

FROM HEGEL TO HINDUISM:
THE DIALECTIC OF E. M. FORSTER

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CHAPTER I
THE INNER WAR

O born in days when wits were fresh and clear,
And life ran gayly as the sparkling Thames;
Before this strange disease of modern life,
With its sick hurry, its divided aims,
Its heads o'ertaxed, its palsied hearts, was rife--
Matthew Arnold, The Scholar Gypsy

It has become a commonplace in literary criticism to say that most writers have one thing to say and when they have said that they become either repetitive or silent. To no other twentieth-century writer has this platitude been applied more often than to E. M. Forster. In his case the remark takes on overtones of irritation modulated into envy: he has gained fame, the critics say, by not writing novels. Although vociferous enough in articles and essays since 1924--the date of his last-published novel, A Passage to India--Forster has produced only five novels and one collection of short stories. Yet his work persists in nagging the imagination and puzzling the critical sensitivity of his detractors and admirers alike. The first group have seen him as a disillusioned Edwardian too genteel to be angry, or an effete hothouse plant snuggling, under glass, in the corner of an undusted Georgian drawing room. The second group have seen him as the champion of pale but inwardly audacious anti-heroes, or have tried to justify his fictional silence as a twentieth-century Weltschmerz, in which his India becomes a Bloomsburyian wasteland, a bog of intellectual--and hence acceptable--disillusionment.

The problem for both groups might be solved by shifting the focus from Forster to his work. Biography can never be severed from creative effort, and it is certainly not my intention to do so here. To the contrary, Forster's biography contains those frustrations, fears and doubts which motivated and articulated his themes, but it should be seen as an ingredient rather than as the whole of the motivating force directing his productivity. In 1940, a year ripe with the frustrations of World War II, he wrote in "The Individual and His God": "Besides our war against totalitarianism, we have also an inner war, a struggle for truer values, a struggle of the individual towards the dark, secret place where he may find reality."¹ It was this search for an inner reality impelled by struggle which, I believe, contains the clue to his fictional method and which, if understood, can clarify his message, the "thing" he has "said." That method uses struggle as its fuel. One cannot have struggle without two opposing forces. One cannot have two opposing forces without some form of resolution--even impasse is resolution of a sort. One cannot have resolution between deadly enemies that does not demand, eventually, fresh struggle, fresh resolution. Forster's method, based on his inner war between the self and everything--nature, the state, other people--which constitute the Not-Self, became, I believe, his own brand of the Hegelian dialectic.

Dialectic is a term one should use with caution and some hesitation. It has been applied with equal authority to Socratic cross-examination (elenchus), Platonic dialogue, Aristotelian syllogism (categorical demonstration), Kantian transcendentalism (the second division of his

Transcendental Logic Kant entitled "Transcendental Dialectic"), and to the so-called Hegelian triad of thesis, antithesis and synthesis (Dreischritt). I say "so-called" because Hegel never used the terms "thesis, antithesis, synthesis." His method was much more spiritual than is generally supposed.² The central idea which dictated the content and form of his Phenomenology of Mind is aufheben, the annihilation of, but at the same time the preservation of, each preceding step into a new metamorphosis which in turn demands its own annihilation and preservation, ad infinitum until one reaches Absolute Reality, Absolute Truth, Absolute Spirit. This is precisely Forster's method. Again and again, in story after story, in novel after novel, his characters, by annihilating and yet preserving previous concepts of themselves, through their experiences, through their knowledge gained in visionary moments--moments almost interchangeable with Hegel's description of self-consciousness--attain new levels of awareness which, depending on the intensity and quality of their experience, reach or fall short of that inner reality which is Forster's Holy Grail.³ Forster, like Hegel, refuses a synthesis, even when the last step--acceptance of all things through the subconscious--is taken. He is closer to Hegel than the others because Forster, like Hegel, carries his view of man beyond Aristotle's categories; both Forster and Hegel see the Absolute, unlike Plato, as a pervasive spiritual possibility rather than as a goal to be "reached"; both see the self, unlike Kant, as a substance capable of assimilating the Not-Self rather than as an autonomous entity retaining a dichotomy with the Ding an Sicht.⁴ With both it is the connection of contraries rather than the

separation that is important. "Only connect" is Forster's cry throughout his work. We must, he believes, connect with nature, with other people, with ourselves, before reality and peace can be found. When such total connection occurs, it may cause death or disintegration of the character, but still this is not a synthesis, a closing in, so much as it is an opening out, the first step in a new dialectic of the spirit where the soul rises to ever widening experiences. Thus Mrs. Wilcox's ancestors, in Howards End, can communicate with her; Mrs. Moore can "connect" with Aziz, Fielding, and Adela after her death in A Passage to India. The learning and assimilating process for Forster does not end with death, but often begins when the objects of this world--including other people--are assimilated into the self to be transmuted into a new metamorphosis capable of further learning, further assimilating. There is no "next" world: all is one, for those of us able to operate on the subconscious level of cognition, which is, for Forster, uncluttered by reason, education, or convention, and constitutes true understanding.

Because he refuses synthesis, none of Forster's stories or novels have a "last" chapter or scene. "Expansion," he wrote in Aspects of the Novel, "That is the idea the novelist must cling to. Not completion. Not rounding off but opening out."⁵ All Forster's stories, as Alan Friedman insists, open outward rather than end.⁶ Schiller's pun, that Hegel's dialectic was really a "Trialectic," a "Try-it-on," might, with justification, be applicable to Forster. Forster's Cambridge friend Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson defined the "Trialectic" as an insistence upon the tentative and experimental character, not merely of human life,

but of the universe as a whole.⁷ Human life is experimental for Forster; the universe is tentative. His search is a "Try-it-on." First with fantasy and myth, then with impulse, emotion, intuition and mysticism characters try to reconcile the contradictions between themselves and nature, themselves and other people. Yet those contradictions are not self-cancelling but form fulcrums for uplift onto other levels of exploration, to be examined in the next short story, the next novel. Thus his canon assumes a directed vacillation which, once understood, is not vacillation at all but a controlled thrust toward the final step, a mystical awareness of the Absolute through love. Forster travels up by going down into that "lower personality" where, "unless a man dips a bucket down into it occasionally he cannot produce first-class work."⁸ Forster dips and his subconscious produces, but such a psychic activity disconcerts those who would like to read his work by daylight. Forster will not accommodate them. He shies constantly away from a static, factual, scientific approach; his method is introspective, intuitive, instinctual, and in its last stages occult. Although based on experience, his search is not empirical so much as it is spiritual. Sidney Hook, in "What is Dialectic?" might have been writing of Forster when he made the distinction between scientific thinking and the dialectical process: "The fundamental difference between dialectic and science is that scientific thinking is controlled at some point by the facts it seeks to explain, while dialectic thinking, seeking to clarify and not to explain, is autonomous, is always on the wing; the introduction of a fact spells its death."⁹ It is so with Forster. His search is "always on the wing."

From each new position on his dialectical chart, Forster views his characters through the transparent shadows of his own chiaroscuro. Once we learn to "see" with him--"seeing" and "having a view" are two of his favorite yardsticks for characters--we realize that Forster, through his dialectical method, displays a more unified effort than his canon would at first disclose.

Where did he get such a method, and did he use it consciously or unconsciously? The answers to such questions must always remain conjecture, although efforts toward answers must be attempted if deeper understandings are to be achieved. Certainly biography and the milieu of the 1890's enters here. Forster first went up to Cambridge in 1897 and left in 1901. He could not have gone to Cambridge at a more exciting time. His fellow-students, Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore, considered themselves iconoclasts rebelling against the Hegelian idealism taught by John McTaggart Ellis McTaggart. But Moore with his non-natural quality of Absolute Good (*Summum Bonum*) and Russell with his "neutral monism," a oneness of mind and matter, were both searching for an unchanging essence beyond the reach of time and change.¹⁰ Both made their way eventually, although by different routes, back to the mysticism inherent in McTaggart's teaching. Their colleague, Alfred North Whitehead, would write later in Modes of Thought that "the purpose of philosophy is to rationalize mysticism!"¹¹ Such a definition could easily be applied to McTaggart, Moore, Russell, and Forster. The 1890's interest in the occult--whether such an interest was a reaction to nineteenth-century industrialism, a residue of self-examination left over from Evangelical

Protestantism, or just another form of Romantic malaise--is an influence which cannot be ignored.¹² One fact which emerges from the last years of the century is the power of this interest in the inexplicable. Hermetic, Cabalist, Alchemist and Astrological Societies appeared. Under the influence of Mme. Blavatsky, founder of the Theosophical Society, Yeats joined the Order of the Golden Dawn. Dickinson, Forster's friend who would go with him on his first voyage to India and whose biography Forster would write, belonged to the Society for Psychical Research. McTaggart published "The Further Determination of the Absolute," an essay which would expand into the mysticism of his The Nature of Existence in the 1920's.¹³ Dowson's "Out of a misty dream / Our path emerges for a while, then closes / Within a dream" expressed the bittersweet reverence for the brevity of life inherited from Marvell and Herrick, but also contained not only a new emphasis on the mystery of life but a new juxtaposition of that mystery with an industrialized Victorianism, its religion bent on control, its science based on the expendability of man. Others would kick against the shins of the Archbishop of Canterbury and of Darwin: Hardy with meliorism, Shaw with creative will, Swinburne with a Hellenic revolt, William James with an investigation of psychic experience, McTaggart with a spiritual universe held together by love, Roger Fry with "Art for Art's Sake." And Forster? Forster seems to partake of and assimilate all these. There are elements of meliorism at the end of A Passage to India, of creative will in The Longest Journey, of Hellenic revolt in the short stories, of interest in psychic experience, a spiritual universe and art for art's sake throughout his work. His

championing of each in its turn illumines "the dark, secret place where he may find reality."

Forster's interest in Hinduism hinges, it seems to me, on the importance it gives to the unseen. In "The Gods of India," he wrote:

The Hindu is concerned not with conduct, but with vision. To realize what God is seems more important than to do what God wants. He has a constant sense of the unseen--of the powers around if he is a peasant, of the power behind if he is a philosopher, and he feels that this tangible world, with its chatter of right and wrong, subserves the intangible. . . . And the promise is not that a man shall see God, but that he shall be God. . . . He will realise the universe as soon as he realises himself. . . .¹⁴

This is precisely what happens in the last chapters of Hegel's Phenomenology. Self-consciousness, through deeper and deeper awareness, becomes God, the Absolute, by realizing (i.e., assimilating) the universe. It is also what happens in the last stage of Forster's dialectic, in which his character (Mrs. Moore of A Passage to India) mystically "connects" with the Absolute through an unqualified acceptance (love) of the universe in her subconscious. Such a process is synonymous with the Hindu idea of bhakti, the complete love and acceptance of all things, animate and inanimate, on the subconscious level of awareness. Although Forster did not espouse Hinduism as his final answer--no creed could have satisfied him completely--his emphasis on the subconscious and his distrust of cognition as an inadequate fetish of the West made Hinduism congenial to him.¹⁵ It was perhaps an acceptable--some critics say for him the most acceptable--approach to the Unseen.¹⁶ He was, as he describes the Hindu worshipper in "The Gods of India," "athirst for the inconceivable."

Much deeper and closer to the bone of his thought than either

Cambridge or his interest in Hinduism were his early loss of a sense of place and his conviction that personal relations in the West were becoming increasingly difficult after World War I. To David Jones he admitted, "I think that one of the reasons why I stopped writing novels is that the social aspect of the world changed so much. I had been accustomed to write about the old-fashioned world with its homes and its family life and its comparative peace. All that went, and though I can think about the new world I cannot put it into fiction."¹⁷ The mixture of resentment and nostalgia in such remarks is obvious. Homes and family life--a sense of place and personal relations--were his two persistent themes. Forster's deep conviction that people must "connect" with the earth and with each other for inward peace, that they must reject industrialism's demands that such connection be severed in the interest of "progress" hints at a personal anxiety close to neurosis. Besides regretting his family's loss of Battersea Rise, an ancestral home in Clapham razed by the encroaching industrialism of London, Forster was plagued by the thought that the same industrialism provided him with an inheritance through his great-aunt, Marianne Thornton, which sent him to Cambridge and allowed him to travel and write. "In came the nice fat dividends," he wrote in "The Challenge of Our Time," "up rose the lofty thoughts, and we did not realize that all the time we were exploiting the poor of our own country and the backward races abroad, and getting bigger profits from our investments than we should. We refused to face this unpalatable truth."¹⁸ He read Shaw's Widowers' Houses and felt so guilty that he sold some of his South African mining stock and some shares in Imperial

Chemicals, Ltd. ("70 ordinary and 50 preferred").¹⁹ He wrote in Time and Tide, "It is impossible for any one to have clean hands. I will wash my hands in innocency and so will I go to thine altar? Impossible. There's nowhere to wash. We are all messed up together in a civilization which is going badly askew. Yet resignation is a mistake. . . ." ²⁰

Money, which had robbed thousands of the contemplative life, gave him time for contemplation about personal relationships; industrialism, which had destroyed rural England, allowed him to live comfortably in Cambridge and write about the loss of a sense of place. And yet he felt deeply that it is necessary to connect with the earth in order to attain peace; it is necessary to connect with one another in order to become human. His faith in personal relations, which should have been killed by World War I and the hopeless debacle of Europe in the 1920's and its aftermath, the Walpurgisnacht of Hitler, seemed to reinforce his faith that people could-- indeed must--connect. His almost perverse individualism ("I hate the idea of causes, and if I had to choose between betraying my country and betraying my friend, I hope I should have the guts to betray my country.") put him on Goebbels' list of Englishmen scheduled for execution after the German invasion of Britain.²¹ He could confront the Germans, sell a few stocks, even contemplate the possibility of betraying his country, but somehow, none of these sufficed. When he fought his own battle for reality, it had to be on the inside. For that war, there was nowhere else to go.

It is one thing to speak of biography, with its frustrations, its guilts and its commitments, and another to get those across to a reader

in fiction. One way out--for the sense of place, at least--was myth, particularly Greek myth. In his 1957 introduction to Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson's The Greek View of Life, Forster wrote that the Greeks "are modern because many of their problems are ours, and have been expressed, particularly in Athens, with a lucidity beyond our power. We cannot be lucid, we are too much involved."²² His assumption, that man can "connect" with nature, is too important to him. He fails most obviously when he embodies the possibility of such connection too concretely, as he does in the short stories, in mythological fauns and Pans. The reader is liable to feel, with Dickinson, a cleft between Forster's use of myth and real life. Of the short stories Dickinson wrote: "I am not well satisfied with them. Your constant preoccupation to bring realistic life into contact with the background of values (or whatever it is) is very difficult to bring off, and I am apt to feel the cleft."²³ Even when Forster transferred his mythic creatures into the "elemental" characters of the novels, those close-to-nature Demeter figures and Pan-like young men (Ruth Wilcox of Howards End, Stephen Wonham of The Longest Journey) who could "connect" both with nature and with others, there is still the problem of the tangible assimilating the intangible. Forster's friend Virginia Woolf explained his problem as one of connecting "the actual thing with the meaning of the thing," of carrying "the reader's mind across the chasm which divides the two without spilling a single drop of its belief." For Woolf, his vision was peculiar and his message was elusive; he was, she wrote, "an uneasy truant in fairyland."²⁴

Her judgment echoes the central problem of Forster's critics.

Because he gives equivocal answers Forster has been seen as an equivocal figure. I. A. Richards has called him "the most comforting of modern writers, and at the same time one of the most uncomfortable." F. R. Leavis speaks of his "spinsterish inadequacy," C. B. Cox of his "weak values." Dickinson complained that his "double vision squints," and James McConkey that the Forsterian hero is incomplete. Forster's Indian friend Raja Rao described him as a "Dostoyevsky without faith" and Malcolm Bradbury as "not a novelist of solutions . . . his visions . . . are defined in terms of the anarchy that they must comprehend, and therefore they are never fully redemptive; there is always something they may not account for." Yet Rose Macaulay, who wrote the first book-length study of Forster in 1938, found that "it is this vision of reality, this passionate antithesis between the real and the unreal, the true and the false, being and not-being, that gives the whole body of E. M. Forster's work, in whatever genre, its unity."²⁵ The juxtaposition of positive and negative elements which Macaulay noticed is, I suggest, Forster's use of the dialectic. The inadequacy, incompleteness and lack of resolution which Cox, McConkey, Bradbury and the others found in Forster's work is precisely his rejection of synthesis, a rejection which is necessary for the dialectical process. The cleft Dickinson felt motivates the dialectical movement. Forster's refusal to formulate or to postulate was a necessary corollary to that movement, which had to be left open-ended in order to operate. His habit of thought ends his sentences with semicolons rather than with periods, but only to allow enough freedom for further readjustment, further development. It is my contention that he

knew exactly what he was doing: his hesitations and cautious qualifications may have within them, to use Lionel Trilling's term, a "whim of iron."²⁷ His characters, once on the road to reality, move toward a fulfillment of self with the propulsion of necessity. He saw them caught between the polarities of being and becoming, struggling to experience a reality which in turn would demand new efforts, new struggles. His character, Margaret Schlegel, from Howards End, gives a good definition of her creator's dialectic when she thinks, "No, truth, being alive, was not halfway between anything. It was only to be found by continuous excursions into either realm, and though proportion is the final secret, to espouse it at the outset is to insure sterility."²⁸ If we are to be alive, we cannot rest between, but must be swept through moments of self-consciousness into ever deeper--i.e., higher, more spiritual--realities. We cannot formulate or postulate or state. We must be and become at the same time. We must, in a word, move. Proportion (arrival) must not, as Margaret says, be too easily obtained, nor too soon. The propelling, see-sawing motion of the dialectic almost becomes a character to the reader aware of its existence. It creates a centrifugal force which swirls themes and characters into a unity, an order which is a result but also a cause, a message but also a promise, a statement but also a question. Because Forster's "Try-it-on" method constitutes a philosophy of "as if," his characters act as if rapport with nature will comfort them, as if personal relations can attain to spiritual fulfillment, as if love (bhakti), through the subconscious, can discover inner reality and a mystical connection with the Absolute.²⁹ It is with this view of

Forster's method, "as if" it were a dialectic spiralling upward from the earth to the Absolute, that I should like to investigate his fiction.

NOTES
Chapter I

¹E. M. Forster, "The Individual and His God," The Listener, XXIII (December 5, 1940), 802.

²The terms "thesis, antithesis and synthesis" were coined by Johann Gottlieb Fichte, in his Grundlage der gesamten Wissenschaftslehre (Jena and Leipzig, 1794). For a discussion of the origin of the terms see "Dialectic," The Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, ed. Paul Edwards, II (New York, 1967), 385-389. The chief exponent of Hegel's method as spiritual has been John N. Findlay, Hegel: a Re-examination (London, 1958). See also his "Some Merits of Hegelianism," Proceedings of the Aristotelian Society, LVI (1955-1956), 1-24, and his chapter on Hegel in D. J. O'Connor, A Critical History of Western Philosophy (London, 1964), pp. 319-340.

³For a discussion of Hegel's moments of self-consciousness, see Findlay, "Some Merits of Hegelianism," p. 21, and Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J. B. Baillie (New York, 1967), pp. 215-267. (First published London, 1910.) See also "aufheben" and "Dialectic" in the Appendix of the present study.

⁴A word must be said here concerning Plato's and Kant's use of the term "dialectic." I do not believe Forster's is related to Plato's because Plato's idea of Pure Form excluded opposites (i.e., Beauty would not include Ugliness, although a particular beautiful object could be ugly in certain aspects. See The Republic, Part III, Chapter XIX, trans. Francis M. Cornford [New York, 1964], pp. 179-189). Hegel's idea of the Absolute on the other hand, would correspond Pure Being to Negation, or Nothingness, according to John McTaggart's interpretation in his A Commentary on Hegel's Logic (Cambridge, 1931), p. 20. My interpretation of Forster's message in Passage to India, that Absolute Reality and Truth can contain their opposites (Good-Evil, Beauty-Ugliness, Pure Being-Nothingness) is opposed to Plato's idea and closer to Hegel's. The Marabar Caves, for instance, are Jain, the Hindu sect which saw the universe as "Yes-and-No." In the caves, I believe, Forster's dialectic assimilated all aspects of reality and pushed the process of Hegel's aufheben to its ultimate end, an Absolute which is Everything. See Chapter Six, "India," of the present study. Kant's use of the term "dialectic" also differs from Forster's because Kant not only retains the separation of mind and matter but emphasizes the transcendent quality of the dialectical movement rather than its assimilating function, as Hegel and Forster do. Hegel refutes "Thinghood" (Kant's Ding an Sicht) as "a simple togetherness of many Heres and Nows," a combination of qualities impossible to describe because "here" and "now" are constantly changing. See Hegel's chapter, "Perception, of Things and Their Deceptiveness," in The Phenomenology, especially pp. 164-165. The Ding an Sicht would not allow the self to

assimilate the Not-Self, as it does for Hegel and Forster. Indeed, for them, it must assimilate in order to reach that final stage in which the self can realize the universe.

⁵E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1954), p. 169. (First published London, 1927.)

⁶Alan Friedman, "E. M. Forster: Expansion, Not Completion," The Turn of the Novel (New York, 1966), pp. 106-129.

⁷Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, "Newest Philosophy," Independent Review, VI, No. 23 (April-May, 1905), 190.

⁸E. M. Forster, "Anonymity: An Enquiry," Two Cheers for Democracy (New York, 1951), p. 83.

⁹Sidney Hook, "What is Dialectic?" Journal of Philosophy, XXVI, No. 4 (February 14, 1929), 86.

¹⁰See the appendix of the present study for an explanation of Moore's "Absolute Good" and Russell's "neutral monism."

¹¹Alfred North Whitehead, Modes of Thought (New York, 1958), p. 237. (First published New York, 1938.)

¹²For a detailed discussion of the 1890's interest in the occult, see John Senior, The Way Down and Out: The Occult in Symbolist Literature (Ithaca, New York, 1959).

¹³I have saved a fuller discussion of the milieu of the 1890's for my chapter which deals with Forster's Cambridge and Bloomsbury years, "Bhakti in Bloomsbury: The Legacy." See Chapter VII, the present study.

¹⁴E. M. Forster, "The Gods of India," The New Weekly (May 30, 1914), p. 338.

¹⁵Forster speaks out against all creeds in "Does Culture Matter?" There he writes that "It is impossible to be fair-minded when one has faith--religious creeds have shown this. . . . Faith makes one unkind." See Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 101. For a fuller definition of bhakti, see the appendix of the present study.

¹⁶V. A. Shahane thinks Brahman Hinduism is Forster's final answer. See his Chapter V of E. M. Forster: A Reassessment (Calcutta, 1962), pp. 95-117.

¹⁷David Jones, "E. M. Forster on his Life and his Books," The Listener, LXI (January 1, 1959), 11.

¹⁸E. M. Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 56.

¹⁹Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain (Stanford, California, 1966), p. 356.

²⁰E. M. Forster, "Notes on the Way," Time and Tide, XV (1934), 696.

²¹E. M. Forster, "What I Believe," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 68; Stone, p. 56.

²²E. M. Forster, "Introduction" in Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, The Greek View of Life (New York, 1921), no page number.

²³This quotation is from a letter Dickinson wrote to Forster April 19, 1928. E. M. Forster, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (London, 1962), p. 216. (First published London, 1934.)

²⁴Virginia Woolf, "The Novels of E. M. Forster," The Death of the Moth (New York, 1942), pp. 168, 170.

²⁵I. A. Richards, "A Passage to Forster: Reflections on a Novelist," The Forum, LXXVIII, No. 6 (December, 1927), 914; Stephen Spender, World Within World (London, 1951), p. 167; F. R. Leavis, "E. M. Forster," Scrutiny, VII (September, 1938), 185; C. B. Cox, The Free Spirit: A Study of Liberal Humanism in the Novels of George Elliot, Henry James, E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, and Angus Wilson (London, 1963), p. 102; G. L. Dickinson, Letter to Forster, June 2, 1926, in E. M. Forster, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (London, 1962), p. 216; James McConkey, The Novels of E. M. Forster (Ithaca, N. Y., 1957), p. 3; Raja Rao, untitled article on Forster in K. Natwar-Singh's E. M. Forster: A Tribute, With Selections from His Writings on India (New York, 1964), p. 18; Malcolm Bradbury, "Introduction," Forster: A Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966), p. 4; Rose Macaulay, The Writings of E. M. Forster (New York, 1938), p. 10.

²⁶Angus Wilson, in an interview with Forster, noticed Forster's habit of halting speech, in which he would seemingly stop a sentence, only to add an even more significant word or phrase after a moment. I do not want to arbitrarily compare an oral habit with a written method, but I find it interesting that Forster's fictional process, which always leaves enough room open for another question, another possibility, seems to relate to Wilson's description of Forster's conversational mannerisms. Wilson writes that "EMF speaks in quick, little bursts of words which end, as it seems, inconclusively, and then he usually adds one or two words more, which though they seem tangential, nevertheless are often the real core of what he is saying. It is as though a firework did its stuff adequately but not excitingly, never fizzling but hardly illuminating, and then just as the onlookers are about to give a polite smile and

say 'very pretty' in a slightly disappointed tone, there shoot up one or two very bright lights that in turn fade away, making one wish for more." Angus Wilson, "A Conversation with E. M. Forster," Encounter, IX (November, 1957), 52.

