business of sending out rescue parties to prevent an undesirable marriage' (p. 54).

Though not strictly Forster's *Juvenalia* the early novels draw attention to his meticulous impressionism and to visionary experiences with regard to the theme of personal salvation. In these novels the juxtaposition of Italy and England serves as a major structural principle for contrasting the two approaches to life : the instinctive and the conventional. In the English novels, *The Longest Journey* (1907), *Howards End* (1910) and *Maurice* (written 1913-14), the structure rests on contrast within English society; consequently communities and houses serve a more important symbolic role than in the Italian novels.

Colmer is very perceptive in his treatment of the English

novels. He holds that the theme in these novels is England, the question of 'who shall inherit England'. But at the the very outset, while reminding us of the limitations of Forster's solutions (pastoral Code), he probes the true nature of these novels in the following words : 'They also assert the supremacy of imaginative reason; they explore the possibilities of man living in harmony with the earth; they are centrally concerned with the sanctity of personal relations, with the need to "connect"; and they all show that ultimately "the inner life pays", an ironic reversal of the commercial ethics of the day' (p. 66).

The tripartite division of *The Longest Journey* into Cambridge, Sawston and Wiltshire corresponds to three different responses to life. In the first section, Cambridge, we meet the hero, Rickie Elliot full of high ideals and a radiant vision of human fellowship. In the Sawston chapter, we watch the progressive deterioration of Rickie's character under the influence of his wife Agnes, an unimaginative woman, and of her brother, Mr Pembroke a house master at Sawston school. In the last section of the novel, Wiltshire, Rickie loses his own life in saving Stephen (his illegitimate brother) from being run over by a train. Clearly another story about salvation. Yet, equally important is the theme of illusion and reality. The imaginative Rickie suffers as much as the instinctive Stephen or the intellectual Ansell. The novel as a whole suggests that no one approach is sufficient but that all are necessary.

Colmer, brilliantly correlating *The Longest Journey* with the homosexual stories, remarks that for obvious reasons Forster was driven into using a number of subterfuges to hide his real theme—love between men. But since the publication of *Maurice* in 1971, the new approach illuminates much that has always seemed obscene. Two different views have been taken of this confusion. John Harvey sees it as 'an expression of confused and inadequate vision of life' while Trilling sees it as 'a failure to master technique'.

Colmer surmises: 'it is a confusion of vision as well as of technique', yet his final remarks about the novel are revealing: '*The Longest Journey* is something more interesting than a splendid failure or a flawed masterpiece. It is a novel that challenges most of our settled critical categories and is a landmark in Forster's fictional development' (p. 84).

Howards End, built on a major anti-thesis—the contrast between culture and materialism, is a novel embracing a broader spectrum of English society. it is not the story of a young man's imaginative and emotional development, but the story of two strongly contrasted groups of people—the Wilcoxes (Commercialism, Power) and the Schlegels (Culture). The importance of 'Continuity' is symbolised in the house Howards End. Colmer's main thesis about the novel is that 'it seeks to transmute the muddle of existence into the mystery of life, to transform the horrors of industrialism into a plausible pastoral vision' (p. 93). He successfully illustrates his thesis by suggesting the theme of harmony in a variety of ways: 'It is explored through the private lives of individuals, through the conflict of classes, through the conflict of national traditions' (p, 94). Thus *Howards End* occupies a distinctive place among novels about culture and society. In this respect this novel may be compared to James's novels on love and money, particularly *The Princess Casemassive* (1886) and *The Golden Bowl* (1904). It may, however, be conceded that these works may not be rated fictional masterpieces because of their lack of human warmth and a limited appeal for the general reader.