²⁷Lionel Trilling, E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 10. (First published New York, 1943.)

²⁸E. M. Forster, Howards End (New York, 1960), p. 195. (First published London, 1910.)

²⁹See Alan Wilde, Art and Order: a Study of E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 14, and Hans Vaihinger, The Philosophy of "As If," trans. C. K. Ogden (New York, 1924).

CHAPTER II

GREECE

The gods have taken alien shapes upon them,
Wild peasants driving swine
In a strange country. Through the swarthy faces
The starry faces shine.

AE, Exiles

From the first, the short stories establish the "open-ended" quality of the dialectic. In order to operate, each step must be left open for further development, further metamorphoses. Forster's definition of the writer of prophecy could be applied to his method in the short stories: "His theme is the universe, or something universal, but he is not necessarily going to 'say' anything about the universe; he proposes to sing, and the strangeness of song arising in the halls of fiction is bound to give us a shock."¹ Yet this "strangeness of song," this absence of statement is not vague, as Forster's definition would indicate. It is structured, as his dialectic is structured, around characters and their viewpoints. Because he uses fantasy in the stories the main characters can step outside time and space and, in a visionary detachment, "see" another reality. They can do so because they are antithetical to phenomena, to the everyday world: they contain within themselves an ability to know noumena, which ~~are~~ are the cause and the essence of phenomena and which can only be comprehended intuitively. They see through phenomena to the other side, where another reality lies. The tension caused between these characters who can "see" and the characters of the "thesis"--the everyday

world of phenomena, of convention, of "morality," of "educated" culture--triggers the dialectical struggle which constitutes the plot. Forster forces the reader to change sides, to join the antithetical character in his vision, by a reversal of viewpoint. Those characters of the thesis who represent phenomenal reality are described in the terms of their world and react in those terms (the world of everyday), but these descriptions and reactions are so flat, so "realistic," so shallow, that the richer, deeper, vaguer, more visionary viewpoint of the antithetical "seeing" character becomes more attractive. The everyday world becomes the backside of truth--not untrue, for nothing in Forster's Hegelian dialectic is demolished--but made ridiculous, so that the reader, when he joins the antithetical character from his sprung-about position, changes sides completely. The reader can join the visionary character because Forster does not make of his visionaries something unreal and inhuman: they do not know their own ability to "see" until something happens which causes them to explode inwardly, as it were, into vision. Before that, they are just like the rest of us. And to preserve the reader's credulity, Forster is careful to keep that "something" in the earlier stories concrete. If the experience arrives through a mythological figure it is a faun who speaks, a Pan who is solid enough to leave a hoof-print, or a Dante (made mythological by the context) who can drive a bus. If the experience occurs through nature it is a hedge, a tree, a beech copse, or a bed of flowers through which the character makes contact with another world. Thus a phenomenon (even a symbolic phenomenon, in the case of Pan) is made to serve its cause and essence, or its noumenon; the

noumenon annihilates, but preserves the phenomenon and lifts it, via aufheben, into another reality which is itself not a statement so much as a situation capable of further shifting, further development. The dialectical movement which will unify Forster's whole canon has, even in the first stories, already begun.

All the short stories were written before 1914; six were published as The Celestial Omnibus in 1911, six more as The Eternal Moment in 1928 (both to reappear as The Collected Tales of E. M. Forster in 1947), and one, not included in either collection, "Albergo Empedocle," was printed in a 1903 issue of Temple Bar. The first story Forster wrote, "The Story of a Panic," "came" to him on an Italian hillside in May, 1902. It "rushed into my mind," he wrote later, "as if it had waited for me up there."² It was, perhaps, a visitation from the noumenal world of the subconscious which set his investigation of such "eternal moments" going. The plot is simple enough. A party of English tourists staying at a hotel in Ravello, Italy, decide to go on a picnic in the nearby hills. The group includes a narrator, his wife and two daughters; Leyland, an artist; two Miss Robinsons and a Mr. Sandbach, whose ecclesiastical language implies his Church of England (and hence conventional morality) affiliation. There is also--most importantly--Eustace, the nephew of the Robinsons, a willful teenage boy who sulkily agrees to accompany them but who would much rather loaf around the hotel talking to the Italian waiter. Eustace--his name in Greek ("eustachys") means "rich in corn, blooming, fruitful," and by juxtaposing it with such dull names as "Miss Mary Robinson" and "Mr. Sandbach" Forster has already indicated

something different about him--goes with the party, cuts a whistle from the bark of a tree and blows it. There is a "terrible silence" followed by a "catspaw of wind" which runs down the far ridge of a valley and up the ridge where the party, lazing about, dozes. Immediately panic seizes them: they dash downhill, only to climb up again, a little embarrassed at their terror. They find Eustace sprawled on the grass, senseless, a goat-print near him and a little lizard crawling out of his shirt. He is never the same again. On the way back to the hotel he capers and canters and is welcomed by the Italian waiter, Gennaro, with a mysteriously whispered "Ho capito" ("I understand"). That night Eustace escapes from his room to flit wildly about, reciting strange poetry in the courtyard. He evades the attempts of the narrator and the others to catch him. Finally the narrator bribes the reluctant Gennaro to help them, and Eustace returns submissively to his room with the waiter. Later, when a terrible cry, as of the wind, comes from Eustace's room, Gennaro runs up and leaps from the window with the boy in his arms. Eustace breaks away, jumps a parapet and alights "in an olive tree, looking like a great white moth" (p. 38). Gennaro, in the courtyard, falls forward, dead.

Such a story seems too fantastic, demanding too much suspension of belief. One can certainly agree with Bergson that myths, because they "counterfeit reality as actually perceived," demand a special compliance on the part of the reader.³ Does Forster provide that compliance? He does: with the person of the narrator, in whom--but for the grace of God--we see ourselves. The narrator is "rational," "practical," a link with "reality" and with the everyday social world, one who demands

obedience from the recalcitrant Eustace and obsequiousness from the waiter. He is an English devotee of discipline and the playing fields of Eton whose language places him squarely on the side of the herd. He is just enough like everybody we know to provide Forster with a platform of reality which he can use as a springboard into the less realistic world of Eustace. From the first paragraph, the narrator's ego is ill-concealed in the fussy language of Edwardian nicety. He "confesses" that he is a "plain, simple man"; he "flatters" himself that he can tell a story; Ravello is a "delightful place with a delightful little hotel" (p. 3). But Eustace generates his ire:

I would not have minded so much if he had been a really studious boy, but he neither played hard nor worked hard. His favorite occupations were lounging on the terrace in an easy chair and loafing along the high road, with his feet shuffling up the dust and his shoulders stooping forward. Naturally enough, his features were pale, his chest contracted, and his muscles undeveloped. His aunts thought him delicate; what he really needed was discipline. (pp. 4-5)

The narrator is, in a word, an athletic prig who sets the dialectical movement going. He believes that his speaking "rather sharply on the subject of exercise" caused Eustace to come along on the outing. If he is correct, there is added irony in the fact that the narrator should have arranged, inadvertently, the situation in which Pan--the antithesis of everything he is or believes in--appeared. He is very pleased with himself. "Obedience was not his [Eustace's] strong point. . . . I should have insisted on prompt and cheerful obedience, if I had a son" (p. 7). Eustace, although he calls out "I'm--coming--Aunt--Mary," dawdles "to cut a piece of wood to make a whistle, taking care not to arrive" until the others have set out the food. The passage is worth quoting, for it

rounds off the character of the self-righteous narrator and his complete misinterpretation of another human being:

"Well, well, sir!" said I, "you stroll in at the end and profit by our labours." He sighed, for he could not endure being chaffed. Miss Mary, very unwisely, insisted on giving him the wing of the chicken, in spite of all my attempts to prevent her. I remember that I had a moment's vexation when I thought that, instead of enjoying the sun, and the air, and the woods, we were all engaged in wrangling over the diet of a spoilt boy.

But, after lunch, he was a little less in evidence. He withdrew to a tree trunk, and began to loosen the bark from his whistle. I was thankful to see him employed, for once in a way. We reclined, and took a dolce far niente. (pp. 7-8)

Eustace's sigh may be the patience suffered by a sensitive boy under the unfeeling "guidance" of his elders--but the narrator would never have guessed that, and translates it subjectively as hurt ego. When Eustace withdraws to a tree trunk--the verb is significant--the narrator approves of his being "employed" and turns to a "dolce far niente" ("It is sweet to do nothing"); evidently the narrator condones employment for "social inferiors," but not for himself. The use of the Italian phrase at the end reinforces our view of him as an affected character, but more: "doing nothing" is precisely what the narrator and his "civilized" companions have been doing all their lives, so that the words carry added significance. Leyland, the "artist," emphasizes the emptiness of "cultured" activity and sets up a secondary dialectical see-sawing action with the narrator, spokesman of the "practical." Leyland notices that some of the surrounding chestnut trees have been cut and deplors the commercial use of nature. The narrator defends the harvesting of timber, but Leyland rebukes him with "It is through us, and to our shame, that the Nereids have left the waters and the Oreads the mountains, that the

woods no longer give shelter to Pan." It is Leyland, representative of false, cultured "art," who first uses the word "Pan." It is echoed by Mr. Sandbach, whose "mellow voice" fills the valley "as if it had been a great green church." "Pan is dead," Mr. Sandbach tells the others emphatically, and describes Pan's death at the birth of Christ. "The great God Pan is dead," he pronounces. "Yes. The great God Pan is dead," Leyland echoes. "And," Forster adds, "he abandoned himself to that mock misery in which artistic people are so fond of indulging" (p. 9).

W. R. Irwin, in an article entitled "The Survival of Pan," traces the popularity of Pan in the 1890's.⁴ He tells the same story of Pan's death at Christmas, recorded by Plutarch and embellished by Rabelais, that Mr. Sandbach now repeats. Leyland's "The great God Pan is dead" reminds one of Arthur Machen's novel, The Great God Pan, which appeared in 1894. In that story a girl who meets a "strange man in the woods" becomes insane and causes murders. Pan can aid distressed creatures, but the same power which he uses against villains can become willfully malevolent. He is, after all, as Irwin calls him, a "rough-hewn god" with a power at times diabolical. The banter which follows Leyland's mock misery is met by a silence in Eustace: "Eustace was finishing his whistle. He looked up, with the irritable frown in which his aunts allowed him to indulge, and made no reply" (p. 10). Forster's language here takes on symbolic significance, and deserves analysis:

The conversation turned to various topics and then died out. It was a cloudless afternoon in May, and the pale green of the young chestnut leaves made a pretty contrast with the

dark blue of the sky. We were all sitting at the edge of the small clearing for the sake of the view, and the shade of the chestnut saplings behind us was manifestly insufficient. All sounds died away--at least that is my account: Miss Robinson says that the clamour of the birds was the first sign of uneasiness that she discerned. All sounds died away, except that, far in the distance, I could hear two boughs of a great chestnut grinding together as the tree swayed. The grinds grew shorter and shorter, and finally that stopped also. As I looked over the green fingers of the valley, everything was absolutely motionless and still; and that feeling of suspense which one so often experiences when Nature is in repose, began to steal over me. (p. 10)

After the irritable silence of Eustace, the conversation, like an organism, turns and dies out. Forster enlarges the focus of his camera immediately by cataloguing the scene: the cloudless afternoon, the pale green leaves, the dark blue of the sky. The negation of "cloudless," the unsubstantial "pale" and the frank ominousness of "dark" hint of a Dantean descent. "We were all sitting at the edge of the small clearing for the sake of the view. . . ." They certainly seem on a brink, and the view, physically downward (for they are on a hill), may be symbolically downward into the subconscious. Then: "All sounds died away--." This phrase is repeated: all sounds die away except the grinding together of two chestnut boughs. These grow shorter, and stop; the narrator looks over "the green fingers of the valley." Although the tree is moved presumably by wind, the emphasis is on the boughs grinding "as the tree swayed," and the inference is that the tree is moving to grind the boughs, not as a result of a force from without. Immediately, a reader remembers earlier descriptions in this story which make nature not only organic but human: "the ribs of hill," the valley which seemed like "a many-fingered green hand, palm upwards, which was clutching

convulsively to keep us in its grasp," the trees which "clothed the contours of the hills" (pp. 5, 6, 8). Now the narrator does not tell us that the wind died, but that "everything was absolutely motionless and still," as if "everything" had deliberately chosen to turn silent. When we remember that one of the premises of occultism which John Senior records is that "The human body is especially taken to be the image of creation. The universe is taken to be, in fact, a living man," Forster's description contains more than a playful pantheism.⁵ A human body seems to have stirred, and with a will of its own has tried to "clutch convulsively"--the adverb is not pleasant--and now seems to be responding, in fact seems to be answering, with its own irritable silence, the frown of Eustace. Suddenly Eustace blows his whistle: "Then the terrible silence fell upon us again." Now the narrator stands up and sees "a catspaw of wind" that runs down one of the ridges, "turning light green to dark as it travelled" (p. 11). He experiences "A fanciful feeling of foreboding." He looks around, to find the others standing also, watching it. Again, the phrase, "all was motionless": ". . . all was motionless, save the catspaw of wind, now travelling up the ridge on which we stood" (p. 11). Panic explodes--that word whose root can be diabolical, whose spirit, indeed, may have been invoked by Leyland's and Sandbach's repetitions of its name--and "brutal, over-mastering physical fear" overtakes the narrator, who admits, "I had been afraid, not as a man, but as a beast" (p. 12).

Precisely because Forster has presented the narrator to us as a prig, we have received him as real--more real, certainly, than Eustace.

Now, because of that acceptance, we can appreciate the intensity of his fear as he runs down the hill. We go with him. But his descent is more than movement; the implication of a plunge into the subconscious is unmistakable: "The sky might have been black as I ran, and the trees short grass, and the hillside a level road; for I saw nothing and heard nothing and felt nothing, since all the channels of sense and reason were blocked" (p. 12). The narrator undergoes a change. He can now "see" that Leyland is a coward when he refuses, at first, to go back for Eustace, who has remained on the hill. They find Eustace, motionless, and to the narrator's "unspeakable horror" he sees "one of those green lizards dart out from under his shirt-cuff as we approached" (p. 14). Eustace's hand was "convulsively entwined in the long grass"--just as the valley itself, like a green-fingered hand, had clutched convulsively (the adverb is the same) to keep them in its grasp when they first climbed the hill. Now Eustace opens his eyes and smiles, and the narrator records: "I have often seen that peculiar smile since, both on the possessor's face and on the photographs of him that are beginning to get into the illustrated papers" (p. 14). At the end of the story Eustace is running away--"escaping" is Forster's word--and subsequent readings make that pronoun "him" of "photographs of him" even more puzzling. Why does Forster separate the "possessor" from the photographs of him? And since we have no knowledge that Eustace was ever captured--he may still be escaping--how did the illustrated papers get his picture? Even on first reading, the "him" bothers. Could it refer to Pan? After all, the "catspaw" came in response to the whistle. Could the narrator have seen Pan since? The

heretofore "practical" narrator has certainly been affected by the event.

Rose, the narrator's daughter and the youngest of the group, is perhaps closer to the subconscious than the others. She begs Eustace to tell her "everything--every single thing," as if he knew something the others did not. The narrator, who has been changed by fear--ironically so, since his first criticism of Eustace was for being afraid--is curious, and moves nearer "to hear what he was going to say" (p. 16). Why do they think that Eustace has learned anything, unless they suspect his having communicated with some inexplicable force outside ordinary experience? As the narrator leans forward he sees the footprints of a goat "in the moist earth beneath the trees." Eustace "laboriously got on to his feet"--the adverb implies exhaustion--and rolls on them, "as a dog rolls in dirt" (p. 16). The ecclesiastical Mr. Sandbach sums up the situation neatly: "The Evil One" has been there, and he advises them to "offer up thanks for a merciful deliverance." The attempt at prayer--they make a rather incongruous circle, with Eustace kneeling "quietly enough between his aunts"--underscores the feeble plea of language in the presence of universal forces. While they are praying the pseudo-artist Leyland cuts the whistle in two, "a superstitious act" of which the reasonable narrator "could hardly approve" (p. 17). But Eustace is unperturbed; he does not need it any more, and when they ask him why, he merely smiles. He has taken into himself the powers the whistle called forth.

Forster now lets his reader down from the emotional heights of the hillside onto the familiar ground of the narrator's ego. The narrator

congratulates himself for insisting that Eustace walk rather than ride a donkey: "As it turned out, I was perfectly right, for the healthy exercise, I suppose, began to thaw Eustace's sluggish blood and loosen his stiffened muscles. He stepped out manfully, for the first time in his life, holding his head up and taking deep draughts of air into his chest" (p. 18). The narrator stupidly credits exercise for the change in Eustace and observes "with satisfaction . . . that Eustace was at last taking some pride in his personal appearance" (p. 18). Our recognition of the narrator as still the silly prig we knew at first helps return us to "reality." Things are back to "normal," and, as if to relieve further the larger tensions between the picnic party and the universe, Forster generates again the conflict between Leyland and the narrator. Leyland starts an argument about athletics, a subject which vexes him almost as much as cut timber. But the narrator, caught up again in his own convictions and feeling secure in the usual habitat of his own ego, condescends to ignore "such remarks, especially when they come from any unsuccessful artist, suffering from a damaged finger" (p. 19). His attention is turned again to Eustace, who "was racing about, like a real boy, in the wood to the right." The narrator's use of "real" is ironic. If he could really see Eustace as he is now, with the elemental forces of nature in him, he would seem anything but "real" to the narrator, dulled as his perception is by his phenomenal viewpoint.

"The Story of a Panic" is uncommon among Forster's stories because it contains two elemental characters.⁶ Gennaro, the waiter, is substituting for "the nice English-speaking Emmanuele." Again there seems to

be a juxtaposition of names: the ecclesiastical "Emmanuele," stamped with approval by the tourists because he speaks English, and "Gennaro," which may relate to the Italian "genio" (genius). Eustace wants to see Gennaro when they return, and to Mr. Sandbach's snapped "And why?" Eustace replies "Because, because I do, I do; because, because I do" (p. 20). And he "danced away into the darkening wood to the rhythm of his words," not unlike Hawthorne's Pearl. Even Rose cannot understand why Eustace wants to see Gennaro; he has only been working as a waiter in the hotel for two days. Eustace's running and darting about take on the intensity of frenzy: he dashes into the wood and out again, pretending to be an Indian, then a dog. "The last time he came back with a poor dazed hare, too frightened to move, sitting on his arm" (p. 20). They leave the wood, but Eustace still scurries in front of them "like a goat." Perhaps Forster loses power here by being too obvious; certainly the three old women Eustace meets on the way back to the hotel are too reminiscent of the Fates. He gives one flowers and she blesses him, but he "bounded away without replying at all." He bounds to Gennaro, that "incongruous" person "with his arms and legs sticking out of the nice little English-speaking waiter's dress suit" (p. 21). This is not masquerade: we know who he is; at least the emphasis here is that he is not the nice English-speaking waiter. But the nice English-speaking waiter--nice because he is English-speaking, this Christian Emmanuele--is represented in absentia by his clothes, a shell into which the elemental Pan-like figure of Gennaro has stepped. Forster implies here, I believe, a metamorphosis similar to the one experienced by Eustace, who has assumed

the qualities of Pan. If one applies the same process of transformation to the group of tourists, English "culture" (the narrator's priggishness, Leyland's art, Mr. Sandbach's religion) could be seen as a shell into which the earthly forces have entered in the form of Pan-turned-Eustace. Eustace and Gennaro certainly recognize each other with more than usual enthusiasm. Gennaro keeps whispering his "Ho capito" ("I understand") and the dialectical contrast between the elemental forces and civilization is kept alive by the narrator's snobbery. He asks Miss Robinson's "permission to speak seriously to Eustace on the subject of intercourse with social inferiors" (p. 22). When Gennaro uses the second person singular, the narrator considers that "an impertinence of this kind was an affront to us all. . . ." His daughter Rose, to his surprise, keeps saying that "everything was excusable," but he speaks to the waiter bluntly, because "it is no good speaking delicately to persons of that class. Unless you put things plainly, they take a vicious pleasure in misunderstanding you" (p. 24). Again the recognition of a remembered character trait keeps the reader on familiar ground and keeps the volume low, but this return to the hotel is a lull before the crescendos of climax.

The words the narrator uses to describe Eustace's nocturnal wanderings in the courtyard take on the overtones of a metamorphosis:

Trembling all over I stole to the window. There, pattering up and down the asphalt paths, was something white. I was too much alarmed to see clearly; and in the uncertain light of the stars the thing took all manner of curious shapes. Now it was a great dog, now an enormous white bat, now a mass of quickly travelling cloud. It would bounce like a ball, or take short flights like a bird, or glide slowly like a wraith. It gave no sound--

save the pattering sound of what, after all, must be human feet. And at last the obvious explanation forced itself upon my disordered mind; and I realized that Eustace had got out of bed, and that we were in for something more. (p. 26)

The ambiguity of the "uncertain" light of the stars, the "thing," the "it" which could take "all manner of" shapes, which "gave no sound" insists on, indeed demands, a lack of definition which will leave whatever flits out there in the courtyard free to change its substance. The insistence in the narrator's "must be human feet" implies that in fact he thinks they are not. When the reader remembers the goat prints in the moist earth of the hillside, the real meaning of this passage is clear: the spirit of Pan is in Eustace, dancing about on the flagstones. Eustace "chatters" to himself, then bursts forth with poetry praising the forces of nature:

He spoke first of night and the stars and planets above his head, of the swarms of fire-flies below him, of the invisible sea below the fire-flies, of the great rocks covered with anemones and shells that were slumbering in the invisible sea. He spoke of the rivers and waterfalls, of the ripening bunches of grapes, of the smoking cone of Vesuvius and the hidden fire-channels that made the smoke, of the myriads of lizards who were lying curled up in the crannies of the sultry earth, of the showers of white rose-leaves that were tangled in his hair. And then he spoke of the rain and the wind by which all things are changed, of the air through which all things live, and of the woods in which all things can be hidden. (pp. 28-29)

The "cultured" Leyland observes that Eustace's poetry was "a diabolical caricature of all that was most holy and beautiful in life," but the narrator, who has experienced some change himself and half-admits appreciating Eustace's "high faluting" absurdities, could have kicked him (p. 29). Eustace, just before he finishes and kneels on the parapet, says "And then--and then there are men, but I can't make them out so

well" (p. 29). His vision of creation, in which all things are one and related, is ended.

The narrator bribes Gennaro to catch Eustace, who is now "in the shadow of the white climbing roses." Eustace accepts the waiter as a friend, leaning on him, mumbling "I understand almost everything. The trees, hills, stars, water, I can see all. But isn't it odd! I can't make out men a bit. Do you know what I mean?" (p. 33). Gennaro understands: men are unreal because they do not contain the truth which is of the earth. But the narrator, Leyland and Sandbach jump on Eustace, and the white roses, "which were falling early that year, descended in showers on him as we dragged him into the house"(p. 33). The roses seem to undergo a metamorphosis into tears: the descriptions "falling" and "descended in showers" are followed by "as soon as we entered the house he stopped shrieking; but floods of tears silently burst forth, and spread over his upturned face" (p. 33). The narrator guiltily thinks of the thirty pieces of silver, but he has not changed completely--if he should change completely we could no longer believe in him--for he can still appreciate the deference of Gennaro's "Signor Eustazio." Gennaro tells them Eustace will be dead by morning unless he leaves his room, which has no view and faces a stone wall. Then a cry, "like the sound of wind in a distant wood" comes from Eustace's room and Gennaro runs to save him, leaping out of the window with Eustace in his arms when his path is blocked by the others. Eustace, like a "great white moth," vaults a wall into an olive tree. Gennaro dies in the courtyard murmuring, "He has understood and he is saved," and "more rose leaves fell

on us as we carried him in" (p. 38). But the narrator, to preserve the dialectical tension between non-understanding culture and elemental knowledge of the universe, thinks "those miserable Italians have no stamina. Something had gone wrong inside him, and he was dead" (p. 38). Something certainly had happened inside Gennaro, but what it was the narrator's education or reason will never be able to figure out. Perhaps he possessed some secret strength of the earth, some power of Pan which he surrenders in the sacrificial act of saving Eustace. Certainly there seems to be a transfer of power when Eustace connects with the earth again: "And as soon as his bare feet touched the clods of earth he uttered a strange loud cry, such as I should not have thought the human voice could have produced, and disappeared among the trees below" (p. 38). For all we know, Eustace may still be running, into new metamorphoses, into new and deeper connections, through the earth, with his vision.