Colmer's chapter on 'Posthumous Fiction' is not only informative but also suggestive and illuminating. He refers to four different manuscript versions of *Arctic Summer* and discusses its significance in the perfection of Forster's work. The critic is more successful in presenting a perceptive study of the creative sources and biographical details of *Maurice* (1971) in which Forster granted his male lovers a triumph in exile and speculated on the possibility of a redeemed England

through their classless love. He points out how it throws great light on Forster's dilemma as an artist and as a man: how to come to terms with his own sexuality in a society that imprisoned homosexuals and banned homosexual literature. The key sentence in Colmer's critique of the novel is that *Maurice* is an exercise, in personal therapy, not a finished work of art (p. 114). One may add that it is well done in certain respects but not worth doing. With its simple framework the novel treating the homosexual relations of Maurice Hell with two young men Clive Bell and Alec Scudder and culminating in Maurice and Alec's retreat into the green woods carries the suggestion that they will inherit England. Professor Colmer traces streaks of homosexuality in Forster from the earlier stories and novels to the appearance of his masterpiece *A Passage to India*. Obviously for Forster personal relations are manifested through homosexual relations in so many of his fictional works.

Before taking up *A Passage to India*, Colmer discusses the background of this novel through Forster's visits to India, his knowledge of Islamic culture in Alexendria and his awareness of the sanctity of Hindu ceremonies. Forster's 'Indian Entries' published in *Encounter* (January 1962) and his visit to different Indian cities is quite well known.

The Hill of Devi based on a carefully edited version of letters he wrote home to his mother and friends during his visits to India supply additional material. Forster had responded at the deepest level of his being to the beauty and terror of the Indian landscape. He was equally interested in probing the mysteries or 'muddles' of India and in speculating on the difficulties in establishing personal relationship among different communities.

It is difficult to agree with Professor Colmer's view that *A Passage to India* presents a composite picture of India. The truth is that Forster's glimpses of India are mainly impressionistic. His cursory and superficial knowledge of men and places hardly qualifies him to grasp the real spirit of

India ('unity in diversity'). Forster's own claim that the novel is 'about the search of the human race for a more lasting home, about the universe as embodied in the Indian earth and the horror lurking in the Marabar Caves and the release symbolised by the birth of Krishna' sounds rather unconvincing. Viewed as a work of art that reflects Indian culture and society the novel succeeds only in yoking together heterogenous elements but always emphasizing the 'diversity' rather than the 'unity'. However, artistically speaking, *A Passage to India* does mark the culmination of Forster's career. The harmony in the novel is at best the product of an effort to reconcile the opposites and the incompatibles.

Professor Colmer views the tripartite structure of the novel in a rather simplistic manner. According to him, the first part, Mosque, explores the Moslem approach to truth; the second part, Caves, examines the confusion and sterility of the British and the third part, Temple, celebrates the comprehensive spirituality of the Hindu approach. His discovery of a variety of 'parallel and interlocking relationships' is interesting and reminds us of the difficulties in bringing Englishmen and Indians together as friends: 'The two nations cannot be friends' 'I know. Not yet'. Colmer repeats Forster's view that affection can triumph over corroding suspicion and produce connection and harmony but the triumph is precarious. Colmer observes shrewdly to the affect that 'In *A Passage to India*, language comes to stand for everything that divides man: while memory and silences stand for what reconciles and unites' (p. 168).

Professor Colmer thinks that since Forster's achievement as a novelist depends mainly on his power of characterization, his mastery of dialogue, his delicately poised irony, his flexible prose, he will continue to be read and appreciated as a major twentieth century novelist. He even asserts that Forster's novels will survive changes of fashion and that his critical and social writings will continue to be read both for

their originality of thought and expression and for their historical interest' (p. 227). Perhaps he could have conveniently telescoped certain descriptive chapters to make room for general criticism of Forster's art and vision. Works such as *Howards End* and *A Passage to India* deserve thorough scrutiny. The brief critical appraisals, though quite rewarding for the general reader, leave him craving for a fuller treatment.

Nevertheless, Colmer's book is a valuable contribution to Forster studies and opens fresh avenues for further research. His balanced judgments and comprehensive view of the artist's genius undoubtedly help him in giving us the quintessence of Forster in an objective yet sympathetic manner.

Department of English Mohammad Yaseen
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh

E. M. Forster : The Endless Journey. By JOHN SAYRE MARTIN (Cambridge : Cambridge University Press), 1976: viii+174 pp.

Being one of an introductory series on British authors the book is an attempt at a full-length critical introduction to Forster's fiction. In accordance with the aim of the series Professor Martin takes the reader straight to the works though he begins by pointing to the historical predicament of the twentieth century writer to account for the exploratory and tentative character of these works. This predicament is marked by the lack of a publicly acknowledged code of values, and so in this predicament Forster's basic concern, according to Professor Martin, is to explore the possibilities of harmonizing private values with public values, or, in other

words, of reconciling the claims of the inner life with those of the outer life. 'If Forster is sometimes evasive, it is basically because he does not know how far such reconciliation is possible'. Through his protagonists he is always reaching out for it and never completely attaining it. His journey is an 'endless journey'.

Professor Martin would explain Forster's fiction on the basis of the conflicting claims of private and public life though his thesis dissolves when he comes to consider *A Passage to India*. He relates it even to Forster's homosexuality, which is, after all, a fact of private life no less valid than heterosexuality. He cannot refrain from alluding to the writer's biography in order 'to account for his generally unconvincing portrayal of heterosexual feeling'. That this portrayal is unconvincing and that 'Forster's handling of homosexual love, on the other hand, is more explicit and frequently more convincing' cannot altogether be denied.

Professor Martin does well to point out that 'the exploratory character of Forster's fiction is thematically suggested through its emphasis on travel'. Forster's protagonists, the homosexuals not excluded, are always travelling, literally as as well as metaphorically and very much like the central figures of romantic allegory, into new regions of experience in search of fulfilment, and are subjected to conflicting claims of antithetical forces—Swaston and Italy, outer life and inner life, 'desire for ultimate meaning and a devastating spiritual nihilism' etc.—their central problem being the assimilation of the new experience and its accommodation to the accustomed world of their class and culture. But Professor Martin has not traced the development of Forster's exploratory awareness as indicated by his various apprehensions of the antithetical forces and of the possibilities of their reconciliation in the knowledge of harmony. He has not recognized that Forster's antithetical elements get more and more involved with ultimate issues till we come to *A Passage to India* where the antithesis is not so much bet-

ween private and public values, inner and outer life, heart and head, not so much between the claims of the world within and of the world without as between man's attempt to structure meaning on the one hand and on the other the mysterious challenge of intractable contingency, of the nullifying 'unseen' or unknown within and without man. One gets the impression that Professor Martin has failed to appreciate Forster's growing awareness of the 'mystery' of existence, his growing awareness of 'a curious backwash' that makes ultimate meaning an ever-receding goal and life an 'endless journey'. One wishes he had adjusted his critical focus properly.

While commenting on the baby-bathing scene in *Where Angels* Professor Martin throws some enlightening hints towards a comparison of Forster with D. H. Lawrence. True 'Lawrence at his best would have been less overtly pictorial and rendered more fully than Forster the impact of the scene on the subliminal lives of the two adults. Nor would he at his best have been sentimental as Forster is when he asserts Gino's greatness and majesty, and intrudes upon the portait of father and son a generalization of doubtful validity'. To this, it may be added that Lawrence would have evoked the throbbing intensity of Caroline's love for Gino, would have made us feel it on our pulses, instead of making us hear her confession at the end of the novel. Professor Martin is right about Forster's over-riding ambition for allegory and his 'cavalier disregard for realism', though he himself ingeniously elaborates on the allegorical significance of Monteriano and the little wood at the base of the hill. With regard to Philip Monteriano recalls purgatory and the little wood Dante's 'selva oscura'. Philip himself should be an ironical analogue of Dante and Caroline of Beatrice. But Professor Martin does not seem to have sufficiently right conceptions about Dante's 'idealism' and his 'detachment from individuals' that Forster himself attributes to Dante in his essays on the Italian poet. He forgets that while Dante tends 'to

look through people rather than at them' he sees them, in relation to eternity, in their most intensely significant individualities. It is worth considering why in comparison to Dante's vision 'Philip's deification of Caroline is a piece of sentimental extravagance'. Later on, Professor Martin makes a similar mistake when he compares Godbole's impersonal love for 'all men' to Dante's 'rarefied love' for Beatrice (p. 156), whom Dante regards, in her most intensely significant individuality, one that makes her a sign of God for him—a *Thou* revealing the *Eternal Thou*.