"The Story of a Panic" is exciting because, slight in content and obvious in theme as it is, it contains all the elements of Forster's dialectical movement which will appear again and again throughout his work. The theory of an organic universe, the power of place, the importance of human relationships are real, are noumena placed in tension beside the fake "artist," the phony pragmatist, the ineffectual cleric. Forster will retain that tension with the same cast of characters in his stories and novels. I cannot agree with Wilfred Stone that Forster in the short stories was "seeking his identity," that he was "giving voice, under a dozen fictional disguises, to an agonized self-confession."⁷ Stone

cleverly subtracts eight from 1902, the year "The Story of a Panic" was written, and discovers that Forster, like Eustace, would have been fifteen at the time of the "extraordinary event." He sees Forster's narrator as Forster was in 1902 and Eustace as Forster was in 1894. I contend that Forster sees his narrator far too clearly as a priggish conformist for that gentleman to represent one side of a schizophrenic author. The narrator is rather a position in a dialectical argument, a position shared by the "cultured" Leyland, whose "educated" refinement provides another useless way of seeing the world: both are "civilized," i.e., empty of that harmonious empathy with the earth which invokes vision. The other side of the dialectic, the antithetical or noumenal side, has its problems in this story as well as in Forster's other early efforts, as we shall see. Eustace and Gennaro do not emerge quite solid. Eustace, particularly, seems a flitting outline: his nervous antics lend too unsubstantial a quality to a teenage boy. Perhaps, with Eustace, Forster overplayed his sleight of hand. The only human flaw in Eustace with which we might identify is his laziness, but this seems more often than not a foil for the narrator's grumbling. Through Eustace's identification with white (white moth, white bat, white roses) Forster connects the idea of innocence with paganism, and does so perhaps too bluntly: we do not have to be coached incessantly in the shortcomings of "culture."

Rather than criticize the characters from the standpoint of phenomenal "reality," however, it might be more fruitful to ask: What happened? Real or unreal, teenager or metamorphosis of Pan, Eustace has experienced some strange change. If we shift focus from the character

to the experience we realize that Eustace has learned to operate in another reality which he has entered through sensuous contact with the earth. Limited it may have been, momentary and of no benefit to anyone but Eustace, but intense it certainly was. For a while, there in Ravello, the earth was more than earth, the trees more than trees.⁸ What happened? Did the earth become a symbolic substance through which Eustace experienced another reality? Ernst Cassirer sees objects-become-symbols as a medium through which man can fuse with his environment: "Man lives with objects only in so far as he lives with these forms; he reveals reality to himself, and himself to reality, in that he lets himself and the environment enter into this plastic medium, in which the two do not merely make contact, but fuse with each other."⁹ Yet I should like to avoid the word "symbol" with Forster. He does not like it himself. In Aspects of the Novel he wrote that "Done badly, rhythm is most boring, it hardens into symbol and instead of carrying us on it trips us up."¹⁰ In an interview for the Paris Review he turned from the word "symbol" and suggested instead "symbolic."¹¹ The medium through which Eustace "saw" is much less solid, much more porous than the word "symbol" would suggest. It is not something which stands for or over against something else but a fusion of mind and matter in which man and the things around him, animate and inanimate, become one. Professor Ralph Monroe Eaton writes of such fusion in Symbolism and Truth: An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge:

What is needed in place of the Kantian theory of isolation [of mind and matter] is the notion that mind by its activity joins itself to real things in knowledge, that is, an epistemological monism which takes account of thought-activity in cognition. Mind grows into a cognitive unity with the

reality it originally knows only in fleeting and momentary glimpses; the mind in knowing is actively continuous with real objects.¹²

No better explanation, it seems to me, has been given which could be applied to Forster's use of Hegel's aufheben. Eustace has annihilated the outward forms of nature to penetrate and assimilate the essence and substance of nature into himself, to attain, in Eaton's words, "a cognitive unity with reality." He has allowed his mind "to join itself to real things in knowledge." Eustace, as he runs off into the trees, becomes "continuous" with all things.

Yet it is important to remember that Eustace does not run away into synthesis with the earth or even with the noumenal reality on the other side of phenomena, but into possibility. He is an elemental character who becomes momentarily infinite--outside space and time--and his inability to "see" man in his vision becomes frightening. Man, smothered by "culture," by education, by his own ego, may not really--the implication is yet--exist. Humanity has the potential to live in the subconscious, but this potential operates only in isolated individuals like Gennaro and Eustace. Perhaps, because most of humanity is unable to receive the vision, even those who do are destroyed by it, as Gennaro is here, as Rickie Elliot will be in The Longest Journey and Mrs. Moore will be in A Passage to India. The evil inherent in the excessive impulses generated in this story by contact with Pan reflects a deeper inward inability of man to live on the subconscious level, the only level where we can fully "connect." This, I believe, is Forster's recurring message. This limitation is the basis for Eustace's failure to

see men and for the cry of "Not yet" at the end of A Passage to India twenty-two years later. In both, as in all his stories, Forster refuses synthesis; in both the dialectic is left open.

Living on the subconscious level is the criterion of "Albergo Empedocle," the only story not included in one of the collections.¹³ Again Forster gives us an English tourist group, this time in Sicily: Sir Edwin and Lady Peaslake, their daughters, Lilian and Mildred, and Mildred's fiance, Harold. Harold is the Eustace of the story, a little lazy, a little dull, and not particularly interested in history or in Sicily. He has, however, learned to put himself to sleep by pretending to be someone else, and Mildred is fascinated and "rather annoyed with her parents for their want of sympathy with imagination" when they see Harold's ability as a dangerous habit (p. 667). One afternoon Harold and Mildred visit the ruins of the temple of Zeus. They become separated, and Mildred later finds him asleep on a bed of wild flowers between two fallen columns. When he wakes he knows that he has lived before, as a Greek. Mildred, full of "educated" imagination, imagines that she, too, has been a Greek and remembers "a great city full of gorgeous palaces and snow-white marble temples, full of poets and music . . ." where she and Harold "led solemn sacrifices" (p. 677). When Harold, who knows that the town had not been "full of noble men and noble thoughts," tells her "No, Mildred darling, you have not," she becomes irritated with her own self-deception, then furious with Harold for having proved her wrong. She accuses him of being mad; the others agree and Harold is sent to an asylum where he mumbles an unrecognizable language and seems "utterly

unconscious" of his fellow men. Again, as in "The Story of a Panic," Forster attempts to create credibility through a narrator, this time aided by the distance of time and space: Harold's roommate Tommy introduces the story with a letter regretting that he did not accept Harold's invitation to visit Sicily. If he had been there, he thinks, Harold "would not now be in an asylum." At the end he appears again, to give his opinion on the strange language Harold speaks; he believes that it is Greek, and that we have since lost the correct pronunciation.

With this slim plot and even flimsier veil through which the narrator tries to establish a noumenal viewpoint, Forster manages to present the intensity and depth of a dialectical conflict between the everyday "civilized" world and that strange world of unreason which uses intuition and the powers of the subconscious to "see." He does so by emphasizing Harold's inability to view the past through "education" and his refusal to be a tourist:

"It is imagination," she [Mildred] would say, "that makes the past live again. It sets the centuries at naught."

"Rather!" was the invariable reply of Harold, who was notoriously deficient in it. Recreating the past was apt to give him a headache, and his thoughts obstinately returned to the unromantic present, which he found quite satisfactory. . . . To the magnificence and pathos of the ruined temple of Zeus he was quite dead. He only valued it as a chair. (pp. 664, 671)

Harold is deficient in imagination because his mind is uncluttered by the "ideas" of imagination. He sees directly, clearly, and intuitively. The others see with the limitations of their senses and their culturally conditioned judgments of others. This conflict of views becomes the main

gear which sets the dialectical movement going. Sir Edwin's character is presented through what he "sees" of Harold:

Harold's character was so simple; it consisted of little more than two things, the power to love and the desire for truth, and Sir Edwin, like many a wiser thinker, concluded that what was not complicated could not be mysterious. Similarly, because Harold's intellect did not devote itself to the acquisition of facts or to the elaboration of emotions, he had concluded that he was stupid. He was sitting in a Doric temple with a sea of gold and purple flowers tossing over its ruins, and his eyes looked out to the moving, living sea of blue. But his ears caught neither the echo of the past nor the cry of the present. . . . (p. 671)

Sir Edwin's problem is epistemological: what do we perceive, how do we perceive? He is, as most of us are, limited by his reception of sense data, from nature and from other people. Without intuition, he "sees" only through the narrow slot of his own view: he sees Harold through himself.

Surface misunderstanding cannot give Forster the tension he needs, however. He extends the conflict into the minds of all the characters, where the action really lies. Lady Peaslake's "Ask for a back room, as those have the view" echoes, ironically, the theme: the Peaslake expedition--all except Harold--are incapable of more than a limited view because they are ill from the social disease of self-consciousness. When Mildred watches Harold, who has fallen asleep on the wild flowers, she thinks that she, watching him, "must look picturesque, too. She knew that there was no one to look at her, but from her mind the idea of a spectator was never absent for a moment. It was the price she had paid for becoming cultivated" (p. 672). Mildred's mind operates with ideas: "cultivation" develops a self-consciousness which prevents an honest

connection with Harold or with the earth. Her imagination is purely verbal. She can claim that it "makes the past live again," but when Harold gives her an example of the real thing she cannot cope with it. She can speak glibly of the transmigration of souls because for her it is only an idea. When she speaks of Pindar and Empedocles, she is using merely words and displaying that fund of facts which Sir Edwin equates with intelligence. She tells Harold of the vanished city:

"Think," she said, "of the famous men who visited her in her prime. Pindar, Aeschylus, Plato--and as for Empedocles, of course he was born there."

"Oh!"

"The disciple, you know, of Pythagoras, who believed in the transmigration of souls."

"Oh!"

"It's a beautiful idea, isn't it, that the soul should have several lives."

"But, Mildred darling," said the gentle voice of Lady Peaslake, "we know that it is not so."

"Oh, I didn't mean that, mamma. I only said it was a beautiful idea."

"But not a true one, darling."

"No."

Their voices had sunk into that respectful monotone which is always considered suitable when the soul is under discussion. They all looked awkward and ill at ease. Sir Edwin played tunes on his waistcoat buttons, and Harold blew into the bowl of his pipe. Mildred, a little confused at her temerity, passed on to the terrible sack of Acragas by the Romans. Whereat their faces relaxed, and they regained their accustomed spirits. (p. 667)

Forster's Austenesque touch of domestic comedy lies lightly over weightier material: the Peaslakes are awkward and ill at ease when they speak of the soul because they do not really believe in it, whereas the brutality of man causes them to relax and regain their "accustomed spirits." Harold's "Oh!" registers the impact he feels, deeper than language. This same contrast between the verbal reflection of experience and the deeper

knowledge of it is extended to the scene in which Harold, after his nap, tells Mildred that he has lived before.

"More, more!" cried Mildred, who was beginning to find her words. "How could you smile! how could you be so calm! O marvellous idea! that your soul has lived before! I should run about, shriek, sing. Marvellous! overwhelming! How can you be so calm! The mystery! and the poetry, oh, the poetry! How can you support it? Oh, speak again!"

"I don't see any poetry," said Harold. "It just has happened, that's all. I lived here before." (p. 674)

Because she sees his experience as "poetry" and a "marvellous idea," Mildred longs for verbal descriptions, ignoring Harold's sincerity. "'Oh, I see,' said Mildred fingering her watch. . . . The tide of rapture had begun to ebb away from Mildred. His generalities bored her. She longed for detail, vivid detail, that should make the dead past live. It was of no interest to her that he had once been greater" (p. 675). Not satisfied with Harold's vague statements, she supplies her own details. Excitedly, caught up in the "idea" of having lived before, she thinks she too has lived with "gorgeous palaces . . . bounded by the sapphire sea, covered by the azure sky, here in the wonderful youth of Greece" (p. 677). Her trite language underscores the shallowness of her self-deception, and when Harold whispers his "No, Mildred darling, you have not," her chagrin at her own hypocrisy becomes destructive envy. She will prove that he is deceived. Harold, broken at her loss of faith in him and her accusation of madness, passively submits to commitment.

Although "Albergo Empedocle" contains less action than "The Story of a Panic," more seems to happen. It does so because the real setting is in the minds of the characters; the dialectical distinction between view and vision is made clear there. In the asylum Harold gazes "out

the window hour after hour and sees things in the sky and sea that we have forgotten" (p. 684). After his experience he can tell if people are lying by looking at them: it is his supreme test of Mildred. He is able to "see" truth, and his disinterest in his fellow men at the end indicates their lack of truth; they have deceived themselves so long with "ideas" that they have lost reality. We can, I believe, accept Harold's judgment more readily than Eustace's because he is more real than Eustace. Several items have contributed to his reality. Forster has devoted more time to others' opinions of Harold, so that we feel a roundness to him that we did not from the one-sided narrator's view of Eustace. Harold, unlike Eustace, is contrasted with a peer, with someone closer to his own age, Mildred. The distance between the reader's view of the elemental character is thereby shortened because we see him through eyes not so far removed in years and attitude from his own. And he is in love, sincerely and uncalculatingly in love. His honesty is contrasted with Mildred's states of mind, which are presented to us as manufactured: her self-consciousness, like her imagination, is willed with the help of language. Harold's metamorphoses are real: he really becomes another person watching himself sleep. His satisfaction with that experience was sufficient as long as he kept the knowledge of it to himself. When other people learn of his experience, he becomes dependent on their opinions because he is, after all, just a boy. In his immaturity he relies on the approval of others. "If you think I'm mad," he tells Sir Edwin, "I am mad. That's all it means."¹⁴ Desperately he pleads, "Six people say I'm mad. Is there no one, no one, no one who understands?" (p. 682). Harold is Arnold's

Empedocles, who knows that, even if we gain peace within ourselves and with our relation to nature, society still remains a threat:

Yet, even when man forsakes
All sin,--is just, is pure,
Abandons all which makes
His welfare insecure,--
Other existences there are, that clash with ours.¹⁵

Arnold, Forster's favorite Victorian, created an Empedocles who leaped into the crater of Etna not to become a god like the Empedocles of legend, but to escape despair. Forster's Harold is dependent on the opinion of others--as Arnold's Empedocles is. He brushes aside Mildred's "ecstasy" at his former life and focuses on the really important item: her belief in him. Ironically, that rests on her reception of impressions, of sense data from him: his words, the expression on his face, and on her own interpretation into language of those impressions. She misses the depth and intensity, the truth of his experience. He loses her faith, and the "sophist brood"--the term is Arnold's--wins out:

No, thou art come too late, Empedocles!
And the world hath the day, and must break thee,
Not thou the world.¹⁶

Sir Edwin pronounces the diagnosis: Harold has had a sunstroke.¹⁷ The world has won.

Has it? Harold's ex-roommate, visiting him in the asylum, tells us that "he does not know that we exist" (p. 684). Harold's view has become vision: he can "see things in the sky and sea that we have forgotten." He has connected, through the subconscious, with another reality. The historic Empedocles believed in a universe unified by similar substances and predominated by love. But according to Empedocles' theory,

the elements of the universe had become separated by strife; we can know things only by allowing corresponding elements in ourselves to connect with the elements in things.¹⁸ Translated into Forster's story, Empedocles' theory would mean that our ability to "see" and to "connect" with nature lies in direct ratio to elements within ourselves which can correspond with the elements in nature--truth, beauty, honesty. If those elements are limited, we are limited. Harold was "better" when he lived before. He tells Mildred that he "saw better, heard better, thought better." Was he Empedocles? Perhaps. "Albergo" in the title means, innocently enough, "hotel" in Italian. But it derives its form from "albergare" ("to lodge, to live in a temporary state"). The first person present form of this verb, "I live," is "albergo." The title "Albergo Empedocle" could read "I, Empedocles, live"--i.e., lodge in a temporary state. Harold is the first Forsterian character to connect with more than the earth. Eustace had merely assimilated the forces of Pan; Harold's vision seems to have carried him another step farther up the dialectical spiral into a psychic connection which erases time and space as well as phenomena: he has annihilated his own self-consciousness and assimilated the past and another consciousness into his own.

In Forster's first two stories he refuses synthesis by allowing his visionary characters to escape at the end: Eustace into the woods, Harold into what the world and the Peaslakes call insanity. In his next story, "The Road from Colonus," Forster presents a new problem: a character who suffers disintegration because he turns away from vision. Visiting mountain villages in Greece with his daughter Emily, Mr. Lucas becomes fascinated with a hollow tree which contains a spring and votive

offerings. He decides to spend the night at the local khan, or inn, but is dissuaded from doing so by Emily and the other members of their party, Mrs. Forman and the athletic Mr. Graham, who lifts Mr. Lucas bodily into the saddle and starts his mule off at a trot. Back home in England, Mr. Lucas, now irritable and senile, hardly notices Emily's excitement when she receives from Mrs. Forman (still in Athens) some asphodel bulbs wrapped in a newspaper. One of the headlines tells of the Khan's destruction by the hollow tree, which fell the night Mr. Lucas wanted to stay there. He can only identify the village as a place where they had lunch. With "a faint expression of trouble on his vacant face," he says, "Perhaps it was where the dragoman bought the pig" and continues to compose a letter to his landlord in which he complains of a barking dog, the children next door and the noise of running water from an upstairs apartment (p. 142).

Things had been different in Greece. There, he had experienced "a strange desire . . . to die fighting" (p. 128). Disappointed in his efforts as a tourist to "experience" Delphi or Thermopylae with his mind, he is honest with himself, perhaps for the first time in his life. "I do mind being old, and I will pretend no longer," he tells himself, and then notices water at his feet. It comes from a hollow tree, where he finds little votive offerings "to the presiding Power." He feels "a curious sense of companionship" with the people who left them there, a Wordsworthian mixture of nature worship with love of humanity:

There was no such thing as the solitude of nature, for the sorrows and joys of humanity had pressed even into the bosom of a tree. He spread out his arms and steadied

himself against the soft charred wood, and then slowly leant back, till his body was resting on the trunk behind. His eyes closed, and he had the strange feeling of one who is moving, yet at peace--the feeling of the swimmer, who, after long struggling with chopping seas, finds that after all the tide will sweep him to his goal. (p. 130)

Forster's language captures the rhythmic flow of water and something more: the sinking into the subconscious which becomes Mr. Lucas' "moment." When he returns to the khan he "sees" the people as if for the first time. "There was meaning in the stoop of the old woman over her work, and in the quick motions of the little pig, and in her diminishing globe of wool" (p. 130). Not only people, but natural objects partake of this newly perceived purpose in the universe: "The sun made no accidental patterns upon the spreading roots of the trees, and there was intention in the nodding clumps of asphodel, and in the music of the water" (p. 130). When he "sees," Mr. Lucas desires to hang a votive offering in the tree, "a little model of an entire man"--"entire," perhaps, because Mr. Lucas has become whole since his relinquishment of hypocrisy. There is hope that he can "die fighting" until the characters of the thesis--Emily (the false Antigone), Mrs. Forman and Mr. Graham--gather the momentum of the phenomenal world and set the whirligig of tensions swirling in the opposite direction.

That dialectical conflict is presented by Forster subtly, through the tone of language Mr. Lucas uses when he confronts the members of the opposition. They, like the Peaslakes, are "tourists," and Mr. Lucas "found them intolerable." But when he addresses them he assumes the mask of a pompous old man whose dogmatic judgments jerk out in abrupt phrases. Since Forster has introduced the reader to the real Mr. Lucas whose

thoughts flow with the rhythms of nature, the old man's clipped, academic sentences communicate the pain of his tension.

They came back in ecstasies, in which Mr. Lucas tried to join. But he found them intolerable. Their enthusiasm was superficial, commonplace, and spasmodic. They had no perception of the coherent beauty that was flowering around them. He tried at least to explain his feelings, and what he said was:

"I am altogether pleased with the appearance of this place. It impresses me very favourably. The trees are fine, remarkably fine for Greece, and there is something very poetic in the spring of clear running water. The people too seem kindly and civil. It is decidedly an attractive place." (pp. 131-132)

In contrast to Mr. Lucas' careful phrases, Ethel's "must . . . positively must" and Mrs. Forman's clichés shout a false enthusiasm:

Mrs. Forman upbraided him for his tepid praise.

"Oh, it is a place in a thousand!" she cried. "I could live and die here! I really would stop if I had not to be back at Athens! It reminds me of the Colonus of Sophocles."

"Well, I must stop," said Ethel, "I positively must."

"Yes, do! You and your father! Antigone and Oedipus. Of course you must stop at Colonus!" (p. 132)

Mr. Lucas, "breathless with excitement," can hardly believe his good luck. Forster allows him to think again in a stream of catalogued images, and we are reminded of the rhythmic flow of the subconscious. But when Mr. Lucas delivers his thoughts to the outside world they come out in a terse remark:

To sleep in the Khan with the gracious, kind-eyed country people, to watch the bats flit about within the globe of shade, and see the moon turn the golden patterns into silver--one such night would place him beyond relapse, and confirm him for ever in the kingdom he had regained. But all his lips could say was: "I should be willing to put in a night here."

"You mean a week, papa! It would be sacrilege to put in less."

"A week then, a week," said his lips, irritated at being corrected, while his heart was leaping with joy. (pp. 132-133)

Mr. Lucas, however, is one of Forster's figures who is damned because he did not dare, whose contact with the earth roused longings which he was not strong enough to fulfill. He does not escape into the death experienced by the people of the khan when the tree blew down because he allows the false Antigone, Emily, to drag him back into society. His name, which relates him to the disciple Luke, who preached in Greece, is especially ironic because he is the first of Forster's characters to withdraw from spiritual experience. J. B. Beer points out that Mr. Lucas presents Forster with the problem of a character who has found reality in a moment of time and who does not die with fulfillment.¹⁹ I think, rather, that Mr. Lucas' problem is one of unfulfillment, precisely because his experience remained in time and did not, as Eustace's or Harold's, go beyond space and time. He has a glimpse, no more, into subconscious reality. He hopes a night at the khan will "place him beyond relapse, and confirm him for ever" because he is not beyond relapse and is not confirmed in his vision. His deterioration into irascible senility in England is evidence that his vision was incomplete. It lingers in his subconscious in the form of half-remembered sounds. He grumbles to Emily: "First the door bell rang, then you came back from the theatre. Then the dog started, and after the dog the cat. And at three in the morning a young hooligan passed by singing. Oh yes: then there was the water gurgling in the pipe above my head" (p. 140). Beer correctly relates the old man's complaints to events in Greece, suspended in his mind:

He does not even seem to recall their visit, and perhaps he does not recall it consciously. Yet when we look at the reasons for his complaints more closely, something else

emerges. The incidents about which he complains to his daughter are the cries of the dog and the cat, a young hooligan who passes in the night, singing, and the water gurgling in the pipe above his head. Clearly, although he does not remember the fact, these correspond to the woman with her little pig, the young man who came singing over the waters and the music of the stream. It is the subconscious link with what he has lost that makes these things so irritating to him.²⁰

The disintegration of Mr. Lucas answers the question "What if a character cannot receive his vision?" What if he cannot annihilate and assimilate nature, another consciousness, the Not-Self into the self? The dialectical tension with which Forster leaves the reader at the end of this story drives him onward to seek new resolutions, new answers.

"The Road from Colonus" appeared in 1904. That same year "The Other Side of the Hedge" intensified the contradictions between phenomena and noumena, "this" world and "another." Although a slender story, "The Other Side of the Hedge" annihilates phenomena more completely than anything Forster wrote. We begin after death, with a young man walking wearily along a dusty road which is bordered on either side by high brown hedges. He passes through a break in the hedge, falls into a moat, is helped out by an older man who becomes his guide in the beautiful country on the other side. Patiently the older man tries to explain that the road is never far from "our boundary" and shows the young man a gate through which all humanity "went out countless ages ago, when it was first seized with the desire to walk" (p. 45). Most of the story is taken up with the young man's defense of "progress," of "getting ahead," in spite of the fact that he was relieved when he dropped the heavy things he had been carrying before he "crossed over." But he is still

unconvinced that this country is better than the road he left. His guide shows him a transparent gate in the hedge which opens inwards. Through it he sees again the dusty road and becomes extremely upset. At this moment a man passes with a scythe and a can of beer. The young man snatches the can from him, drinks, and sinks immediately into oblivion. Before he does, he recognizes that the newcomer is his brother, who had left the road a year or two before.