In his discussion of *The Longest Journey* Professor Martin's elucidation of the sqaure-circle figure as mandala—with the circles symbolizing the celestial and the visionary and the squares the mundane and the practical and the total configuration pointing to 'Rickie's desire for a total, integrated reality—is admirable. He is highlighting here, as elsewhere, the Forsterian problem: Is it worthwhile to save one's soul at the cost of losing the whole world?

The problem is highlighted in the discussion of the short stories, too, which are seen, as other works are, in the light of public-private life conflict. It is a valuable feature of Professor Martin's book that all the short stories of Forster, as published in the *Collected Tales* and *The Life to Come*, have been discussed in considerable detail.

Although Professor Martin does not trace the development of Forster's awareness of the 'mystery' he takes note of his sense of the 'external' and sometimes mysterious, cosmic forces that man is subject to' in 'a disjointed, inexplicable universe'. He takes note of them in *A Room with a View*. He rightly observes that Lucy's salvation is shot through with 'moral ambiguity', depending 'less on her own virtue than on good luck and the influence of others'. But he overlooks the fact that with the development of Forster's awareness of the 'mystery' it is revealed that the 'cosmic forces' operate not only externally but also internally, as 'unseen' factors of the inner life itself. For example, in *A Passage* something snaps

inside Mrs Moore, Aziz and Fielding; and there is something inside Adela of which Professor Martin would give only a psychological explanation—that accounts for her mysterious-muddledexperience In the cave. Even inside Mr Lucas there operates some mysterious force to make him relapse into spiritual blindness.

One would like to agree with Professor Martin on all the points about the defects of the novels other than *A Passage*—their confusion of allegorical and realistic aims, their sentimentality and ambiguity, their unconvincing characters, their lack of coherence, etc. In the chapter on *Howards End* he has admirably scrutinized Henry's character as 'the novel's chief flaw'. If the 'outer life' is what Henry represents, 'the reader may wonder why on earth should Margaret want to attach herself to it,' he rightly observes. Once again Forster is unable 'to reconcile the novel's allegorical element with its attempt to achieve social and psychological realism'. Professor Martin does well to highlight the travel theme that is underscored in this novel through references to seas, rivers and tides. As to how matters turn out for Forster's protagonists-travellers, it is true that much depends on luck, 'or, to put it another way, on the manipulating hand of the novelist'. It cannot be denied that 'no novel of Forster's is more obviously contrived' than *Howards End*.

The next chapter is remarkable for being devoted to a much needed full-length discussion on *Maurice*. Professor Martin rightly observes that '*Maurice* is the narrowest and least resonant of Forster's six novels'. He convincingly demonstrates that it is 'the most patently flawed of Forster's novels'. The author's 'uncertain control' over his material, particularly in the case of Clive 'who does most to throw the novel off balance': the sentimentality, particularly of calling 'struggles like Maurice's 'the supreme achievements of humanity' and the unconvincing characters, particularly the character of Alec Scudder—all these flaws have been convincingly demonstrated. But one would not like to go with

Professor Martin to the extent of seeing a necessary connection between Forster's personal 'awareness of the perils of being a homosexual' and the fact that so many of his fictional characters become involved in 'tabooed relationships'. This is stretching biography too naively.

A Passage to India has been rightly accalaimed as 'a modern classic' and a work from which 'great chords reverberate'. Of course, the India of the novel is 'the modern world in epitome'—and not merely the modern world, it may be added, but the world in its incomprehensible complexity and multiplicity. It is not ultimately a 'disordered world', as Professor Martin carelessly calls it—that would amount to taking the Caves as final—but a world that accepts order partially and temporarily and denies it indifferently and mysteriously, challenging man to go on searching for a more and more satisfying vision of order. The ultimate impression the novel leaves is not that in a 'disordered and meaningless world' 'Life is valuable for its own sake' but that life is an 'endless journey' towards mysteriously alluring and ever-receding goal of ultimate meaning. The 'mystery' within and without man, which Professor Martin does not distinguish from 'muddle', has its positive implications. This is the central truth that the critic fails to highlight.

It addition to some fallacies the book has an improper critical focus; it is useful for the light it throws on Forster's fiction; but it could have been more useful than it is—at least it could have justified its sub-title in a better way.

Department of English
Aligarh Muslim University
Aligarh

Z. A. Usmani

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