From the first sentence, space and time are annihilated via fusion: "My pedometer told me that I was twenty-five; and, though it is a shocking thing to stop walking, I was so tired that I sat down on a milestone to rest" (p. 39). From that moment, phenomena melt into unsubstantial forms: when the narrator looks back at the road "strewn with the things we all had dropped . . . the white dust was settling down on them, so that already they looked no better than stones" (p. 40). The road, with its devotees of "progress," seems straight--i.e., purposeful, leading to a "goal" --but the old man on the other side explains that it often doubles back onto itself, is "never far" from the "other side" and sometimes touches the boundary between. Forster is saying that we are never far from another reality, another perspective, in which the "race of life" becomes meaningless and all our efforts at "improvement," at "understanding," becomes ridiculous. When the narrator asks, "What does it all mean?" the answer is "It means nothing but itself" (p. 44). The moat which follows the hedge and into which the narrator falls provides a symbolic baptism, but the narrator is still unconverted. When his pedometer does not work, he uses the catchwords of progress: "The laws of science are

universal in their application. It must be the water in the moat that has injured the machinery. In normal conditions everything works. Science and the spirit of emulation--those are the forces that have made us what we are" (p. 43). He tries to rationalize the doubling of the road as "part of our discipline." "Who can doubt," he asks, "that its general tendency is onward?" (p. 45). But this is Erehwon spelled frontwards: this is a nowhere that is everywhere. Life on this side is no different from life on that side: only the perspective has changed. If this is so, then all the rush and bother, all the goals are meaningless. Where, then, can we go to find reality? The only place left: into the self, into an awareness of the self qua reality. With this inflooding awareness of the self as reality, as an assimilation of all time, space and effort, the narrator gazes with horror through the transparent gate at the road, "monotonous, dusty, with brown crackling hedges on either side, as far as the eye could reach," in which he had put all his faith. A resurgence of self-awareness causes him to realize how hungry and weak he is. He wrenches the can of beer from the passing man's hand: intangible subconscious need meets tangible liquid substance and fuse as his senses sink into oblivion. The senses are annihilated but at the same time assimilated into an oblivion which is also vision: "they seemed to expand ere they reached it." The last sentence of the story--"The man whose beer I had stolen lowered me down gently to sleep off its effects, and, as he did so, I saw he was my brother"--contains overtones which go beyond the immediate relationship to include all humanity (p. 48).

Forster's refusal in this story to give death no more importance

than a dividing line between one form of perspective and another erases phenomena completely. Death is a hedge separating not even one form of life from another, but the same life. The only difference is a deeper awareness, for after death, without the encumbrance of things, we can live entirely on the subconscious level, where reality lies. The "advances" which the narrator uses in his argument--the Transvaal War, the Fiscal Question, Christian Science, Radium--are events and ideas empty of content in contrast with the old man's silence, full of meaning. For a while, the narrator insists on operating on the conscious level, because he identified himself with the Transvaal War and the Fiscal Question. In The Undiscovered Self Jung explains that man, by adapting himself to the tasks and technology of the world, "forgets himself in the process, losing sight of his instinctual nature and putting his own conception of himself in place of his real being. In this way he slips imperceptibly into a purely conceptual world where the products of his conscious activity progressively replace reality."²¹ The narrator has manufactured himself, as it were, in order to adapt to pressures which he and his "civilization" have in turn manufactured: wars, economic crises, competitive technology. Reality lies in the subconscious, not in the overlay of conscious learning and "ideas" which the narrator has mistaken for knowledge, but which are only learned responses. By annihilating the conceptual world--and hence his previous concept of himself--the narrator can abandon his manufactured self and embrace reality. It lies just over a hedge thin enough in places to be seen through, if one dares.

We meet Pan again in "The Curate's Friend," in the form of a Wilt-

shire faun. The curate, his fiancée Emily, her mother and a friend of Emily's, a young poet, go out into the Wiltshire downs for a picnic-tea. The curate sees and talks with a faun, who lays his hands on Emily and the young poet and causes them to fall in love. The curate is surprised to find that he is relieved rather than angry at his loss of Emily. Indeed, his loss is replaced by a joy of nature which he tries to communicate to his parishioners at the end of the story. He remains friends with the faun, who often sits, at sundown, "before the beech copse as a man sits before his house" (p. 123). With this slight and obviously contrived fantasy, Forster manages to present the dialectical tensions between nature and civilization through a cast of characters we have met before. Emily is another Mildred: she is "able to talk about the sub-conscious self in the drawing-room, and yet have an ear for the children crying in the nursery . . ."-i.e., her talk of the sub-conscious (as Mildred's talk of the soul) falls into the category of "ideas" (p. 114). Her "little friend," the poet, is a younger Leyland: "a pleasant youth, full of intelligence and poetry, especially of what he called the poetry of the earth" (p. 115). He can "press his face passionately into the grass" but he cannot hear, as the curate does, the sounds of the earth all around them. The curate, too, might be a younger Mr. Sandbach. He likes to climb to the top of hills and "exclaim facetiously 'And who will stand on either hand and keep the bridge with me?'" (p. 115). But he is likeable and contains with him, as the others do not, the possibility of connecting with the earth.

The earth in "The Curate's Friend" is not only organic but more

animate than it had been in the other stories. The downs are like "a great chalk spider who straddles over our island--":

whose legs are the south downs and the north downs and the Chilterns, and the tips of whose toes poke out at Cromer and Dover. He is a clean creature, who grows as few trees as he can, and those few in tidy clumps, and he loves to be tickled by quickly flowing streams. He is pimpled all over with earthworks, for from the beginning of time men have fought for the privilege of standing on him, and the oldest of our temples is built upon his back. (p. 115)

Not only is the earth animate, but it possesses a voice which can cry out. When the curate tries to light the fire Emily's mother pleads "Won't the kettle stand? Oh, but make it stand.' I did so. There was a little cry, faint but distinct, as of something in pain. 'How silent it all is up here!' said Emily. I dropped a lighted match on the grass, and again I heard the little cry" (p. 117).

Into this organic universe runs the faun, whom they mistake for a schoolboy out for a swim, "until the strange fingers closed upon me . . ." reports the curate. It is then, when he wrests himself away from the "boy," that the curate sees the tail.

In a terrible voice I said to him, "Get thee behind me!" He got behind me. "Once for all," I continued, "let me tell you that it is vain to tempt one whose happiness consists in giving happiness to others."

"I cannot understand you," he said ruefully. "What is to tempt?" (p. 119)

But innocence, with a Pan figure, does not necessarily imply goodness. The faun cannot understand what the curate means by making people happy: "People whom I have never seen--people who cannot see me--why should I make them happy?" (p. 120). He "towers insolently above" Emily and the young poet, lays his hands on them, and what they intended as "a little

cultured flirtation" becomes passion--i.e., the idea of passion becomes the real thing. When the curate swears the faun rejoices: the curate is cured of his inhibitions, and he can hear, for the first time, "the chalk downs singing to each other across the valleys. . ." (p. 123). The curate, like the young man of "The Other Side of the Hedge," has annihilated a previous concept of himself, which he had manufactured to fit his environment, and has assimilated the reality of the earth into a newly-found self wherein peace lies.

Yet this story does not satisfy the tensions it presents, as "The Other Side of the Hedge" did, or as that other Pan-centered story, "The Story of a Panic," did. One reason might be the curate's too sudden acquiescence in a change which was brought about, not by himself or through himself, but by a figure external to himself. He does not have, therefore, a legitimate "moment," but merely a heightened awareness of an organic universe which he was receptive to even before the faun's appearance. Another reason for the less-than-satisfactory dialectical shift at the end might be the figure of Pan in England. If he is less diabolical in Wiltshire than he had been on the Italian hillside, he is also less believable. It is as if Forster were trying to make him into a middle-class shopkeeper "sitting before the beech copse as a man sits before his house." This simply, for Pan, will not suffice. The forces of nature are too cramped in a cottage, even an imaginary one, and especially an English one. Max Beerbohm, in Seven Men, declared that "from the time of Nathanael Hawthorne to the outbreak of the 1914 war, current literature did not suffer from any lack of fauns . . . with their hoofs and

their slanting eyes and their ways of coming suddenly out of woods to wean quiet English villages from respectability."²² "The Curate's Friend" was Forster's only attempt at Anglicizing his pagan demi-god. After 1907 Pan would be a spirit, no less powerful, but less recognizable, on English hillsides.²³

In "The Celestial Omnibus" literary figures replace Pan as the mediums into noumenal reality. In this story "The boy who resided at Agathox Lodge, 28, Buckingham Park Road, Surbiton" discovers a sign, "To Heaven," pointing up a blind alley. It has been placed there, his middle-class parents tell him, by a naughty young man named Shelley who was expelled from the University and who "came to grief in other ways." They advise him to ask their cultured friend Mr. Bons--"snob" spelled backwards--for further information.

"Had you never heard of Shelley?" asked Mr. Bons.

"No," said the boy, and hung his head.

"But there is no Shelley in the house?"

"Why, yes!" exclaimed the lady, in much agitation.

"Dear Mr. Bons, we aren't such Philistines as that.

Two at the least. One a wedding present, and the other, smaller print, in one of the spare rooms."

"I believe we have seven Shelleys," said Mr. Bons, with a slow smile. Then he brushed the cake crumbs off his stomach, and, together with his daughter, rose to go.

(pp. 50-51)

Mr. Bons might be the narrator of "The Other Side of the Hedge" with another twenty years on his pedometer: he has shackled himself with the civilized trappings which society thinks "good":

He had a beautiful house and lent one books, he was a churchwarden and a candidate for the County Council; he had donated to the Free Library enormously, he presided over the Literary Society, and had Members of Parliament to stop with him--in short, he was probably the wisest person alive. (p. 50)

In short, he represents the thesis, the everyday world of phenomena. Forster achieves here the same irony he created in "The Story of a Panic" with a narrator--now a boy--unaware of his own shortsightedness. We forgive the boy more than we did the tale-teller of the previous story because of his youth, but because we do, we forgive Mr. Bons less for his unkindness to him. Bons' self-righteous "seven Shelleys" and his condescending "It is odd how, in quite illiterate minds, you will find glimmers of Artistic Truth" mark him as a suburban Leyland, representative of false culture (p. 63).

The boy discovers noumenal reality one afternoon at sundown when he ventures up the alley, reads a sign announcing the services of Sunrise and Sunset Omnibuses, for which tickets may be obtained from the driver. There are no tickets at the other end: return tickets are available for one day only. As he leaves the alley he bumps into his father, a sadistic man whose chief pleasure seems to be laughing at his son: "Diddums! Diddums! Diddums think he'd walky-palky up to Evvink!" (p. 53). The next evening, however, the boy returns to the alley, boards the improbable omnibus--how it turns around in the narrow alley we never learn--and obtains a return ticket from the driver, Sir Thomas Browne, a kindly, delightful guide. They soar into fantasia, where matter, space, direction and the senses fuse: rainbows have sounds, clouds are solid, caves are gateways. Home again, the boy is caned by his father while his mother, silly and weak, begs him to recant the "lie." "There is no omnibus," the father screams, punctuating the strokes of the cane, "no driver, no bridge, no mountains; you are a truant, a gutter snipe, a

liar" (p. 62). He turns the boy over to Mr. Bons for the recital of Keats, the "punishment": "Here, Bons, you go in for poetry. Put him through it, will you, while I fetch up the whisky?" (p. 64). But Keats' "Aye, on the shores of darkness there is light, and precipices show untrodden green" describes exactly what the boy has seen, and he bursts into tears. "I never doubted it," Mr. Bons says "with closed eyes," but his agreement is verbal and "cultured": he sees the description as an "idea." When the boy tries to tell him more he stops him with "Tut, tut! No more of your yarns, my boy. I meant that I never doubted the essential truth of Poetry. Some day, when you have read more, you will understand what I mean" (p. 65). To "cure" the boy of his hallucinations, Mr. Bons takes him to the alley the next evening, where they board another bus, driven by Dante. Bit by bit, the dialectical tensions are forced into focus by this last bus ride. Mr. Bons cannot see Achilles guarding the causeway of the rainbow bridge, nor hear the prelude to Rhinegold that rose from the water. "I want to go back," he whimpers peevishly to the driver. "I have honoured you. I have quoted you. I have bound you in vellum. Take me back to my world" (p. 73). Dante replies: "Stand by yourself, as that boy has stood. I cannot save you." Mr. Bons falls out of the omnibus "against the hard, moonlit rock, fell into it as if it were water," to be found near the Bermondsey gas-works (p. 73). The boy, caught up on Achilles' shield, sees the mountains awake, the river awake, and felt "the touch of fresh leaves on his forehead" where "some one had crowned him" (p. 74).

I cannot agree with Wilfred Stone, who thinks this story is a

"psychic escape of a boy hero" by an author who is concealing antagonism against his guardians, whom he doesn't kill off, as he does Mr. Bons, because (1) they would not then suffer remorse and (2) the author does not want to reward himself with "too much poetic justice. . . ." "After all," Stone writes, "the real parent-guardian might read the story. . . ."24

Nowhere in Forster's biography do I find any indication that he suffered at the hands of his mother or of Marianne Thornton, who died when he was eight. He never knew his father, who died when he was a baby. Perhaps, as Stone suggests, Forster resented the "smothering" he received from the two women; certainly there is an implication that, in Stone's words, Forster might have felt "like a fought-over prize." But even if he had, I cannot equate childhood resentment with the secret rebellion against parental authority which Stone attributes to "The Celestial Omnibus." It was first published in 1908, the same year that Room with a View appeared, when Forster was twenty-nine. He would hardly have been concealing, it seems to me, latent hostility at that age. It is more meaningful, in terms of his fiction, to see the sadistic father as an extreme case of "civilized" man trapped by the catchwords of a learned "morality," just as the narrator in "The Other Side of the Hedge" was trapped by the catchwords of progress, and the boy as a position in a dialectical argument which sets nature vs. civilization.

Certainly the boy is contrasted with the false culture of Mr. Bons. For the boy, as for all Forster's elemental characters, nature is organic, even before his experience. In the wasteland of Surbiton it had retreated into a railroad cutting, "that wonderful cutting which

has drawn to itself the whole beauty out of Surbiton, and clad itself, like any Alpine valley, with the glory of the fir and the silver birch and the primrose" (p. 51). It was this cutting, Forster tells us, "that had first stirred desires within the boy--desires for something just a little different, he knew not what, desires that would return whenever things were sunlit, as they were this evening, running up and down inside him. . .". (p. 51). The boy has the ability to "see." The universe to which he travels on the bus is spiritual, organic, in which waters sing and mountains awaken, where experience expands rather than contracts, where there is no synthesis. It is set in opposition to Agathox (ironically from "agathos," Greek for "good," the environmental embodiment of Mr. Bons, also "good"), where everything is spiritually asleep--or worse, spiritually dead. But even in a dead-end alley with damp brick walls, one can catch a celestial omnibus, if one "sees."

"Other Kingdom" brings the reader back to earth, in which the "other reality" is a beech copse. The cultured, Leyland-Bons character here is Harcourt Worters, who has imported an Irish girl, Miss Beaumont, as his fiancée whom he intends to "educate." He gives her the copse as a wedding present, and it becomes the fulcrum for a dialectical conflict between the civilized and the pagan. The copse has a stream in front of it, reminiscent of the moat in "The Other Side of the Hedge," which Mr. Worters wants to span with a bridge. He also wants to fence in the copse to keep wandering lovers out. He tells Miss Beaumont: "My haven from the world! My temple of purity. Oh, the spiritual exaltation-- you cannot understand it, but you will! Oh, the seclusion of Paradise.

Year after year alone together, all in all to each other--year after year, soul to soul, E. B., Everlasting Bliss!" (p. 97). Miss Beaumont would admit humanity into paradise, those wandering couples who carve their names on trees, deeper as each child is born: "Year by year--while the initials deepen--the only thing worth feeling--and at last they close up--but one has felt them" (p. 96). Similar hints are given that Miss Beaumont, if not a dryad, is capable of becoming one:

She flung her arms up above her head, close together, so that she looked like a slender column. Then her body swayed and her delicate green dress quivered over it with the suggestion of countless leaves . . . she twitched up her skirts so that for a moment they spread out in great horizontal layers, like the layers of a beech. (p. 80)

She insists on a picnic in the wood, accompanied by Worters, Inskip (the tutor-narrator), and Worters' ward, a boy named Ford, who is secretly in love with Miss Beaumont and who is another "elemental character." Inskip (who has "skipped into" the story?) represents the view of the everyday world, but because his opinions are narrow, Forster encourages the reader to sympathize with the more exciting elemental characters. It is Inskip who inadvertently defines the dialectical oppositions which form the real theme of the story when he compares Worters and Ford. Explaining Ford, he tells the reader that "he has dreams--not exactly spiritual dreams: Mr. Worters is the man for those--but dreams of the tangible and the actual: robust dreams, which take him, not to heaven, but to another earth" (pp. 83-84). Worters, called "spiritual" by the limited narrator, is really selfish, wanting to keep the wood and Miss Beaumont to himself: his spirituality is the idea of spirituality.

Ford, on the other hand, dreams of "the tangible and the actual" and connects with matter: he knows that the only way to get to noumena is through phenomena. The spirit cannot be reached by talking about it, by putting it into language. When Miss Beaumont speaks to Worters of feeling the initials of the lovers deepen, Forster writes:

"Our initials!" he murmured, seizing upon the one word which he had understood and which was useful to him. "Let us carve our initials now. . . ."
 He stretched out his hand to cut the initials. As he did so she seemed to awake from a dream. "Harcourt!" she cried. "Harcourt! What's that? What's that red stuff on your finger and thumb?" (p. 97)

Worters is the "opaque" character of the thesis, sensuous enough to appreciate Miss Beaumont's high spirits but spiritually unfeeling, whose money allows him to alter nature to his purposes. He builds the fence and orders asphalt paths to be put down to the wood, which now "lies tethered by a ribbon of asphalt" to the house. He sends Ford away, after discovering a notebook in which Ford had drawn a caricature of him. Before he does, Miss Beaumont lashes out at the narrator and Ford for their loyalty to catchwords and disloyalty to Worters, whom she trusts, and therefore completely misreads.

"Right? What's a right? You use too many new words: 'Rights'--'apologies'--'society'--'position'-- I don't follow it. What are we all here for, anyhow?"
 Her discourse was full of trembling lights and shadows--frivolous one moment, the next moment asking why Humanity is here. I did not take the Moral Science Tripos, so I could not tell her.
 "One thing I know-- and that is that Harcourt isn't as stupid as you two. He soars above conventions. He doesn't care about 'rights' or 'apologies.' He knows that all laughter is nice, and that the other nice things are money and the soul and so on. (p. 101)

Irony via misunderstanding--Forster had used it in "The Story of a Panic"

and "The Celestial Omnibus"--again emphasizes the real and the wished-for. Worters does send Ford away, who ends in a grubby London flat reading Oedipus Colonus.²⁵ Miss Beaumont succumbs to Worters, retreats into the house and changes her green dress to a brown one--significantly the colors of "The Other Side of the Hedge," in which brown was the color of the civilized side of the hedge. The wind rises mysteriously and blows a bough from the copse against the house. The branches "sigh" organically as Worters brags that he has at last "rounded us off from the world" (p. 105). When Miss Beaumont dons her green dress again and goes to the wood, the wind dies, but rises again after she disappears, to chase the others indoors, as the catspaw of wind has chased the tourists in "The Story of a Panic." Inside Worters and the narrator watch the rain, which "hissed and rose up from the dry meadows like incense smoke, and smote the quivering leaves to applause" (p. 110). They saw Other Kingdom "as one who claps the hands, and heard it as one who roars with laughter in the thunder"--nature in a form human enough to satisfy the most ardent occultist. Miss Beaumont's song as she assimilates nature to become a dryad turns into a chant, regrettable for its puns: "Oh Ford! oh Ford, among all these Worters, I am coming through you to my Kingdom. Oh Ford, my lover while I was a woman, I will never forget you, never, as long as I have branches to shade you from the sun" (p. 109). And "singing," she "crossed the stream." The woods of Arcady are not dead for Forster.

The stories which we have investigated so far (with the exception of "Albergo Empedocle") belong to the collection entitled The Celestial

Omnibus, which appeared in 1911. In The Eternal Moment and Other Stories, which was published in 1928, there is a subtle but significant change in Forster's dialectic. In the earlier stories he relied on mythological figures to embody noumena. Often, as with Eustace and Harold, and especially with the Wiltshire faun, he overstated the elemental character of the antithesis to the point of almost destroying the dialectical tensions necessary for a forward movement. Perhaps he felt later that isolated characters such as Leyland, Bons and Worters were not strong enough to weigh the thesis side of his argument. Being external and civilized, they could be coped with and overcome by the Miss Beaumonts and boys who could see heavenly rainbows. The thesis would be more insidious and much harder to deal with if it existed side-by-side with the antithesis within the same character: the character could then be a victim of culture trying to justify the viewpoint of the thesis but at the same time a champion of the "unseen" trying to receive a vision. By allowing the noumenon, with its possibility of another reality, to take up its residence in the minds of the characters, Forster can move from Pan to man, from a mythological to a human context. Now the noumenon, trapped in the mind by ego and false concepts of the self, must oppose the force of the thesis at closer range. Now the breaking down of the ego and of culture-imposed concepts of the self will constitute the dialectical movement between the thesis and antithesis. The action will be less overt; the drama will be internal. To emphasize this new, internal setting of his dialectic, Forster in this second collection employs enclosures more obviously than he has done before. Although

enclosures were used in the first collection--the hollow votive tree of Mr. Lucas, the beech copse of Miss Beaumont and the curate's friend--they were natural enclosures of vegetation. Now they are (with one exception, the grotto in "The Story of the Siren") not natural but culturally produced and psychological: Micky's narrow "humanism" in "The Point of It"; Mr. Andrews' selfish idea of heaven; the girls' school's commitment to a limited curriculum in "Co-ordination"; a commercialism which closes man off from his fellows in "The Eternal Moment."

Nowhere in the collection is this new emphasis more evident than in the first story, "The Machine Stops." Here Forster with one stroke extends the idea of enclosure to a whole civilization by making the civilization itself a trap which suffocates its people spiritually, mentally and physically. It is his No Exit, an underground world of blank walls and corridors leading to similar blank walls and corridors, where humanity has surrendered to the Machine. Its people are "funguous," without muscle, thought, or feeling, who pursue "ideas" through speaking tubes and who dread physical contact. All connection with the earth, the sun, the stars, vegetation, and each other, is gone. Vashti and her son Kuno are the only characters we meet, but looming in the background, hovering in the air about them is the presence of the Machine and its tentacles, the bed which comes out of the ceiling, the thermometer which pops into mouths, the televised telephones through which "lectures" are heard and delivered. All action is verbal: the phenomena of nature has been replaced by "ideas." "Vomitories" provide access for airships, which transport occasional passengers from one look-alike room to another and,

less frequently, some daring soul to the surface of the earth--equipped with a respirator, for earthly air is now poison--under the guise of research. But for the muscular and the too-inquisitive, there is the threat of "homelessness," an ironic term for death because, in their isolated cubicles, these people are already homeless. For Forster this must have been the most frightening nightmare he could have devised: by severing man from the earth, this world destroyed the sense of place; by severing people from each other, it destroyed personal relationships; by removing man from natural objects and emphasizing "ideas"--false noumena--it destroyed the possibility of man's reaching true noumena through phenomena. If his characters can experience a spiritual "moment" here, or connect in this world atrophied of feeling, there is hope for civilization.

One day Kuno dares to crawl up a tiled ventilator shaft (left over from the construction of this under world) and discovers a remnant of earth-people still alive on the surface. He persuades his mother to visit him in his room on the other side of the earth, and Vashti reluctantly leaves her lecture on "Music during the Australian Period" to board an airship. Horrified, she hears his blasphemies: he has admired the stars, the earth, the people he met. He compares the mending apparatus, which pulled him back into the shaft, to long white worms. Vashti returns to her own room convinced that Kuno is mad. Years pass. Then the Machine begins to slow down; the air becomes stale, the light dims, the bed sometimes refuses to come down. Kuno calls her again, to warn her that the Machine is stopping. She refuses to listen: the

Committee of the Mending Apparatus has assured everyone that all complaints will be investigated. As doubt enters this world the need to believe returns: furtively, Vashti worships the Book of the Machine, heretofore nothing but a manual of operations. One day there is silence: she has never heard silence before. Frantically she presses button after button, turns dial after dial: nothing happens. She dares to go out into the corridor. It is choked with groaning people dying in the dark. Kuno finds her, and through a vomitory opening widened by a crashing airship, before they die, they see "scraps of the untainted sky." They achieve their "moment" as they weep for humanity and Kuno's blood spurts onto Vashti's hands. They have connected through the phenomena of their bodies: they have touched at last, and thereby recaptured life.

Contrived and Wellsian as this story is, Forster manages to communicate his two themes of place and personal relationships more powerfully than he has done before. It is through the earth and each other that man must connect with another reality. Perhaps because his thesis has expanded into a civilization which threatens to eliminate completely the possibility of connecting, the sense of place and personal relationships take on the nostalgia of lost causes. By making his thesis impersonal, he can give it more force than it could have if it were embodied in an individual. It pervades Vashti. Her name links her with that Vashti from the Book of Esther who refused to go to the feast of King Ahasuerus and who was set aside by him for another. Like her Biblical counterpart, Vashti refuses the feast of experience, of life. She is totally dominated by her world. She has "no time" to talk with Kuno; she speaks constantly of "wasting time": the sense of hurry has

annihilated time as uniformity has eliminated place. In the airship going to visit Kuno she is bored by the sight of the Himalayas--they gave her no "ideas." When Kuno speaks of Orion--Forster's image of the heroic ideal ("Man had mirrored his strength on the constellations")--she says "I dislike the stars. But did they give you an idea? How interesting; tell me" (p. 147). Specialization has isolated mankind. When the blind flies up in the airship the attendant is helpless: "it was not her place" to mend it; she can only suggest that Vashti change compartments, and "behaved barbarically" by touching Vashti to keep her from falling (p. 161). Vashti's longing to help Kuno--taken from her as an infant and raised by the state--is muddled. What if "Kuno himself, flesh of her flesh, stood close beside her at last, what profit was there in that? She was too well-bred to shake him by the hand" (p. 164). She is horrified by his escapade, and cannot understand his spiritual communication with humanity when he tells her that, as he was digging and clinging in the ventilator shaft, "the spirits of the dead comforted me . . . even as the dead were comforting me, so I was comforting the unborn" (p. 170). Equally frightening to her is his description of the Wessex hills as organic nature: "But to me they were living and the turf that covered them was a skin, under which their muscles rippled, and I felt that those hills had called with incalculable force to men in the past and that men had loved them" (p. 175). "The surface of the earth is only dust and mud," she tells him, "no life remains on it. . . ." But Kuno knows the difference between the idea of something and the thing itself, and knows that only by connecting with things can man be whole:

"You know that we have lost the sense of space. We say 'space is annihilated,' but we have annihilated not space, but the sense thereof. We have lost a part of ourselves"(p. 167). Dying, Vashti weeps, and the flood of emotion makes her human again.

They wept for humanity, those two, not for themselves. They could not bear that this should be the end. Ere silence was completed their hearts were opened, and they knew what had been important on the earth. Man, the flower of all flesh, the noblest of all creatures visible, man who had once made god in his image, and had mirrored his strength on the constellations, beautiful naked man was dying, strangled in the garments that he had woven. (pp. 195-196)

Man made the Machine; man willed his own extinction as human. Progress in this "advanced" world is really the progress of the machine, and its products, things, have become the dictators of man. Only connection with the earth, and with each other, holds the possibility of salvation. Before the end, Vashti and Kuno connected; however briefly, they annihilated self-consciousness and ego and assimilated each other and humanity through love. Forster's dialectic seems already to have begun, in 1909, the year "The Machine Stops" was published, that movement toward the Hindu bhakti--connection with the universe through love-- which would be its ultimate destination in A Passage to India fifteen years later. But, true to his commitment that a story should open out rather than end, he refuses synthesis in "The Machine Stops," as he will refuse it later in A Passage to India. Even while they are connecting with all those past generations, Vashti and Kuno gaze outward into infinity. "For a moment they saw the nations of the dead, and, before they joined them, scraps of the untainted sky" (p. 197).

The science fiction atmosphere created by "The Machine Stops"

remains in the next three stories, "The Point of It," "Mr. Andrews," and "Co-Ordination," with the introduction, in each, of a contrived heaven-hell hierarchy which operates in the spiritual world as the civilization of the "The Machine Stops" had operated below. The enclosure in "The Point of It" is a boat, in which two boys, Micky and Harold, "muddle about" trying to reach shore against an ebbing tide. But this enclosure develops later in the story into the false "humanism" and "education" of Micky, the self-righteous boy ("God had never thwarted him hitherto . . .") who shouts out lines of Tennyson as he urges Harold, with a weak heart, to row harder. "Harold, who did not care for poetry, only shouted" (p. 199). Harold's exertion leads him to "the mystic state that is the athlete's true though unacknowledged goal: he was beginning to be" (p. 200). But Forster's "to be" implies spirituality. "Setting his teeth," Forster writes, Harold "went berserk." "His ancestors called to him"--one is reminded of the dead generations calling to Kuno-- "that it was better to die than to be beaten by the sea" (p. 200). He listens, pushes himself into infinity, and dying, calls out to Micky that he will "see the point of it" some day. Micky will remember "Harold's final gesture (one hand grasping his own, the other plunged deep into the sea), because there was a certain aesthetic quality about it, not because it was the last of his friend" (p. 202). Micky is a Leyland-Bons character, an esthete who will "serve" humanity by becoming an official at the British Museum, but at the end of his life, as his son said, all he had accomplished was the rearrangement of some display cases. He is not devoid of feeling, but feeling, when it remains too

close to ideas--in this case, the "idea" of humanism--is not enough. Because such service is shallow, the language Forster employs describing Sir Michael (Micky has been knighted) is trite: "Love, the love of humanity warmed him, and even when he was thinking of other matters, was looking at Orion perhaps in the cold winter evenings, a pang of joy, too sweet for description, would thrill him, and he would feel sure that our highest impulses have some eternal value, and will be completed hereafter" (p. 203). What he does not know, and what Harold, dying in the boat, discovered, is that our highest impulses do not have to wait until a "hereafter," but can be accomplished here and now.²⁶ Harold, with the pagan element of the athlete, realized a mystic state through his body; Micky's "love of humanity" is lip service and ironically, comically, causes his death when he interferes with two quarrelling women. Forster's description crackles with wit:

The manner of his death was as follows. He, too, met with an accident. He was walking from his town house to Catherine's [his daughter] by a short cut through a slum; some women were quarrelling about a fish, and as he passed they appealed to him. Always courteous, the old man stopped, said that he had not sufficient data to judge on, and advised them to lay the fish aside for twenty-four hours. This chanced to annoy them, and they grew more angry with him than with one another. They accused him of "doing them," of "getting round them" and one, who was the worse for drink, said "See if he gets round that," and slapped him with the fish in the face. He fell. When he came to himself he was lying in bed with one of his headaches. (pp. 210-211)

Ironically, he dies because of his civilized attempt to "help" the women, but his "educated reason" prevents him from connecting with people. Symbolically, he dies by a blow from a fish--from the sea.

In hell, because the afterlife is the same life, as it was in "The

Other Side of the Hedge," Micky still does not "see." He regrets all the time he spent in the sun. He likes hell, where he can see "none of the stars that drove me almost mad at night once." "It would be appalling, would it not," he asks a companion, "to see Orion again. . . . for he recalled adventure and my youth" (pp. 216-217). He is exactly opposite to Kuno, who, when he saw Orion, "felt that a man of my sort lived in the sky." Micky is afraid of heroism because civilization has killed herosim in him. But even in hell it is not too late. When the Spirit of Life appears with the song, "I was before choice, I was before hardness and softness were divided. I was in the days when truth was love. And I am . . .," Micky dares to follow the spirit across the stream to the region of the saved (p. 221).²⁷ It is a journey not to heaven, but to another reality in which time and all his past experiences have been annihilated, where he can recapture and assimilate that spiritual moment from the past when Harold died.²⁸ As he crosses he is again in the boat watching the sand dunes on the shore. Like the boy crossing the hedge, he feels a weight fall off his body. He experiences youth and beauty at last because he reaches out to the true reality, beyond time and space. We leave him in the boat again, and again, as with Vashti and Kuno, Forster ends his story without synthesis, with a character who looks out to a cloudless sky and a sea where "gulls were riding up and down on the furrowed waters," to a farm on the shore "full to the brim with fire" (p. 224). Micky has recaptured the spirit of place and of heroism, for we feel that the spirit of Harold again rides with him.

"Mr. Andrews" introduces heaven and the Hindu world soul. But again, as in "The Other Side of the Hedge" and "The Point of It," the afterlife is no different than the present life, as Mr. Andrews soon discovers. It contains the same problems of connection and the necessity for continuous experience. Mr. Andrews is ascending to heaven, accompanied by a Moslem soul. At the entrance gate, in a moment of pity for the Moslem, Mr. Andrews asks "Cannot he enter?" instead of the usual "Can I enter?" The Turk does the same: "For the same spirit was working in each of them"(p. 228). But heaven proves disappointing: its delights--for the Moslem, dark-eyed damsels, for Mr. Andrews, a harp--cannot match the moment outside the gate when each lost his ego-consciousness and became concerned for the other. On their way up, the world soul had "pressed them on every side, just as the atmosphere presses upon rising bubbles, striving to vanquish them, to break their thin envelope of personality, to mingle their virtue with its own. But they resisted, remembering their glorious individual life on earth, and hoping for an individual life to come" (p. 225). Only after they are both disappointed in the selfish heaven they have found do they request release.²⁹ Once outside, they experience aufheben, an annihilation of ego and an assimilation of the universe which constitutes their visionary moment and places them onto a dialectical platform promising further fulfillment:

As soon as they passed the gate, they felt again the pressure of the world soul. For a moment they stood hand in hand resisting it. Then they suffered it to break in upon them, and they, and all the experience they had gained, and all the love and wisdom they had generated, passed into it, and made it better. (p. 232)

It should be noted that Mr. Andrews and the Moslem, like all Forster's visionary characters of the antithesis, are passive recipients of their "moment." They may be ready, as Eustace was, as Harold in Sicily was, as the curate was, but the vision must come to them before their experiences can fuse into metamorphosis.

In "Co-Ordination" heaven contains Beethoven and Napoleon, who look down on a girls' school and its ridiculous commitment to "co-ordinating" a curriculum around Napoleon. Miss Haddon, the music teacher, listens to her piano students play the Eroica Symphony badly hour after hour. Other students recite "Homages de Wordsworth" and paint the left front leg of Pauline Buonaparte's couch. Miss Haddon, admitting to herself that she is a poor music teacher, picks up a sea shell from St. Helena which holds papers down on the principal's desk. Like Mr. Lucas, who also experienced inklings of the unseen after he was honest with himself, Miss Haddon connects with another reality. "She heard the sea . . . the tide whispering over mud-flats or chattering against stones . . . and the little waves that live in the big waves all sing for joy. . . . She heard them all, but in the end she heard the sea itself, and knew that it was hers for ever" (p. 238). The principal enters and Miss Haddon confesses that she has been a poor teacher and asks for dismissal. The principal, too, listens to the sea shell and joins her in a session of self-honesty. A holiday is declared and the organization of the "co-ordinated" curriculum breaks down. The girls play games at which "every-one hid and nobody sought; every one batted and nobody fielded . . . it was even possible to play two games at once. . . (p. 241). Mephistopheles,

looking down from heaven, where he has gone with a scroll marked "J'accuse!" decides that he may not have been able to prove the futility of genius with Job or Faust, but that he really has a case this time: great men are completely misunderstood. The archangel Raphael agrees that he may indeed have a case, because "this universe is supposed to rest on co-ordination, all creatures co-ordinating according to their powers" (p. 243). He asks Mephistopheles for his evidence, then rebukes him for missing the main point. Because the girls and their head mistress have co-ordinated with Melody and Victory, they have not betrayed truth. Because they have dared to be honest, they have carried truth into human relationships, where they have found another reality, universal co-ordination. They have stepped, via an object of the earth, a sea-shell, through phenomena into a noumena which is true connection. They have escaped the enclosure of their own man-made mental restrictions into spontaneous experience.

Eight years separated the publication of "The Story of a Siren" (1920) from "Co-ordination" (1912), yet the theme picks up, like a thread, the same conflict between false culture and a spontaneity realized through nature. From the first line, "The Story of the Siren" makes culture seem silly and insignificant compared with nature. The narrator, a student in Sicily on holiday, tells us that "Few things have been more beautiful than my notebook on the Deist Controversy as it fell downward through the waters of the Mediterranean" (p. 245). He stays behind with a young Sicilian guide who will dive for the book while the others go on in the motor boat, to return for them later. They sit out-

side a grotto on a "great sunlit rock that guarded the harmonies within" (p. 246). In the grotto there is a "cleanliness of all the sea gathered together and radiating light" (p. 246). The Sicilian tells of his brother Giuseppe, who was cruel, but who saw the Siren there, in spite of the fact that she is said to appear only to the good. She cannot emerge from the sea because "The priests have blessed the air, so she cannot breathe it, and blessed the rocks, so that she cannot sit on them. But the sea no man can bless, because it is too big, and always changing. So she lives in the sea" (p. 249). Giuseppe married a girl who had seen the Siren and legend prophesies that a child born of two who have seen her will "fetch her from the sea, and destroy silence, and save the world" (p. 258). The priests' "blessing" of the air is really a curse, and it is a priest who pushes the pregnant wife of Giuseppe over the cliff to her death. Giuseppe, broken-hearted, wandered over the world looking for someone else who had seen the siren, until in Liverpool "he began to cough, and spat blood until he died" (p. 257). The grotto where the narrator and Giuseppe's brother sit is beautiful, but it contains the terrible possibility of total knowledge: when Giuseppe saw the siren, he was "unhappy because he knew everything" (p. 252). But total knowledge, terrible as it is, becomes for Giuseppe the only reality, and drives him to his death.

As the narrator and the young Sicilian sit in the blue beauty of the grotto talking of these things, commercialism threatens in the form of tourism, brought by an English lady who wrote a book about the place, "and it was through her," the Sicilian says, "that the Improvement Syndi-

cate was formed, which is about to connect the hotels with the station by a funicular railway" (p. 250). The English boy stops him with "Don't tell me about that lady in here" (p. 250). The place is too sacred for an invasion of mechanized civilization, which happens too soon when the returning boat shatters the serenity. After the Sicilian boy's trumpeting prophecy--"Silence and loneliness cannot last for ever. It may be a hundred or a thousand years, but the sea lasts longer, and she shall come out of it and sing" --the story as well as the narrator is cut short: "I would have asked him more, but at that moment the whole cave darkened, and there rode in through its narrow entrance the returning boat" (p. 258). The cave "darkens" with the return of civilization, which is characterized by "silence and loneliness." The end, abrupt and intense, fuses with the sudden confrontation of Christian-pagan, civilization-nature elements onto an unresolved dialectical platform which will demand future resolution beyond the boundary of this story.

The fertility theme which appeared in "The Story of a Siren," in the form of a baby who holds the hope of the future, is central to the hoped-for resolution of "The Eternal Moment." Although this story first appeared in 1905, I, like Forster, have chosen to place it last because in treatment of theme and character it seems to form a bridge between the short stories and the novels. Miss Raby, the novelist of "The Eternal Moment," almost steps out of the pages of "The Story of the Siren." Like the English lady mentioned in the grotto, she has written a book which has brought prosperity--and neon signs--to a peaceful village, in this case the Italian village of Vorta. She returns to Vorta with a companion,

Colonel Leyland, whose position as her fiancé is somewhat ambiguous: they are "friends" in a mature disillusionment. As they pass a view, she recognizes a mountainside where a young Italian guide, Feo, once kissed her years ago. They register at the Grand Hotel des Alpes, which Miss Raby impulsively leaves for the old Hotel Biscione when she learns that her friend, Signora Cantu, still runs the old establishment and that Signora Cantu's son, owner of the new hotel, has broken with his family because of prosperity and competition. But her interview with Signora Cantu proves disastrous: the old lady, too, is envious and spiteful; she hopes that her son will fail. Miss Raby is about to leave her when Feo's name is mentioned. He is now the concierge of the Hotel des Alpes. Miss Raby sees him that afternoon, hoping to conciliate the two factions. He is fat, greasy and obsequious, deftly greeting guests who tip him. Still hopeful that she can penetrate his commercialism, Miss Raby reminds him that he was once a passionate young man on a mountainside years ago. It is hopeless; not only does Feo not remember her clearly, but he welcomes Colonel Leyland's "rescue" from a scene which threatens embarrassment. When Feo mentions his wife and children, Miss Raby tries to adopt his youngest boy as a penance for ruining Vorta. She wants to bring him up in England, to teach him that rich people are good, sympathetic, and truthful. "Your boy shall learn this, and he shall try to teach it to you. And when he grows up, if God is good to him he shall teach the rich: he shall teach them not to be stupid to the poor" (p. 304). But this attempted reconciliation between rich and poor, like her reconciliation between Signora Cantu and her son, fails. In

her defeat Miss Raby learns that the only good thing which has happened in the new prosperity, the lovely campanile, is slipping and will one day fall. It is then, when failure annihilates her previous conceptions about herself, that Miss Raby experiences her "eternal moment":

In that moment of final failure, there had been vouchsafed to her a vision of herself, and she saw that she had lived worthily. She was conscious of a triumph over experience and earthly facts, a triumph magnificent, cold, hardly human, whose existence no one but herself would ever surmise. From the view-terrace she looked down on the perishing and perishable beauty of the valley, and, though she loved it no less, it seemed to be infinitely distant, like a valley in a star. At that moment, if kind voices had called her from the hotel, she would not have returned. "I suppose this is old age," she thought. "It's not so very dreadful." (p. 307)

In this new assimilation of her past life, Miss Raby rises beyond personal relationships, outside time and space, and from her new vantage point looks down as if from an infinite distance. Impersonal, "cold, hardly human," her triumph has carried her beyond the earth, beyond the pain of people, but has lifted both place and people into a new region of love without expectation, acceptance without regret. Misunderstanding is no longer frustrating, but can be seen as the normal course of human communication. Outside time, the perishing beauty of the valley, like human misunderstanding, causes no alarm. Miss Raby has annihilated and assimilated, and, for a moment, seems to have reached that area described by Professor R. W. Eaton in which "Mind and matter are aspects of, abstractions from, a known reality which is wider and richer than either."³⁰

Colonel Leyland, with his pince nez and name reminiscent of Leyland in "The Story of a Panic," is the opaque character of the thesis who implies that Miss Raby is insane by touching Feo's forehead. We may

not agree with his implication concerning Miss Raby's sanity, but Miss Raby certainly causes us to look at her twice. In the first place, she has been presented to us as a sensitive person who secretly longs for love and who humbly regrets the ill she has brought to Vorta. She is impulsive, but repentant and contrite, too contrite to suddenly say "impressively," "Let me have that child, and I will bring him up" (p. 303). Her promise to show the boy that the rich are good seems the speech of a person with all the answers to social ills, a latter-day evangelizing Marianne Thornton defending investments. But the purpose of the whole story, with its contrapuntal orchestration between the themes of natural honest spontaneity and a dishonest commercialism which destroys the sensitivity of its victims, defies and refutes such a change in her character. That she should speak for the prosperity which has all but ruined Vorta and for which she is sincerely repentant is too illogical a position at the end. And can we believe in Miss Raby's maternal desires? Would she really love the child, or use him to expiate not only her wrongs to Vorta, but to herself for having lived a passionless life? Lionel Trilling may be right when he calls her "the delicate ancestress of Forster's most notable heroines, women elderly, or middle-aged, or moving toward middle age. . . ." These women are "wise but powerless, in some way triumphant, in some way defeated, often confused yet gifted with an obscure certainty, as if remembering some ancient sibylline wisdom that the world no longer knows."³¹ But, as Trilling says, neither Mrs. Wilcox, nor Mrs. Elliot, nor Mrs. Moore--the descendants of Miss Raby in Howards End, The Longest Journey and A Passage to India respectively--have maternal affection, and we would suspect a similar lack in

Miss Raby, if she acquired Feo's boy. What of her sexual affection? Has she really known passion, or has she merely, via imagination, transformed it into memory and into art, where she can worship it, safe from actual physical contact? C. B. Cox sees Forster's commitment to personal relationships as an island of escape where he can avoid grappling with social problems.³² Is this what Miss Raby has done? Is she a female Leyland-Bons character, transformed, to be sure, into a Demeter figure, but fertile only in art? After all, her visionary moment, although subjectively satisfying, leaves her detached and resigned to the isolation of old age. Of Demeter, Forster wrote that "Demeter alone among gods has true immortality . . . to her, from all over the world, rise prayers of idolatry from suffering men as well as suffering women, for she has transcended sex."³³ Perhaps Miss Raby has not transcended sex so much as avoided it.

Her importance lies, I believe, in the fact that she is the first Forsterian character to attain a visionary moment through specific human relations. Admittedly, her love has been of the imagination, but the imagination for the occultists and for Forster is real.³⁴ Most of the other main characters in these last six stories have touched down lightly onto the earth and have achieved a promise of connecting rather than a real arrival at a subconscious destination. The headmistress and Miss Haddon are lifted momentarily by a recognition of earthly power rather than by an actual absorption of those powers. Micky and Mr. Andrews receive their "moments" after death, in retrospect, as it were, and seem more like specimens under glass--fossilized pieces from Micky's British Museum cases. Giuseppe is destroyed in his search for a mythological

salvation of the world, but his death is caused by weariness and exhaustion--and, by implication, the commercial smog of Liverpool via tuberculosis--rather than by a visionary moment. Vashti and Kuno, although connecting with the universe, do so through a love of dead generations and humanity in general. Beginning with Miss Raby, the emphasis is on specific personal relations. She is a pre-Lucy Honeychurch from A Room with a View, who dares to consummate the love she experienced on a violet-strewn mountain terrace, a pre-Caroline Abbott from Where Angels Fear to Tread, who tries to adopt an Italian child, believing that an English upbringing will purge a sin, a pre-Margaret Schlegel from Howards End, who tries to reconcile commercialism and nature, and a pre-Mrs. Moore from A Passage to India, who experiences visionary detachment. But not until Forster divided Miss Raby's character and gave her separate stories in his two Italian novels, A Room with a View and Where Angels Fear to Tread, would she make sense. Within the confines of her short story she leaves too many questions unanswered. It was time to try a novel.³⁵

NOTES
Chapter II

¹E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1954, p. 125. (First published London, 1927.)

²E. M. Forster, The Collected Tales of E. M. Forster (New York, 1947). All quotations from the short stories are from this Knopf edition, with the exception of "Albergo Empedocle" which appeared in Temple Bar, CXXVIII (December, 1903), 663-684.

³Henri Bergson, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion (New York, 1956), p. 211.

⁴W. R. Irwin, "The Survival of Pan," PMLA, LXXXVI (June, 1961), 159-167.

⁵John Senior, The Way Down and Out: The Occult in Symbolist Literature (Ithaca, New York, 1959), p. 39.

⁶The only other one is "Other Kingdom," which has Miss Beaumont and Ford.

⁷Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain (Stanford, California, 1966), p. 122.

⁸I cannot agree with James McConkey that the unity provided by the earth in the short stories "is not connected with anything beyond the physical world." I see Forster's use of the earth here, in this first story, as no different from his use of it in A Passage to India, in which the Marabar Caves become the medium for Mrs. Moore's psychic transformation. See James McConkey, The Novels of E. M. Forster (Ithaca, New York, 1957), p. 52.

⁹Ernst Cassirer, Language and Myth, trans. S. K. Langer (New York, 1946), pp. 6-10. Quoted and discussed by Charles Feidelson, Jr., Symbolism and American Literature (Chicago, 1966), p. 53.

¹⁰E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel, p. 167.

¹¹P. N. Furbank and F. J. H. Haskell, "E. M. Forster" in Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews, ed. Malcolm Cowley (New York, 1959), p. 31. Forster was interviewed June 20, 1952.

¹²Ralph M. Eaton, Symbolism and Truth: An Introduction to the Theory of Knowledge (Cambridge, Mass., 1925), p. 276.

¹³E. M. Forster, "Albergo Empedocle," Temple Bar, CXXVIII (December, 1903), 663-684.

¹⁴Harold's statement is close to McTaggart's "Nothing is true but mental states . . . nothing is true unless it is believed." J. M. E. McTaggart, The Nature of Existence, I (Cambridge, 1921), 16-17. The reality of states of mind was one of the main premises of Bloomsbury. See Chapter VII of the present study.

¹⁵Matthew Arnold, "Empedocles on Etna," Act I, lines 242-246. In Selected Poetry and Prose, ed. Frederick L. Mulhauser (New York, 1955), p. 25.

¹⁶Ibid., Act II, lines 16-18, p. 34.

¹⁷It is interesting that this will be Mrs. Moore's mistaken "explanation" of her experience in the Marabar Caves in A Passage to India. See E. M. Forster, A Passage to India (New York, 1952), p. 150. (First published London, 1924.)

¹⁸"Empedocles," Encyclopaedia Britannica, VIII (Chicago, 1949), 400. Empedocles' idea of an interacting single-substance universe is strikingly similar to McTaggart's theory of "determining correspondence." See the Appendix of this study. It is also interesting that to Empedocles was attributed the power of controlling the winds, as Eustace seems to do in "The Story of a Panic."

¹⁹J. B. Beer, The Achievement of E. M. Forster (London, 1962), p. 45.

²⁰Ibid.

²¹Carl G. Jung, The Undiscovered Self (New York, 1961), p. 93.

²²Max Beerbohm, Seven Men (New York, 1959), p. 39. (First published London, 1919.) Quoted by K. W. Gransden, E. M. Forster (New York, 1962), p. 11.

²³Pan's avatar, Stephen Wonham of The Longest Journey, who was born the same year (1907), proved more congenial, although almost as strange, in the hills of Wiltshire. Forster, in Howards End, stated the problem bluntly: "Why has not England a great mythology? Our folklore has never advanced beyond daintiness, and the greater melodies about our country-side have all issued through the pipes of Greece." See Howards End (New York, 1960), p. 267. (First published London, 1910.)

²⁴Stone, p. 152.

²⁵Ford's similarity to Leonard Bast in Howards End is striking. Howards End was published the year after "Other Kingdom" appeared. Not only is there a resemblance between Ford and Leonard, but between Harcourt Worters and Henry Wilcox--their initials and philosophies are the same. There seems to be a kinship, also, between Miss Beaumont and the Schlegel sisters; indeed, she could be a composite of Helen, whose

impulsive defense of Leonard Bast proves unrealistic, and Margaret, whose appreciation of money and the ability to make it allows her to see good qualities in Henry, as Miss Beaumont does in *Harcourt*. See Chapter V of the present study.

²⁶Robert Friend, in "The Theme of Salvation in 'The Point of It'," Studies in English Language and Literature, ed. Alice Shalvi and A. A. Mendilow, XVII (Jerusalem, 1966), 252, sees Micky as Castor, the human twin who lives a death-in-life, and Harold as Pollux, the divine brother who goes to Hades to save him. Although this comparison is interesting and although the stars Castor and Pollux are mentioned in the story, I do not believe such mention justifies the Christ-Harold-Pollux conclusion Mr. Friend draws.

²⁷Robert Friend thinks this spirit, never named by Forster, is Youth. See note 26. I find a phonetic similarity between "I am," the Hindu "OM," and the echo in the Marabar Cave in A Passage to India, the famous "ou-boum." The caves are "older than all spirit" as the spirit in this story "was before choice . . . before hardness and softness were divided." See Chapter VI of the present study for a discussion of the Dravidian Marabar Caves.

²⁸It is ironic--and indicative of Micky's blindness--that he thinks "No spiritual bond could survive" his relationship with Harold (p. 202). A spiritual bond--that moment in the boat--is precisely what did survive.

²⁹As F. W. McDowell says in "Forster's 'Natural Supernaturalism': The Tales," Modern Fiction Studies, VII (Autumn, 1961), 271, the heaven of Mr. Andrews "represents a selfish rather than a selfless fulfillment."

³⁰Eaton, p. 287. This quotation is discussed by Charles Feidelson, Jr., in Symbolism and American Literature (Chicago, 1966), p. 51.

³¹Lionel Trilling, E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), pp. 46-47. (First published New York, 1943.)

³²C. B. Cox, The Free Spirit: A Study of Liberal Humanism in the Novels of George Elliot, Henry James, E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf, and Angus Wilson (London, 1963), p. 79.

³³E. M. Forster, "Cnidus," Abinger Harvest (New York, 1955), p. 167. (First published London, 1936.)

³⁴That the imagination is real was a belief also of McTaggart, Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore, who influenced Forster at Cambridge, and of the Bloomsbury Group. It is not incidental that Roger Fry designed the 1911 edition of The Celestial Omnibus, in which "The Eternal Moment" first appeared. The edition was dedicated to "The memory of The Independent Review," founded by Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson.

35

Although A Room with a View was begun in 1903, Where Angels Fear to Tread, Forster's first completed novel, appeared in 1905, the same year "The Eternal Moment" was published. The stories in both novels were undoubtedly on Forster's mind when he wrote the short story.

CHAPTER III

ITALY

Time drops in decay,
Like a candle burnt out,
And the mountains and woods
Have their day, have their day;
What one in the rout
Of the fire-born moods
Has fallen away?

Yeats, The Moods

Forster's two Italian novels are a direct development from Miss Raby's "eternal moment." With his "Trialectic" method he subjects the story to a series of "what if" questions. In A Room with a View he seems to ask "What if Miss Raby had dared consummate the love scene on the mountainside? What if, instead of an Italian lover, an Englishman were substituted?" Then the dialectical opposition could be between two individuals representative of pressures operating within one culture. If one kept the Italian setting, these pressures could be put in juxtaposition with the more elemental, more earthy philosophy of the Mediterranean. But turning Italy into a scenic backdrop seemed still to skirt the original issue, the confrontation of Italian paganism with English commercialism which Miss Raby had set up more intensely precisely because they operated between people representing separate cultures. In A Room with a View the lovers are English, and Italy does come dangerously close to postcard prettiness. In Where Angels Fear to Tread Forster asks the braver questions "What if Miss Raby had married her

Italian? What if his vulgarity were not the product of a commercial invasion of tourism, which 'The Eternal Moment' perhaps too simply suggests, but inherent in his character?" Then the dialectical tensions would be complex, indeed. "Is it possible," he seems to ask in both novels, "for England to invade the Mediterranean and come away, not detached, as Miss Raby, not escaping, as Eustace, not disintegrating, as Mr. Lucas, but wiser?" Each novel answers the question in its own way. In the discovery of that answer Forster's characters experience new levels of reality which will move them beyond the sensuous awareness of the short stories into an imaginative perception which will form the next step of the dialectic.

The plot of A Room with a View is simple. Lucy Honeychurch and her chaperone, Charlotte Bartlett, arrive at the Pension Bertolini, Florence, in pursuit of "culture." Their first shock is not only that the Signora Bertolini is a Cockney but that she has given their promised rooms (with a view) to other guests. A forward but well-meaning old man, Mr. Emerson, and his son George offer theirs; the offer is accepted only after the Reverend Beebe, representative of the Church of England and propriety, approves. Other guests include the spinster sisters, the Alans, and Miss Lavish, a "lady novelist." Miss Lavish, who unfeelingly uses people for her plots, inconsiderately wanders off in search of "local color" to leave Lucy in Santa Croce, where she encounters the Emersons and the Reverend Eager (less likeable than the Reverend Beebe) lecturing on Giotto. The crowd spurn the more human interpretation of art offered by Mr. Emerson, who afterwards spouts

unconventional philosophy to Lucy, with a quote from Housman inserted. Lucy meets his son George accidentally in the Piazza Signoria, where they witness a murder and George emerges as sensitive and thoughtful. On an outing to Fiesole they meet again, accidentally, with Lucy falling onto a violet-covered terrace to be kissed impulsively by George. Miss Bartlett, who has witnessed the disreputable scene, whisks Lucy away to Rome, where the Vyses, friends of the family, are staying. Thus ends Part One. Part Two belongs to England and to Cecil Vyse, representative of English "culture" and now engaged to Lucy. He is medieval--a nasty word to Forster--and sees Lucy as a work of art rather than as a human being. Thinking he will play a practical joke on a local landowner (despicable to London-educated Cecil because the landowner is conservative gentry), Cecil urges him to rent a villa to the Emersons, whom Cecil has met accidentally in the National Gallery and has pegged as "uncultured" because Mr. Emerson mispronounced an artist's name. Lucy meets George again as he runs naked from a swim with her brother, Tibby and Rev. Beebe, now transferred conveniently, with the plot, to England. Lucy gradually sees Cecil as inhuman, breaks her engagement, plans to go to Greece with the Alan sisters, is dissuaded by Mr. Emerson, marries George and returns with him to the Pension Bertolini to enjoy the view.

Although accidents and coincidences seem to be central to the plot of A Room with a View, they actually form the periphery because the characters use the accidents and thus control the plot more than would seem possible at first glance. Norman Kelvin thinks that this control

of plot by character "expresses one of the novel's major concerns: the responsibility of the individual to be heroic--to accept a moral imperative to defy society and consequently influence, shape, or control its future."¹ Lucy, whose responsibility to be heroic is almost destroyed by her fear of direct experience, confuses honest emotion with "education." In Santa Croce she tells Mr. Emerson, "I like Giotto. It is so wonderful what they say about his tactile values. Though I like things like the Della Robbia babies better."² Mr. Emerson's "So you ought. A baby is worth a dozen saints" voices the credo of earthy fertility and makes Lucy's "cultured" term, "tactile," sound hollow and superficial. Only when she plays the piano, and especially Beethoven, does she allow a naturally passionate nature to experience emotion. "Like every true performer," Forster tells us, "she was intoxicated by the mere feel of the notes: they were fingers caressing her own; and by touch, not by sound alone, did she come to her desire" (p. 35). So emotional was her performance in the Pension Bertolini that the Rev. Beebe has cause to say "If Miss Honeychurch ever takes to live as she plays, it will be very exciting--both for us and for her" (p. 36). But she does not allow herself to remain emotional or sensuous for long. Immediately after Rev. Beebe's observation "Lucy at once re-entered daily life." She is in danger of joining those who do not dare to live heroically, who, Forster tells his readers, sin "against passion and truth, and vain will be their strife after virtue":

As the years pass, they are censured. Their pleasantry and their piety show cracks, their wit becomes cynicism, their unselfishness hypocrisy; they feel and produce discomfort wherever they go. They have sinned against Eros

and against Pallas Athene, and not by any heavenly intervention, but by the ordinary course of nature, those allied deities will be avenged.

Lucy entered this army when she pretended to George that she did not love him, and pretended to Cecil that she loved no one. The night received her, as it had received Miss Bartlett thirty years before. (p. 204)

We are never told what happened to Miss Bartlett "thirty years before," but we can guess that, whatever the cause, the result was the resignation of spinsterhood, the negation of love. The implication is that Lucy may become another Miss Bartlett; her character contains a testy propensity for renunciation. Her solution to her broken engagement, to work in London and share a flat with another girl or to go to Greece with the Miss Alans, is interpreted by her mother as a self-inflicted martyrdom not unlike Charlotte's.

Lucy screwed up her mouth and said, "Perhaps I spoke hastily."

"Oh, goodness!" her mother flashed. "How you do remind me of Charlotte Bartlett!"

"Charlotte?" flashed Lucy in her turn, pierced at last by a vivid pain.

"More every moment."

"I don't know what you mean, mother; Charlotte and I are not the very least alike."

"Well, I see the likeness. The same eternal worrying, the same taking back of words. . . ."

"What rubbish! And if you dislike Charlotte so, it's rather a pity you asked her to stop. I warned you about her: I begged you, implored you not to, but of course it was not listened to."

"There you go."

"I beg your pardon?"

"Charlotte again, my dear; that's all; her very words."
(pp. 227-228)

Lucy is also linked, very subtly by Forster, to another spinster, the elderly Miss Alan. As Lionel Trilling sensitively discovered, the language used to describe the two is almost the same. After Lucy breaks

with Cecil and refuses George, the effect of autumn on her is one of pathetic decay: "Summer was ending, and the evening brought her odours of decay, the more pathetic because they were reminiscent of spring (pp. 196-197). As Trilling notes, "In the subtle--sometimes too subtle--thematic fashion he often uses, Forster had written almost these very words earlier in the novel when he had said of the sweet elderly Miss Alan that 'A delicate pathos perfumed her disconnected remarks, giving them unexpected beauty, just as in the decaying autumn woods there sometimes arise odours reminiscent of spring'" (p. 41).³ The danger is there: the very real danger that if Lucy fails to connect honestly and sensuously with another human being, she will, in effect, refuse to live. But the main point of A Room with a View is that Lucy Honeychurch, unlike Miss Raby, does not choose to allow accident and "education" and the expectations of others to deter her from living heroically, from accepting, in Kelvin's words, "a moral imperative to defy society and consequently influence, shape, or control its future." She may be slow to learn her lesson, but the lesson is there, and constitutes a dialectical step toward a reality with a "view."

Lucy forms, with Cecil, the first of three character clusters in the book. They represent false culture, "educated" with words and ideas, undirected by any critical judgment of their own. Lucy's ignorance is harmless; Cecil's is viciously sarcastic. Of a permissive nature, Lucy wants to oblige conventional opinion. She wants to admire the Giotto's in Santa Croce, if someone will tell her which frescoes are his. She asks Mr. Emerson, "Do you know which is the tombstone that

is praised in Ruskin?" "For her," writes Forster wryly, "taste was catholic, and she extended uncritical approval to every well-known name" (p. 48). In personal relationships she is equally dependent upon public opinion: "she was accustomed to have thoughts confirmed by others or, at all events, contradicted; it was too dreadful not to know whether she was thinking right or wrong" (p. 55). Cecil, on the other hand, thinks he is original, with "taste," but he really mouths trite praises of nature and sees people as things. He thinks of Lucy as "a Leonardo." He sneers at her mother because she says "the horse has arrived" instead of "the carriage," not realizing that the difference lies in an emphasis on animate rather than inanimate things. He can be petty: at the dinner table he asks sarcastically, "May me and Lucy get down from our chairs? We don't want no dessert" (p. 163). His life, like some rooms, is without a view, and instinctively he realizes his problem when he tells Lucy, "I had got an idea--I dare say wrongly--that you feel more at home with me in a room." She admits, to his annoyance, that she does, and, moreover, one without a view (p. 122). When she defends to her mother his disparagement of their drawing room furniture with "But he does not mean to be uncivil--he once explained--it is the things that upset him--he is easily upset by ugly things--he is not uncivil to people," her mother retorts with "Is it a thing or a person when Freddy sings?" (p. 156). This question echoes another which Lucy had put to herself a few pages earlier:

If Cecil disliked Sir Harry Otway and Mr. Beebe, what guarantee was there that the people who really mattered to her would escape? For instance, Freddy. Freddy was

neither clever, nor subtle, nor beautiful, and what prevented Cecil from saying, any minute, "It would be wrong not to loathe Freddy"? And what would she reply? (p. 121)⁴

One of the reasons, I think, we can accept George's defamation of Cecil's character as he fights for Lucy's love is that we instinctively agree with George when he tells Lucy, "He is the sort who are all right so long as they keep to things--books, pictures--but kill when they come to people" (p. 194). Cecil's problem is that he wants to impose his opinions, to dictate: "Every moment of his life he's forming you," George tells Lucy, "telling you what's charming or amusing or ladylike, telling you what a man thinks womanly; and you, you of all women, listen to his voice instead of your own" (p. 194). After George opens her eyes, Lucy's description of Cecil defines for the reader the meaning of his last name. He is a vise:

". . . conventional, Cecil, you're that, for you may understand beautiful things, but you don't know how to use them; and you wrap yourself up in art and books and music, and would try to wrap up me. I won't be stifled, not by the most glorious music, for people are more glorious, and you hide them from me. That's why I break off my engagement. You were all right as long as you kept to things, but when you came to people--" (pp. 201-202)

Yet it is to Cecil's credit that he agrees. "I shall never forget your insight. . . . I have just used you as a peg for my silly notions of what a woman should be. . . . I must actually thank you for what you have done--for showing me what I really am" (pp. 202-203). This is Cecil's "moment," that brief contact with truth through personal relationships which "saves" him. "For all his culture," Forster writes, "Cecil was an ascetic at heart, and nothing in his love became him like the leaving of it" (p. 204).

The Emersons represent humanism, with George the elemental character. While Cecil sees Lucy as "some brilliant flower that has no leaves of its own, but blooms abruptly out of a world of green," George watches real flowers "beat against her dress in blue waves" (p. 123, 80).⁵ The simpatico cab driver "connects" Lucy with George on the hillside by mistakenly--and naturally--assuming that it is George Lucy is looking for, rather than Mr. Beebe. He directs her to him, to the violet-covered terrace, to the explosive kiss. But George is no Eustace, or simple avatar of Pan: his paganism is diluted by a fin de siecle disillusionment. In Italy he is described by his father as a young man who is worried over "the things of the universe" not "fitting" (p. 31). The world, for George, was "askew." He, like Forster selling his shares in Imperial Chemicals, Ltd. ("70 ordinary and 50 preferred"), states the dilemma of humanism caught in a commercial society:

"We cast a shadow on something wherever we stand, and it is no good moving from place to place to save things; because the shadow always follows. Choose a place where you won't do harm--yes, choose a place where you won't do very much harm, and stand in it for all you are worth, facing the sunshine." (p. 176)⁶

George, groping with the realities of earning a living, caring for an aging father and losing Lucy, retreats into a belief in Fate: "Everything is Fate. We are flung together by Fate, drawn apart by Fate--flung together, drawn apart. The twelve winds blow us--we settle nothing--" (p. 148). His words echo the Housman poem quoted by Mr. Emerson in Santa Croce to Lucy:

From far, from eve and morning,
And yon twelve-winded sky,
The stuff of life to knit me
Blew hither: here am I. (p. 32)

Mr. Emerson's "We know that we come from the winds, and that we shall return to them; that all life is perhaps a knot, a tangle, a blemish in the eternal smoothness" restates Housman in the pontifical tones of a senatus consultum (p. 32). With such a father, it is understandable that George seldom acts independently. Apart from two stolen kisses, the only scene in which George seems to stop quoting his father and to speak for himself is the one with Lucy, when he denounces Cecil in order to prosper his own cause. David Shusterman thinks George is "hitting below the belt" and that Lucy is too naive not to see it.⁷ Perhaps; but Lucy has not been presented to us as a very original thinker. She is a girl dependent on the opinion and guidance of others, and it is only after George speaks out that she "sees" Cecil, when he refuses to play tennis with Freddy. As the chief spokesman for humanism, Mr. Emerson is no more original than George or Lucy. He quotes "a friend"--Samuel Butler ("'Life,' wrote a friend of mine, 'is a public performance on the violin, in which you must learn the instrument as you go along.'" (p. 236)--and at times seems no more than a windbag. But if he begins as a comic figure, he ends as the most powerful character in the book. Even as his own body decays he sings, like an English Whitman, the song of the body, the physical contact upon which all other realities depend. It is his kiss which gives Lucy her "moment," "a sense of deities reconciled, a feeling that, in gaining the man she loved, she would gain something for the whole world" (p. 240). It is to him, in Rev. Beebe's study, that Miss Bartlett allows Lucy to go. By so doing Miss Bartlett joins the humanists, vicariously partakes of love and turns from an ascetic

spinster into a champion of youth.

Thus Miss Bartlett, in league with asceticism throughout most of the book, switches from an accomplice to an adversary of the vicious culture represented by the Reverends Eager and Beebe, who form the third cluster of characters, the clerics. The Reverend Eager is an ecclesiastical Cecil who may "lecture" on Giotto, but who is ignorant of life. He sees history as Cecil sees art, artificially: when Eager hears of the murder in the piazza he is unaware of the irony in his "This very square--so I am told--witnessed yesterday the most sordid of tragedies. To one who loves the Florence of Dante and Savonarola there is something portentous in such desecration--portentous and humiliating" (p. 60). Mr. Eager is apparently ignorant of the fact that Savonarola was burned to death in the Piazza della Signoria for Puritan attitudes not too different from his own. He reveres the dead, but defames the living when he implies that Mr. Emerson murdered his wife. When we learn that she died of guilt--George was not baptised--as a result of Mr. Eager's overzealous preaching, the viciousness of his self-righteousness emerges. But a more insidious form of viciousness is present in the person of the likeable, humorous, accommodating Mr. Beebe. Mr. Beebe fulfills Forster's definition of a "flat" character: one who is constructed around one idea or quality.⁸ Mr. Beebe's is a homosexuality which Forster never quite describes but constantly hints at. He is real because Forster does hold back; Forster's definition of a real book in Aspects of the Novel could be applied to Beebe: "It is real when the novelist knows everything about it."⁹ We accept Mr. Beebe immediately because we feel Forster

does know him. Beebe is likeable: he is not pompous, self-righteous, or narrow. Naively he says, "It is so difficult--at least, I find it difficult--to understand people who speak the truth" (p. 10). With sincere modesty he cannot understand why Lucy really listened to his sermon, and it is Mr. Beebe who starts the stamping when Lucy plays Beethoven. But we soon learn that his enthusiasm for Lucy's emotional musicianship originates from a safe position of deliberate detachment: "Girls like Lucy were charming to look at, but Mr. Beebe was, from rather profound reasons, somewhat chilly in his attitude towards the other sex, and preferred to be interested rather than enthralled" (p. 38). Forster may be giving the masculine version of Lucy's fear of experience in Beebe, but there seems to be more in that phrase "for rather profound reasons" than an intellectual preference for ecclesiastical celibacy. Freddy is struck by Beebe's attitude toward Cecil:

"You know Mr. Beebe's funny way, when you never quite know what he means. He said: 'Mr. Vyse is an ideal bachelor.' I was very cute. I asked him what he meant. He said: 'Oh, he's like me--better detached.' I couldn't make him say more, but it set me thinking. Since Cecil has come after Lucy he hasn't been so pleasant, at least--I can't explain." (p. 98)

When Cecil tells Beebe that Lucy is going to marry him, "The clergyman was conscious of some bitter disappointment which he could not keep out of his voice" (p. 107). Beebe tries to salvage the awkward situation by telling Cecil:

"No, I have said nothing indiscreet. I foresaw at Florence that her quiet, uneventful childhood must end, and it has ended. I realized dimly enough that she might

take some momentous step. She has taken it. She has learnt--you will let me talk freely, as I have begun freely--she has learnt what it is to love: the greatest lesson, some people will tell you, that our earthly life provides." It was now time for him to wave his hat at the approaching trio [Mrs. Honeychurch, Lucy, Freddy]. He did not omit to do so. "She has learnt through you," and if his voice was still clerical, it was now also sincere; "let it be your care that her knowledge is profitable to her."

"Crazie tante!" said Cecil, who did not like parsons. (p. 108)

The qualification "some people will tell you" that love is great and the veiled threat "let it be your care that her knowledge is profitable" make love not only of questionable value but a duty rather than a spontaneous experience. Beebe's voice may have been "sincere," but that adjective is no longer enough to outweigh other implications. When he hears that Lucy and Cecil have broken their engagement, he is delighted. "His belief in celibacy, so reticent, so carefully concealed beneath his tolerance and culture, now came to the surface and expanded like some delicate flower. 'They that marry do well, but they that refrain do better.' So ran his belief, and he never heard that an engagement was broken off but with a slight feeling of pleasure" (p. 219). When he comes upon Lucy singing a song Cecil gave her, one that advocates "Vacant heart and hand and eye / Easy live and quiet die," he is pleased: "'It's a beautiful song and a wise one,' said he. 'go on'" (p. 221). Although Beebe can have fun swimming with George and Freddy at an outing which K. W. Grandsden describes as "a jolly bachelor affair, all ragging and fun," when he comes into his study and finds Lucy sobbing because she loves George "He was very quiet, and his white face, with its ruddy whiskers, seemed suddenly inhuman. A long black column, he

stood and awaited her reply" (p. 239).¹⁰ When she does reply he tells Mr. Emerson, "in a low, stern voice: 'I am more grieved than I can possibly express. It is lamentable, lamentable--incredible.' 'What's wrong with the boy?' fired up the other again. 'Nothing, Mr. Emerson, except that he no longer interests me'" (p. 239). Is this the same agreeable clergyman who stamped his feet in enthusiasm when Lucy played Beethoven in the Pension Bertolini? Perhaps Mr. Beebe is one of those characters that Forster complained of in Aspects of the Novel who "have been required to contribute too much to the plot . . . their vitality has been impoverished, they have gone dry and thin."¹¹ And yet A Room with a View would not be the same book without Mr. Beebe. He, with Cecil, is its thesis, the dialectical opposition to humanism, the anti-fertility, inhuman asceticism of Christianity. His homosexual interest in control rather than love, more powerful because it is left vague and more dangerous because it exists in a character who is otherwise likeable, intensifies the tensions and extends by implication his own attitudes to all asceticism in Western culture.

Yet Beebe contains within him not only the atrophying force of asceticism but a genuine appreciation of music and life which bubbles up occasionally, as it does when he watches Lucy play the piano. He, like Lucy, knows the internal struggle between the propriety and conventionality of the thesis and the spontaneity of the antithesis, but in Beebe the thesis wins. Although he can be sensitive to Lucy's music his "view" of her is as "artistic"--and therefore as limited--as Cecil's. When Beebe sees Lucy, her mother and Freddy at the piano Forster gives us the scene from Beebe's viewpoint: "Oddly enough, the group was

beautiful. Mr. Beebe, who loved the art of the past, was reminded of a favourite theme, the Santa Conversazione, in which people who care for one another are painted chatting together about noble things--a theme neither sensual nor sensational . . ." (p. 221). One could add, in Beebe's case, that such a scene would be safely nonsensual. Mr. Beebe is afraid of life. He can accept spontaneity only as long as it promises not to be fertile. He posits, like a Janus figure, the male counterpart of Lucy's fear of experience. But Lucy chose to live heroically; Lucy's annihilation of a previous concept of self and her assimilation of a new one which could include physical love gave her her "moment." As Forster strongly hints, Mr. Beebe is a victim of a culturally induced homosexuality which seeks to control rather than love other human beings. As a result, he cannot live heroically; in spite of his occasional appreciation of emotion in others he can never experience another reality in which visionary awareness occurs. Perhaps no better portrait of homosexuality exists in English literature, and Forster accomplished it in 1908 without using the word.

If ambiguity discreetly shades the character of Mr. Beebe and his theme of asceticism, it is used with even more effect in A Room with a View to present the themes which oppose asceticism: humanism, paganism and the need for heroism. Miss Bartlett's first view of Mr. Emerson is an example of this ambiguity: "He was an old man, of heavy build, with a fair, shaven face and large eyes. There was something childish in those eyes, though it was not the childishness of senility. What exactly it was Miss Bartlett did not stop to consider, for her glance

passed on to his clothes" (p. 5). The "something," the negative "not the childishness of senility," the vague "What exactly" Miss Bartlett cannot handle and she passes on to clothes--tangible appearance, and thereby safer. As Lucy and Miss Bartlett experience "quite a scene" over the Emerson's offer of a room, Lucy "had an odd feeling that whenever these ill-bred tourists spoke the contest widened till it dealt, not with rooms and views, but with--well, with something quite different, whose existence she had not realized before" (p. 6). But what is "something quite different, whose existence she had not realized before"? Could it be the challenge to live heroically? We do not know, as we do not know what it is George is "smiling across" when Lucy leaves the dining room at the Pension Bertolini with a little bow to the Emersons, nor what the curtains are "heavy with": "The father did not see it; the son acknowledged it, not by another bow, but by raising his eyebrows and smiling; he seemed to be smiling across something. She hastened after her cousin, who had already disappeared through the curtains--curtains which smote one in the face, and seemed heavy with more than cloth" (pp. 8-9). When Charlotte uses Mr. Beebe as "a guarantee of a sort" that the Emersons "will not presume on" their acceptance of the rooms, Lucy "again had the sense of larger and unsuspected issues" (p. 15). This same sense of larger issues is present again after Lucy meets Mr. Eager and the plot-hunting Miss Lavish in the Piazza Signoria the day after the murder. Not only did she doubt that Miss Lavish was a great artist, but "She doubted that Mr. Eager was as full of spirituality and culture as she had been led to suppose. They were tried by some new

test, and they were found wanting" (p. 62). What test? The test of humanism, which could feel honest sorrow at a death rather than see it, as Miss Lavish does, as fuel for her pen, or, as Mr. Eager does, as an excuse for a self-righteous appraisal of history. Lucy, after breaking with Cecil, "gave up trying to understand herself, and joined the vast armies of the benighted, who follow neither the heart nor the brain, and march to their destiny by catch-words. The armies are full of pleasant and pious folk. But they have yielded to the only enemy that matters--the enemy within" (p. 204). What is the "enemy within"? The refusal, through fear, to live heroically? The retreat, because of that fear, into convention, "culture," catchwords?

Nowhere, however, does Forster use ambiguity to better effect than in the Piazza Signoria scene when the murdered man lurches toward Lucy "as if he had an important message for her." But he said: nothing. "He opened his lips to deliver it, and a stream of red came out between them and trickled down his unshaven chin" (p. 49). After the murder, Lucy sees George "looking at her across the spot where the man had been. How very odd! Across something" (p. 49). After she fainted and George helped her, she felt "that she, as well as the dying man, had crossed some spiritual boundary" (p. 50). It is strange--but extremely important for Forster's dialectical message in the novel--that the murderer tried to kiss the dying man before he fell. Forster is giving here, I believe, a strong hint that the dying man, because he inspired love in his murderer, is experiencing a visionary moment just before death: he has connected with another human being, fully, honestly, even

though that connection has brought annihilation. George, thinking of the murderer's attempted kiss, realizes that "something tremendous has happened; I must face it without getting muddled. It isn't exactly that a man has died" (p. 51). What is it, exactly, then? A detailed examination of the passage following this remark reveals the dialectical interaction between thesis (Lucy's cautious fear) and antithesis (George's excitement) as the characters observe a visionary moment. Their reactions, easy for an unobservant reader to pass over, become signposts of the thesis and antithesis to one who is initiated into Forster's dialectic. The italics are mine:

"For something tremendous has happened; I must face it without getting muddled. It isn't exactly that a man has died."

Something warned Lucy that she must stop him.

"It has happened," he repeated, "and I mean to find out what it is."

"Mr. Emerson--"

He turned towards her frowning, as if she had disturbed him in some abstract quest.

They were close to their pension. She stopped and leant her elbows against the parapet of the embankment. He did likewise. There is at times a magic in identity of position; it is one of the things that have suggested to us eternal comradeship. She moved her elbows before saying:

"I have behaved ridiculously."

He was following his own thoughts.

"I was never so much ashamed of myself in my life; I cannot think what came over me."

"I nearly fainted myself," he said; but she felt that her attitude repelled him.

"Well, I owe you a thousand apologies."

"Oh, all right."

"And--this is the real point--you know how silly people are gossiping--ladies especially, I am afraid--you understand what I mean?"

"I'm afraid I don't."

"I mean, would you not mention it to any one, my foolish behaviour?"

"Your behaviour? Oh, yes, all right--all right."

"Thank you so much. And would you--"

She could not carry her request any further. The river was rushing below them, almost black in the advancing night. . . .

"Well, thank you so much," she repeated. "How quickly these accidents do happen, and then one returns to the old life!"

"I don't."

Anxiety moved her to question him.

His answer was puzzling: "I shall probably want to live."

"But why, Mr. Emerson? What do you mean?"

Leaning her elbows on the parapet, she contemplated the River Arno, whose roar was suggesting some unexpected melody to her ears. (pp. 51-53)

"I shall want to live" when I have my visionary moment is George's unspoken statement here. The "something" that "warned Lucy that she must stop him" is her own fear of connecting with "eternal comradeship" through another human being. Correctly, "she felt that her attitude repelled him." It does so because her worries are concerned with public opinion, with gossip, with conventional morality, with the thesis position. She thinks, stupidly, that one can "return to the old life." George's answer, "I don't," implies more than refusal: he cannot return to the old life because he has observed a visionary moment; vicariously, he has glimpsed another reality. When such a moment happens to him, he tells her, he "shall want to live"--rather than die, like the murdered man. Lucy's blindness to the vision is her fear of joining him in a real "identity of position"--and not just one on a parapet, looking at the Arno. Understandably, this scene has been ignored by the critics.¹² Unless one understands that Forster's underlying message is the need of a dialectical step into an emotional reality which can be gained only through physical connection between people, the ambiguities make no sense. Once that message and method are understood, however, George's

inattention and Lucy's bickering insistence on propriety should enable the reader to plumb thematic depths otherwise overlooked. They are the first Forsterian characters to observe a visionary moment and, in George's case, to know, if not what it is they observe, at least the importance of it. The dying man's outreaching had been a plea to Lucy to connect with humanity through experience; it was a silent cry against negation and for the acceptance of love, and, through love, of the universe. It is no coincidence that five days later, on the outing to Fiesole, their Italian driver, called by Forster "Phaethon," is an elemental character who can prophesy weather and more: "He alone had divined what things were, and what he wished them to be. He alone had interpreted the message that Lucy had received five days before from the lips of a dying man" (p. 82). How? Mysteriously, this symbol of lover--who drove with one arm around his "sister's" waist until Mr. Eager made her leave the carriage--divined that Lucy had received a message telling her to live heroically, to love. How? "He alone" had used "the whole of his instinct, while the others had used scraps of their intelligence" (p. 82). Instinctively and perhaps occultly he knew of the message, and again it is no coincidence that he appears at the end of the novel singing on the street below George and Lucy's window at the Pension Bertolini: they have experienced physical love, and his song reminds them of its consummation. But they become at the end conscious of a spiritual love not unlike the dying man's, which can encompass humanity. The view from their window looks past "Phaethon" into infinity and refuses synthesis: "Youth enwrapped them; the song of Phaethon announced passion

requited, love attained. But they were conscious of a love more mysterious than this. The song died away; they heard the river, bearing down the snows of winter into the Mediterranean" (p. 246). It is clear, now, what that "something" was that George looked across in the Piazza Signoria: it was the dying man's "moment." George gazed across it at Lucy as they both gaze across and through their own "moment" now: past sex, past physical love into the possibility of a spiritual love which can annihilate and assimilate all their past experience and carry it, like the river, down to the measureless depths of another reality.

The sense of place, so powerful in this last scene, links setting to theme elsewhere in the novel and helps to underscore Forster's use of ambiguity, which is necessary not only for the story's visionary ending but for its theme of paganism, which supports and reinforces the humanism of the antithesis. The description of the Piazza Signoria before the murder is an example.

The great square was in shadow; the sunshine had come too late to strike it. Neptune was already unsubstantial in the twilight, half god, half ghost, and his fountain plashed dreamily to the men and satyrs who idled together on its marge. The Loggia showed as the triple entrance of a cave, where in dwelt many a deity, shadowy, but immortal, looking forth upon the arrivals and departures of mankind. It was the hour of unreality--the hour, that is, when unfamiliar things are real. An older person at such an hour and in such a place might think that sufficient was happening to him, and rest content. (p. 48)

Words like "unsubstantial," "shadowy," "unreality," and "unfamiliar" prepare the reader for the mystery of the murder. The dark sound of the archaic "marge" is extended into the cave image of the loggia, where "deities" watch the comings and goings of humanity in a timeless detach-

ment. In this "hour of unreality," the reader is justified in asking "What is 'sufficient' which might be happening?" Is Forster saying that an older person, closer to the experience of death, would be aware of the deities in the shadows, of the silent drama, the genius loci before him? Less older people--presumably the reader, George and Lucy--want more, want, perhaps, a sensuous contact with humanity. Forster provides just such a sensuous contact in the murder for which this description prepares them. The genius loci of Florence is presented in the form of an ambiguous question implying pantheism and the need for sensuous personal relationship: "Was there more in her frank beauty than met the eye--the power, perhaps, to evoke passions, good and bad, and to bring them speedily to a fulfillment?" (p. 65). Pan is not dead. At the outing at Fiesole "There was a general sense of groping and bewilderment. Pan had been amongst them--not the great god Pan, who has been buried these two thousand years, but the little god Pan, who presides over social contretemps and unsuccessful picnics" (p. 81). Like "Phaethon," his spirit leads Lucy to George; he is the pagan link between the elemental forces of passion and the visionary insights of humanism. The ineffable, pagan power of place also resides in the pool in which George, Mr. Beebe and Freddy take their unconventional swim in England. It has all the magic qualities of a pond in fairyland: "That evening and all that night the water ran away. On the morrow the pool had shrunk to its old size and lost its glory. It had been a call to the blood and to the relaxed will, a passing benediction whose influence did not pass, a holiness, a spell, a momentary chalice for youth" (p. 153). It seems as if

the pool filled purposely for their swim, to call to their "blood" and to their "relaxed will," and the implication is that the pool will never again--unless, again, it chooses to become "a momentary chalice for youth"--brim so full. The violets at Fiesole, too, multiply with a purpose:

From her feet the ground sloped sharply into view, and violets ran down in rivulets and streams and cataracts, irrigating the hillsides with blue, eddying round the tree stems, collecting into pools in the hollows, covering the grass with spots of azure foam. But never again were they in such profusion; this terrace was the well-head, the primal source whence beauty gushed out to water the earth. (p. 80)

Why would they "never again" exist in such profusion? Lucy's view of them, which metamorphoses vegetation into water--and reminds one of the boy's descriptions in "The Celestial Omnibus" which also contained unnatural mixtures (solid rainbows and rocks like water)--is visionary and, in its implication that the violets acted willfully, perhaps occult. Were the violets present only as silent witnesses for love? Or for another reality in the universe? George and Lucy would find that other reality through love. Their discovery seems to be promised on this pagan hillside.

A Room with a View is certainly, I think, closer to fantasy than Where Angels Fear to Tread.¹³ Forster defined fantasy in Aspects of the Novel as that which "implies the supernatural, but need not express it."¹⁴ This was his method in A Room with a View and explains his effective use of ambiguity, which carried the weight of the real theme, the importance of emotional contact in human relationships. In Where Angels Fear to Tread we move from the inexplicable to the over-explained, from a plot

which the characters controlled to one in which incidents and accidents melodramatically--and less satisfactorily--control the characters. We begin, appropriately enough, at a train station, where the young widow Lilia Herriton and her chaperone, Caroline Abbott, are being packed off to Italy by Lilia's mother-in-law. The purpose of the trip is to get the impulsive Lilia away from England, since she has become too attractive to a young clergyman whom the elder Mrs. Herriton considers beneath the family. They can hardly get away from Philip, Mrs. Herriton's Italiophile son. His admonitions to "get off the track" so they can "get to know the country," so they can "love and understand the Italians" ring in their ears and almost prevent Lilia from kissing her daughter Irma good-bye. In Italy Lilia becomes engaged to Gino Carella, the son of an Italian dentist in a small provincial town, Monteriano. Mrs. Herriton immediately dispatches Philip to rescue the family name--after all, Lilia's daughter is her grandchild--but he is too late: Lilia and Gino are married, and Philip returns to England. Lilia dies under the duress of Italian house arrest (the Latin counterpart of propriety for ladies), but not before giving birth to a son. Irma begins receiving postcards signed "your litel brother" from Gino which are promptly hidden by Mrs. Herriton. Then Caroline Abbott, in remorse for Lilia's death (because she did not protest enough, she blames herself for the marriage), goes to Italy to rescue the baby from an Italian upbringing. Not to be outdone, Mrs. Herriton dispatches Philip to Italy again, this time with his sister Harriet--a harridan, as the sound of her name implies. But the genius loci of Italy assumes command: their first night there is spent at an opera--the

impulsively sensuous "Lucia di Lammermoor"--and the effect of music disrupts sober intentions. Gino, the handsome Pan, is a little stupid and a little cruel, but Philip and Caroline Abbott, convinced that Gino loves his son, concede defeat and are going home when Harriet kidnaps the baby. Their separate carriages collide; the one with the baby overturns and he is killed. Philip, with a broken arm, delivers the news to Gino, who tries to kill him. He is rescued by Caroline, whose appearance calms Gino into resignation. On the train back to England Philip realizes that he cares for Caroline, but more importantly that she has loved Gino. His vicarious appreciation of Caroline's physical love for Gino "connects" him with humanity and he is "saved."

Miss Raby, in other words, has married her cad. She, alias Lilia, has succumbed to the vicious elements in Pan, and Philip's civilized efforts cannot rescue her.¹⁵ He cannot because he is muddled and unsure of himself. Product as he is of English propriety, Philip cannot develop into a philosophe like Mr. Emerson, who became a spokesman for his creator and who helped Forster's themes through A Room with a View. Philip's sister Harriet is less unsure, but because she represents uncompromising "morality" she is also less human. Caroline Abbott (with the ecclesiastical overtones of "carol" and "abbot" in her name) represents the more human, charitable element in English culture, but she is equally ineffective: her missionary efforts dissolve into a muddled "do-goodism." Lilia (Lilith?), hopelessly succumbed to physical desire, can suffer but cannot think. With characters not circumspect enough to verbalize his themes for him, Forster resorts in Where Angels Fear to

Tread to bothersome authorial asides which, as George Thomson says, often seem spoken "over the heads of the characters."¹⁶ As a result, they too often and too obviously represent. In one of his asides Forster practically robs them of their individuality by stressing their historical and cultural blood-ties: "No one realized that more than personalities were engaged; that the struggle was national; that generations of ancestors, good, bad, or indifferent, forbad the Latin man to be chivalrous to the northern woman, the northern woman to forgive the Latin man" (p. 65). Philip says of Gino that "He's got a country behind him that's upset people from the beginning of the world" (p. 92). Philip contains within him the internal conflict of thesis-antithesis; he is an Italiophile who is repelled by the country he loves. But when he receives his "moment" he seems to represent someone receiving it rather than someone experiencing inward vision. He is watching Caroline embrace the bereaved Gino, who has just learned that his baby died:

Philip looked away, as he sometimes looked away from the great pictures where visible forms suddenly become inadequate for the things they have shown to us. He was happy; he was assured that there was greatness in the world. There came to him an earnest desire to be good through the example of this good woman. He would try henceforward to be worthy of the things she had revealed. Quietly, without hysterical prayers or banging of drums, he underwent conversion. He was saved. (p. 173)

Even here, when we should be inside the character, feeling with him, we stand with Forster on the outside and listen to a description rather than partake of an experience. Forster was a story-teller in A Room with a View; he becomes an evangelical preacher in Where Angels Fear to Tread, as the phrases "earnest desire to be good" and "would try

henceforward to be worthy" suggest. As Frederick Crews says, the moral of A Room with a View was "utterly simple: throw away your etiquette book and listen to your heart. The point is made with even less qualification than in Where Angels Fear to Tread, where Lilia's fate reminds us that the heart, too, can be mistaken."¹⁷ Where the heart can be mistaken, the author must step in to explain.

In A Room with a View, with a character-controlled plot, Forster could rely on the ineffable quality of place, on ambiguity of statement and description to translate to the reader the supernatural implications of his theme and the hidden tensions and movements of his dialectic. In Where Angels Fear to Tread, with its plot-controlled characters unsure of themselves, Forster must rely not only on philosophical asides but on actions and incidents which seem arbitrarily contrived to make his thematic points. If the asides slow the dialectical movement, the emphasis on plot threatens to misdirect it into melodrama. Tricks to generate suspense prove poor substitutes for good characterization. Gino's reaction to the news of the baby's death is a violence described in the language of Hollywood:

Gino approached from behind and gave him a sharp pinch. Philip spun round with a yell. He had only been pinched on the back, but he knew what was in store for him. He struck out, exhorting the devil to fight him, to kill him, to do anything but this. Then he stumbled to the door. It was open. He lost his head, and, instead of turning down the stairs, he ran across the landing into the room opposite. There he lay down on the floor between the stove and the skirting-board. (p. 169)

The trite phrasing, the quick clichés keep the pace fast but lose the quality of tragedy. After this action, Philip's "senses grew sharper."

He could "hear Gino coming in on tiptoe" growling "like a dog." Even Forster, it seems, cannot continue the scenario, and breaks in with an aside:

Physical pain is almost too terrible to bear. We can just bear it when it comes by accident or for our good-- as it generally does in modern life--except at school. But when it is caused by the malignity of a man, full grown, fashioned like ourselves, all our control disappears. Philip's one thought was to get away from that room at whatever sacrifice of nobility or pride. (p. 170)

At this point, the reader, too, may have thoughts of escaping from a scene that is too obviously contrived. Like the accident of the baby's death, the coincidences, the meetings and just-missed meetings between characters, this fight between Philip and Gino does not seem large enough for the sense of evil Forster wants to introduce.

To strengthen his incident-ridden plot, Forster describes the settings of those incidents more obviously than he has done before. No longer can he depend on the ambiguous atmosphere of a piazza or an Arno running down to the sea to do his job for him; he becomes explicit. But again, I think, he overstates his case and loses power by doing so. England and Italy are more sinister than they were in the earlier novel. Sawston, where the Herritons live, is full of chinless curates with damp hands; England is a "raw over-built" land (p. 76). Italy is "the enemy's country." Philip thinks, even on his first trip, that "he was in the enemy's country, and everything--the hot sun, the cold air behind the heat, the endless rows of olive-trees, regular yet mysterious--seemed hostile to the placid atmosphere of Sawston in which his thoughts took birth" (p. 22). Monteriano--Forster's original title for the book--is

dark, its color brown, a color for Forster of negation, as it had been in the life-killing side of the hedge and in Miss Beaumont's dress when she succumbed to oppression:

Its color was brown, and it revealed not a single house-- nothing but the narrow circle of the walls, and behind them seventeen towers--all that was left of the fifty-two that had filled the city in her prime. Some were only stumps, some were inclining stiffly to their fall, some were still erect, piercing like masts into the blue. (p. 27)

Monteriano, as this description emphasizes, is decay, and, as Frederick Crews notes, "a romantic image of the buried life."¹⁸ Italy in A Room with a View had been a window through which one could view the good life, the memory of a violet-strewn hillside; in Where Angels Fear to Tread it becomes a bog of evil in which even the most energetic intentions disintegrate. It is not the comedy Wilfred Stone thinks it is, but a reassessment--and not a flattering one--of the Land of Pan.¹⁹

But Italy is complex, and one approaches Monteriano through a little wood which, although it "lay brown and sombre across the cultivated hill" and although its trees "were small and leafless," still those trees "stood in violets as rocks stand in the summer sea" (p. 24). Violets--Forster's promise of fulfilled love--are important again, and we know the wood will have future significance when Forster interposes into Philip's thoughts the flashback-prediction that "next March he did not forget that the road to Monteriano must traverse innumerable flowers" (p. 25). The "must" implies that whatever will happen will be tragic--perhaps even horrible--but that these flowers, seen blooming now in a brown, sombre wood and overshadowed by small leafless trees, will be a

reminder of beauty and spontaneity in spite of the prevailing negation and decay in the world. They are a bright spot in an otherwise oppressive setting. The complexity of Monteriano and Italy contains the futility of unfulfilled hope: "The grand schemes for a marble facade" for Monteriano's Collegiate Church of Santa Deodata "were never carried out, and it is brown unfinished stone until this day" (p. 100). Italy also contains, like the story of Santa Deodata, patron of the village, a muddle of good and evil. This fifteen year old girl, who decided to gain sanctity by lying motionless on her back--even while the devil flung her mother downstairs--achieved sainthood, although her mother died in the fall. Gino, representative of Italy and Monteriano, is a mixture of cross purposes as intricate as Santa Deodata's. He is cruel, avaricious and vulgar, and yet he is loyal to friends, warm and compassionate with his son. He is the faun of "The Curate's Friend" without a sense of sin, and therefore, as Caroline Abbott says, "perhaps he isn't sinful" (p. 111). Forster presents Gino's practical pagan attitude toward women in a conversation with a bachelor friend from Chiasso, met on the street as Gino goes for the mail. Forster's fidelity to Latin speech nuances is remarkable:

Hearing of Gino's marriage, he had come to see him on his way to Siena, where lived his own uncle, lately married too.

"They all do it," he exclaimed, "myself excepted." He was not quite twenty-three. "But tell me more. She is English. That is good, very good. An English wife is very good indeed. And is she rich?"

"Immensely rich."

"Blonde or dark?"

"Blonde."

"Is it possible!"

"It pleases me very much," said Gino simply. "If you remember, I always desired a blonde." Three or four men had collected, and were listening.

"We all desire one," said Spiridione. "But you, Gino, deserve your good fortune, for you are a good son, a brave man, and a true friend, and from the very first moment I saw you I wished you well."

"No compliments, I beg," said Gino, standing with his hands crossed on his chest and a smile of pleasure on his face.

Spiridione addressed the other men, none of whom he had ever seen before. "Is it not true? Does not he deserve this wealthy blonde?"

"He does deserve her," said all the men. (pp. 49-50)

If we leave out "He was not quite twenty-three" and "simply" after "said Gino" and perhaps the description of "hands crossed on his chest and a smile of pleasure on his face," the conversation assumes the pointillistic effect of Hemingway, but, as with Hemingway, such simplicity often cloaks complexity.²⁰

Gino's complexity, the sense of excitement beneath the careful phrases is never more clear than when he refuses to give up the baby to Caroline.

"No, he is troublesome, but I must have him with me. I will not even have my father and mother too. For they would separate us," he added.

"How?"

"They would separate our thoughts."

She was silent. This cruel, vicious fellow knew of strange refinements. The horrible truth, that wicked people are capable of love, stood naked before her, and her moral being was abashed. It was her duty to rescue the baby, to save it from contagion, and she still meant to do her duty. But the comfortable sense of virtue left her. She was in the presence of something greater than right or wrong. (pp. 136-137)

Yet Gino's simplicity may be close to stupidity. His real sin is that of Cecil in A Room with a View: he tried to control another human being, and in his suppression of Lilia, killed her spirit. But, at the same

time, Gino is Pan-in-touch-with-nature. His casual prediction of rain will be a clue, in retrospect, when the carriages collide on the slippery hillside. Forster relates him to the view when Caroline visits him: he is sitting "astride the parapet, with one foot in the loggia and the other dangling into the view" (p. 131). He is not without aesthetic appreciation, and can see people artistically, but sincerely, reverently, as we feel Cecil could never have done. As Gino watches Caroline drying the baby from a bath, Forster manages to insert one of his less troublesome asides. We never know if Gino thought about Bellini or Lorenzo di Credi, but the honesty of the feeling comes through:

Just such a baby Bellini sets languid on his mother's lap, or Signorelli flings wriggling on pavements of marble, or Lorenzo di Credi, more reverent but less divine, lays carefully among flowers, with his head upon a wisp of golden straw. For a time Gino contemplated them standing. Then, to get a better view, he knelt by the side of the chair, with his hands clasped before him.

So they were when Philip entered, and saw, to all intents and purposes, the Virgin and Child, with Donor. (p. 141)

And yet when Philip first met Gino at the restaurant he was anything but aesthetic:

A starved cat had been worrying them all for pieces of the purple quivering beef they were trying to swallow. Signor Carella, with the brutality so common in Italians, had caught her by the paw and flung her away from him. Now she climbed up to the bowl [of goldfish] and was trying to hook out the fish. He got up, drove her off, and finding a large glass stopper by the bowl, entirely plugged up the aperture with it.

"But may not the fish die?" said Miss Abbott. "They have no air."

"Fish live on water, not on air," he replied in a knowing voice, and sat down. Apparently he was at his ease again, for he took to spitting on the floor. (p. 32)

This is the force which Philip Herriton must cajole into giving up a child. But Philip is, in his own way, an English Saint Deodata. James McConkey thinks that Philip's "supercilious detachment in the name of culture" causes a refusal of responsibility which is the major theme of the book.²¹ Certainly Philip "travels light" in his human relationships, an observer rather than an actor.²² His exaggerated praises of Italy and his directions to Lilia as she leaves Sawston to "see the little towns--Gubbio, Pienza, Cortona, San Gemignano, Monteriano" have the effect of backfire (pp. 3-4). After all, when Lilia goes to Monteriano and falls in love with an Italian, she is merely following Philip's advice to "Love and understand the Italians for the people are more marvellous than the land" (p. 4). Ironically she is putting to the test Philip's theory that "Italy really purifies and ennobles all who visit her. She is the school as well as the playground of the world" (p. 8). Once in Italy, however, Philip soon changes his ideas. His indecision, like Gino's villainy, originates in complexity. His "cultivated" aestheticism, in an earlier stage of his development, took the outward form of "parti-coloured ties and a squashy hat," but really had its roots in loneliness: "All the energies and enthusiasms of a rather friendless life had passed into the championship of beauty" (p. 69). His relationship with his mother has been limited: she is another of Forster's luke-warm mothers who confides in her son only so far as such confidence proves useful. When she dispatches him to Italy with Harriet to bargain against Caroline Abbott he retreats into a rationalization of his detachment as an appreciation of the comic element in the whole affair.²³

Philip saw no prospect of good, nor of beauty either. But the expedition promised to be highly comic. He was not averse to it any longer; he was simply indifferent to all in it except the humours. These would be wonderful. Harriet, worked by her mother; Mrs. Herriton, worked by Miss Abbott; Gino, worked by a cheque--what better entertainment could he desire? (p. 94)

But Philip knows his problem. He knows that for him Italy is mysterious and terrible because there may be something lacking in the beholder: "he had a strange feeling that he was to blame for it all; that a little influx into him of virtue would make the whole land not beastly but amusing" (p. 96). His is the philosophical problem of detached perception which can become a pinnacle for observation or an ivory tower of retreat.²⁴ Philip is a victim of a society which approves withdrawal from involvement, stamping it as "clever." But such withdrawal may grow out of and result in, as Forster suggests, a loneliness approaching desperation. Philip tells Caroline:

You would be surprised to know what my great events are. Going to the theatre yesterday, talking to you now--I don't suppose I shall ever meet anything greater. I seem fated to pass through the world without colliding with it or moving it--and I'm sure I can't tell you whether the fate's good or evil. I don't die--I don't fall in love. And if other people die or fall in love they always do it when I'm just not there. You are quite right; life to me is just a spectacle. . . . (p. 151)

In spite of the fact that Philip speaks here of "fate," he rejects fatalism, as a younger, more immature George Emerson was not able to do. When the baby dies because Philip did not resist Harriet and return the kidnapped child, he realizes that "It was his own fault, due to acknowledged weakness in his own character. Therefore he, and no one else, must take the news of it to Gino" (p. 166). This honesty is the first step to his

salvation, and, brief and vicarious as his connection through love is, Philip is "saved" as he watches Caroline cradle Gino in her arms after he has delivered his news.²⁵

On the train returning home Philip's "moment" is extended by a realization that Caroline's love for Gino was physical. She tells him to "Get over supposing I'm refined. That's what puzzles you. Get over that."

As she spoke she seemed to be transfigured, and to have indeed no part with refinement or unrefinement any longer. Out of this wreck there was revealed to him something indestructible--something which she, who had given it, could never take away.

"I say again, don't be charitable. If he had asked me, I might have given myself body and soul. That would have been the end of my rescue party. But all through he took me for a superior being--a goddess. I who was worshipping every inch of him, and every word he spoke. And that saved me."

Philip's eyes were fixed on the Campanile of Airolo. But he saw instead the fair myth of Endymion. This woman was a goddess to the end. For her no love could be degrading: she stood outside all degradation. This episode, which she thought so sordid, and which was so tragic for him, remained supremely beautiful. To such a height was he lifted, that without regret he could now have told her that he was her worshipper too. But what was the use of telling her? For all the wonderful things had happened. (pp. 183-184)

There is aufheben here, the annihilation and assimilation of a previous concept of self. But what makes this extension of Philip's moment detached to the point of unreality is the fact that the process of aufheben happens to someone else, or, rather, to Philip's concept of someone else rather than to himself. He has watched Caroline's "refinement" disintegrate. "Out of this wreck there was revealed to him something indestructible--." Caroline has undergone metamorphosis, at least in Philip's eyes, but what of Philip? He is again, as we noted with his earlier

scene when he watched Caroline hold the grieving Gino, standing outside of rather than partaking of experience.²⁶ Even his "post-moment" withdrawal, similar to Harold's from "Albergo Empedocle" or Eustace's from "The Story of a Panic," is incomplete. Although Philip "was convalescent, both in body and spirit" and his "convalescence brought no joy," he can realize only that "life was greater than he had supposed, but it was even less complete" (p.177). He is groping here because, I believe, he has not really had a "moment," in spite of the fact that Forster insists he is "saved." When he watched Caroline with Gino in her arms he knew that "there was greatness in the world" and felt "an earnest desire to be good. . ." (p. 173). But can one analyze a visionary moment in terms of ethical conduct? Does one objectify--and dilute--such an experience by inserting it into the context of a Greek myth, unless the experience has been impersonal? "The fair myth of Endymion" seems too thin a shell to contain the lust Caroline Abbott has just confessed to. Philip, by using it, retreats into "culture" and loses that connection with humanity which could have carried him farther up the path of Forster's dialectic. Mythology and the objectivity it encourages cut off the subconscious flow, as Forster discovered after his first short stories when he turned from fauns, Pans and natural enclosures to the psychological enclosures of the mind. Philip, at the end, attains an imaginative reality through vicarious connection. But, like Miss Raby's, Cecil's, Charlotte Bartlett's, and Caroline Abbott's, it is a reality limited by reason, a lonely, momentary glimpse of sensuality without the total commitment of love.

Caroline Abbott will go where Philip fears to tread. She is more elemental than Philip; if she is not Demeter, at least she is a Persephone who dared to return to the depths of Italian experience which she had visited earlier. Her natural sympathy with people makes her highly susceptible to environment. In England she engaged in social work and had a "district," but she confessed to Philip that "when the spring came, I wanted to fight against the things I hated--mediocrity and dullness and spitefulness and society" (p. 78). Then, she went to Italy for the first time and did little to discourage Lilia's affair with Gino. Gino remembered her as one who was "simpatico" (p. 52). When she returned from the opera the music and the "warm, sweet air" were too much. "'Help me!' she cried, and shut the window as if there was magic in the encircling air" (pp. 124-125). Unlike Lilia, who made Gino buy the house for her (Lilia was "determined to have the man and the place together" p. 41.), Caroline does not want to control people. She can admire Philip's detachment; indeed, it encourages her to her confession: "I dare tell you this because I like you--and because you're without passion; you look on life as a spectacle; you don't enter it; you only find it funny or beautiful" (p. 181). She has entered, but nun-like, retreats into a life of resignation and relinquishment, for Gino has contracted an Italian marriage before she leaves Italy. Norman Kelvin thinks her "eternal moment" is less satisfactory than Miss Raby's because "Forster is no longer attempting to liberate 'the undeveloped heart,' to add to romance the vitality of sex."²⁷ Yet Caroline, it seems to me, comes closer to an awareness of physical love than Miss Raby, although both must experience

that love in the imagination. The problem can again be explained in terms of Forster's dialectic. Miss Raby and Caroline have touched down but briefly onto the subconscious level of imaginative experience, but, as with Philip, because they are limited by education, training, and "culture," they return to cope with "normal" reality via self-sacrifice and resignation.²⁸ One feels an honest reaching out in Caroline's confession to Philip which could have--but for circumstances and her own timidity--physically connected with Gino through love.

Yet in spite of this upward step in the dialectic, Where Angels Fear to Tread fails. It fails because Forster tries too hard to create an atmosphere necessary for vision. His frequent use of obvious symbolic images is an admission that he is straining after the ineffable, which he accomplished with much more ease in A Room with a View. When Caroline visits Gino before the traumatic "baby's bath" scene, in which she realizes he loves his son, she watches him unnoticed through the door. He is talking to the sleeping child, and smoking. She watches his smoke-ring rise and travel intact to the landing.

Again she tried to speak. But the ring mesmerized her. It had become vast and elliptical, and floated in at the reception room door. . . . The ring had extended its pale blue coils towards her. She lost self-control. It enveloped her. As if it was a breath from the pit, she screamed. (pp. 128-129)

Gino is frightened, not for her, but for himself, because "it is a serious thing to have been watched." Since Forster switches to the present tense in a passage which had been consistently in the past tense, the implication is that Forster, not Gino, is now speaking. Gino qua Pan is civilized enough to have developed a self-consciousness. Alone, he is

pagan honesty; "watched" he is cautious calculation. Forster indulges in one more philosophical comment before the action can continue: "We all radiate something curiously intimate when we believe ourselves to be alone" (p. 129). The "something" which Gino seems to have radiated--for Caroline, at least--has been the smoke ring, its pale blue coils enveloping her "As if it was a breath from the pit . . .," i.e., evil. Caroline has been presented as a level-headed social worker whose trip to Italy was not an impulsive jaunt but a well thought-out plan. She is capable of sensuality and sympathy, but not hysteria, and not hysteria on such short notice. The symbolic smoke ring cannot carry the weight of evil, float as it may. The baby's milk, ironically brought up from the kitchen by the singing maid Perfetta--who does not know of the baby's death--becomes too obviously the symbolic toast which will reconcile Gino with Philip. These lines occur just after Philip's "conversion" and act like a communion ritual to seal his salvation. Caroline is the patron sibyl, and the Biblical tone of "And Philip obeyed also and drank" is unmistakable:

"That milk," said she, "need not be wasted. Take it, Signor Carella, and persuade Mr. Herriton to drink."
 Gino obeyed her, and carried the child's milk to Philip.
 And Philip obeyed also and drank.
 "Is there any left?"
 "A little," answered Gino.
 "Then finish it." For she was determined to use such remnants as lie about the world.
 "Will you not have some?"
 "I do not care for milk; finish it all."
 "Philip, have you had enough milk?"
 "Yes, thank you, Gino; finish it all." (p. 173)

The village idiot who helps Harriet kidnap the baby becomes another symbolic image when Forster describes him as "part of Nature's scheme" (p.

158). "He understands everything but he can explain nothing," the landlady tells Philip, who has just received from him an ambiguous note of Harriet's and is desperately trying to find out where Harriet is. When Harriet, shuddering, tells him later "Oh, he understands. . . . He tried to carry the baby," the indirect reference to an evil touch is unmistakable and perhaps too obvious (p. 162). The wood in which the carriage overturns and in which the baby dies is that dark, somber wood with leafless trees--but with their trunks in violets--which Philip noticed at the beginning of the book and to which we were promised he should return, but its mixture of beauty and decay are too unnatural, as the baby, crying without tears--with no hint of having been unwell--is too unnatural. The same attempt to capture the ineffable through symbolic imagery and action is the reason, I believe, Forster resorts to violence between Gino and Philip after the baby dies. Violence between them is logical enough--after all, we have watched Lilia see Gino in a fury when she realized that there was "plenty of brutality deep down in him"--but Forster's manipulation of Gino's fight with Philip, with its Hollywood stage directions, points too obviously toward a contrived denouement (p. 58). After Gino twists Philip's broken arm and chokes him until he faints, Caroline enters. Then: "The room was full of light, and Miss Abbott had Gino by the shoulders . . ." (p. 171). The sibyl has arrived; the communion ritual can begin. Good, as well as evil, seems manufactured for the moment.

No other story of Forster's is so obviously stated in theme and character, so contrived in plot and setting as Where Angels Fear to Tread.

It was an experiment. In terms of the dialectic, it was an experiment that failed. One cannot believe in Philip's "salvation" by simply being told he is saved. The Unseen must be treated on its own ground: by the unseen, stated with ambiguity, with vague outlines. One cannot say a theme through annoying asides or dramatize it through symbolic images. Neither work, for the ineffable is beyond both, its substance more effervescent than smoke rings, milk communions, idiots and violets. One cannot replace it with asides. One cannot catch a ghost with a net, nor capture the subconscious with the conscious. One can only do that through an "eternal moment." Has Philip had one? Forster tells us so, and relies on Greek myth to close Philip's thoughts at the end. Gino, the vulgar Endymion--can we quite accept him? Caroline Abbott, the English Selene resigned to an unfulfilled spinsterhood--will she really be able to feed her soul on the memory of an unlikely alliance? And Monteriano, can it be taken, with its Pallazo Pubblico (intellect), Collegiate Church of Santa Deodate (soul), and Cafe Garibaldi (body), as Philip takes it, for a complete city qua complete society qua complete universe--qua evil? Evil in A Room with a View had been a more restrained but paradoxically more powerful ground bass underneath the lyrics of Mr. Emerson's melodious effusions. Because Forster did not try to state it through action, but left it as an ineffable quality, it emerged in A Room with a View as a more pervasive force which threatened Lucy's decision to live heroically. In Where Angels Fear to Tread evil--as well as good--has retreated into symbolic images and Hollywood violence which cannot support its implications.

The dating of the two novels may explain the difficulty. The Italian part of A Room with a View was begun in 1903, the year Forster's first published story, "Albergo Empedocle," appeared. Forster laid aside Lucy Honeychurch's problem and did not attempt a solution until five years later, after Where Angels Fear to Tread and The Longest Journey were published and he had gained some confidence in handling themes, plot and character. In 1908 he returned to his Italian hillside to try to iron out the difficulties Lucy and George began for him with that impulsive kiss. By that time he had learned to handle evil more adroitly. Instead of dramatizing it with fisticuffs, as he does in Where Angels Fear to Tread, or verbalizing it with philosophical seminars, as he does in The Longest Journey, he was content to let it sink like a leitmotif into the rhythm of the whole novel. Having begun A Room with a View with the delightfully light tone of an Austenesque domestic comedy, and having introduced a rather stereotyped but energetic heroine, he instinctively, in 1903, shied away from the expected happy ending of an "ever after" marriage which he would deplore later in Aspects of the Novel.²⁹ He was also, in 1903, under the influence of Meredith, who made Cambridge and "much of the universe" tremble.³⁰ His subsequent rejection of Meredith can perhaps give us a clue to his turning away from A Room with a View to write the darker Where Angels Fear to Tread and The Longest Journey. In Aspects of the Novel Forster writes that Meredith, unlike Hardy, misses "What is really tragic and enduring in the scenery of England" and therefore misses "what is really tragic in life."³¹ Lucy and her rather muscular George tumbling onto each other in the violets could

hardly lend themselves to a sense of the tragic, even with, as added ingredients, the half-hearted Weltschmerz of George or the blatant Shavian social criticism of his doting but ineffectual father. What could one do with them except marry them off? Lucy's one brush with evil--her refusal, in James McConkey's words, to "see the physical reality," is removed at the altar.³² The sense of the tragic must be relegated to minor characters: to Charlotte Bartlett, whose refusal of love thirty years before made her a pathetic spinster; to the Reverend Beebe, whose self-righteous celibacy and latent homosexuality made him an even more pitiable victim of culture. But if George and Lucy are not tragic, the possibility of evil writ large around them in the ineffable forces of society and in the thesis--antithesis conflict within their own minds--Lucy's "the enemy within"--can become stronger.

By the same temporal yardstick we can measure Forster's more complex characterization in Where Angels Fear to Tread. Because A Room with a View was begun earlier, the characters seem to be repetitions of creations from the first short stories. Lucy could be a more sensitive, sympathetic Mildred from "Albergo Empedocle," George a less psychic Harold; the Christian villains, the Reverends Eager and Beebe, could be better known Mr. Sandbachs from "The Story of a Panic" and Cecil could be its Leyland. Forster tried to adjust them to a deeper, more individual development in the English (1908) part of A Room with a View, but because they had already started living, as it were, he could do little more than alter the lighting which, in the case of Mr. Beebe, is less than satisfactory. Weak as they are, however, I cannot agree with George Thomson, who

somewhat peevishly complains that Forster, because he "has no responsibility to his characters," produces "negative characters who are not morally accountable for the evil that attends them and that his positive characters have not quite earned the given moments of their deepest insight and highest goodness."³³ Forster was not setting up a balance sheet which could add up causality in neat columns. It is precisely because his positive characters (Lucy, George) do not "earn" their visions, but contain psychic receptivity, that their moments come to them; it is precisely because his negative characters (Cecil, Mr. Beebe) often do nothing to earn their fates that we can sympathize with them, caught as they are in their negation, which is, more often than not, the result of social conditioning. Forster's method is not analysis but reconciliation of dialectical oppositions. With these he learned to create the more complex characters of Where Angels Fear to Tread: the cruel tenderness of Gino, the ascetic sensuousness of Caroline Abbott, the detached involvement of Philip Herriton. A sentence Forster wrote in Aspects of the Novel describing Proust's Remembrance of Things Past could be applied to both his Italian novels: "The book is chaotic, ill-constructed, it has and will have no external shape; and yet it hangs together because it is stitched internally, because it contains rhythms."³⁴ Critics have paired the Italian novels because of their setting. I would suggest a more fundamental reason. They form, it seems to me, a rhythmic unit in the upward swing of the dialectic based on the "internal stitching" of personal relations and on Forster's increasing ability to match character to the tensions of his dialectical movement. Charlotte Bartlett and Cecil Vyse

from A Room with a View and Philip, Caroline and Lilia in Where Angels Fear to Tread act impulsively, connect momentarily and vicariously with sensuality. Because that connection is momentary--in Cecil's case very momentary--and vicarious, they achieve only an imaginative reality limited by reason and education, by their own reluctance to connect physically with another human being through love. Thus they remain detached from humanity, appreciative of love through an aesthetic perception, but resigned to isolation. Because George and Lucy connect physically they know that emotional reality which can come only from an annihilation of the ego and the assimilation of another ego through consummated love.³⁵

Dating the novels also explains the similarity of themes. In the earlier, Italian part of A Room with a View the theme centered around the problem of Lucy's daring to live heroically. In the second, English part, Lucy's theme is almost completely replaced by Cecil's: the sin of trying to control others. If we remember that the "Cecil" (English) part of A Room with a View was written after Where Angels Fear to Tread perhaps we can see Cecil's defeat as a working out of the problem of control posed by the Herritons, Caroline Abbott and Gino Carella. If Herriton pride or Caroline's good intentions are not enough to excuse controlling others, neither is the equally lame excuse of marriage customs which Gino uses. The whole point of Gino's character is that, although he is passionately uncontrollable, he tries to control others, and wins out.³⁶ The whole point of Cecil's character is that, although he is calculatingly passionless, his effort to control others fails. Cecil and Gino form two sides

of a thesis which binds the two novels together: interestingly enough, the last-written ending--Cecil's, which fails in its attempt at control--gives to Lucy Honeychurch the first fulfilled love affair in Forster's work and places her as the first of Forster's characters to achieve an emotional reality gained through consummated sexual love. Yet it is not strange that these two novels should dovetail so neatly. As Alan Wilde says in Art and Order, a Study of E. M. Forster, "there is everywhere in Forster's novels a sense of opposition and twoness; dealing with a series of related problems in which two forces struggle with one another, each novel reaches, tentatively and hesitantly, a solution which the next, beginning the search over again, disrupts. There are no decisive battles in Forster's world, only skirmishes and the sense that it is all to do once more."³⁷

One of those skirmishes which help link the Italian novels is sex, appearing as emotional response in A Room with a View and as impulsive sensuality (fulfilled or unfulfilled) in Where Angels Fear to Tread. As Frederick Crews has noted, in Forster's Italian novels characters are rewarded or punished according to their attitudes toward passion.³⁸ Love in A Room with a View, writes J. B. Beer, is "the reality by which other states of human existence are to be judged and against which they sink into various modes of unreality."³⁹ I would suggest that the reason for the importance of sexual love in these two novels--unique in this respect in Forster's work--is directly related to the position their characters take in his dialectic. Both Lucy Honeychurch and Caroline Abbott develop from Miss Raby of "The Eternal Moment," as their plots grow out of Miss

Raby's situation of unrequited love. But Miss Raby is the first Forsterian character who receives her visionary moment through a personal relationship apart from mythology or a contrived future world--she is neither underground, as Vashti was in "The Machine Stops," nor in hell, as Micky was in "The Point of It," nor in heaven, as Mr. Andrews was in "Mr. Andrews." However brief, imaginary or unreciprocal, Miss Raby's emotion had been real, and she stepped up onto the next dialectical platform, that of personal relations, the first to do so. She is followed, from A Room with a View, by Cecil (very briefly) and Charlotte Bartlett, and from Where Angels Fear to Tread by Caroline Abbott and Philip Herriton. But more importantly, George Emerson and his Lucy bypass Miss Raby onto the next rung of the dialectical ladder. As we have noted, because their connection was not vicarious but physical, the reality they attained was not limited to a resigned detachment but found an emotional outlet in consummated love. Sex, at this point in the dialectic, simply could not be avoided. The other characters experience a lesser, imaginative reality--none the less real for being imaginative--but limited by reason, education and culture. They do not connect physically. They cannot escape, as Eustace or Miss Beaumont did, or die, as the boy on the Celestial Omnibus or Giuseppe did, because their "connection" has been vicarious.

But none of the characters in the Italian novels has had that traumatic contact with the earth that the earlier characters of the short stories experienced--even George and Lucy, within the sanctions of marriage, seem limited in ecstasy: looking out the window of the Pension Bertolini at the end they might have been a married Vashti and Kuno with

a glimpse of humanity. One reason for this limitation, even with characters who experience physical love, is that all important characters in both novels return to a "normal" existence: Cecil to London, Mr. Beebe to his study, Lucy and George to conventional marriage--even to the same "view"--Gino to his cronies at the Cafe Garibaldi, Caroline to her social work and Philip to his mother. But if the intensity of their epiphanies is less than those Pan-connected earth-reconciled characters of the short stories, their closeness to reality is greater. Physical contact with the earth, the first step in Forster's dialectic, gives way to the next platform, physical contact between people. Sex and the control of another person which its fulfillment implies is set up as the central problem of the Italian novels. True to his refusal to "end" a story, Forster avoids a solution. That may come in his next novel, The Longest Journey, where, to repeat Alan Wilde, "it is all to do once more."

NOTES
Chapter III

¹Norman Kelvin, E. M. Forster (Carbondale and Edwardsville, Ill., 1967), p. 85.

²E. M. Forster, A Room with a View (New York, n.d.), p. 30. (First published London, 1908.) All references are to this Vintage Books edition.

³Lionel Trilling, E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), pp. 107-108. (First published New York, 1943.)

⁴Cecil may be Forster's reassessment of Stewart Ansell from The Longest Journey: the English part of A Room with a View was written after that novel. Cecil's sneering rejection of people who do not think as he does or who are not beautiful may be a less intellectual, but perhaps no less vicious, form of Bloomsbury exclusiveness exhibited by Ansell when he tells Rickie Elliot "You think it is so splendid to hate no one. I tell you it is a crime. You want to love everyone equally, and that's worse than impossible--it's wrong. When you denounce sets, you're really trying to destroy friendship." See E. M. Forster, The Longest Journey (New York, 1962), p. 21. (First printed London, 1907.) See also the discussion of Bloomsbury attitudes, Chapter VII, the present study.

⁵This and other uses of contrasting details are discussed by George Thomson, The Fiction of E. M. Forster (Detroit, Mich., 1967), p. 111.

⁶George's attitude echoes Forster's "I will wash my hands in innocence and so will I go to Thine altar? Impossible. There's nowhere to wash." See note 20, Chapter I, the present study.

⁷David Shusterman, The Quest for Certitude in E. M. Forster's Fiction (Bloomington, Indiana, 1965), p. 137.

⁸E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1954), p. 67. (First published London, 1927.)

⁹Ibid., p. 63.

¹⁰K. W. Gransden, E. M. Forster (New York, 1962), p. 34.

¹¹Forster, Aspects of the Novel, p. 94.

¹²I have not found the ambiguities of this scene discussed or examined by critics. They discuss the photographs of art which were bought by Lucy shortly before and which were spattered by the dead man's blood

and thrown into the Arno by George. They see these as a device to portray the sensitivity of George. I would suggest that they accomplish much more. George says ". . . it seemed better that they go out to the sea--I don't know; I may just mean that they frighten me" (p. 51). They frighten him because they represent the side of Lucy which is "educated," which represents the thesis position. Lucy could buy a copy of Lysippus' "Apoxyomenos" and Botticelli's "Birth of Venus" not because the first is physically beautiful and the second is spiritually beautiful, but because "she went to Alinari's shop . . . as she might not go on the electric tram"--i.e., she was using art--Miss Bartlett called a nude "a pity"--as a half-hearted revolt against convention (p. 47). She bought the pictures neither because she liked them nor because she truly turned away from prudery, as her emphasis on propriety in the scene with George by the Arno clearly shows.

¹³E. M. Forster, Where Angels Fear to Tread (New York, 1958). (First published London, 1905.) All references in this study are to this Vintage Books Edition.

¹⁴Forster, Aspects of the Novel, p. 112.

¹⁵Critics often compare Where Angels Fear to Tread (1905) to Henry James' The Ambassadors, published two years before. The contrast of cultures is certainly present, but Forster's novel goes beyond this conflict and investigates the darker side of the Latin temperament, thus emphasizing the subconscious element in the characters more strongly than James did.

¹⁶Thomson, p. 118.

¹⁷Frederick Crews, E. M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism (Princeton, New Jersey, 1962), p. 88.

¹⁸Ibid., p. 76.

¹⁹Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain: A Study of E. M. Forster (Stanford, California, 1966), pp. 162-163. Stone writes that Where Angels Fear to Tread is "a gay book. . . . Sententiousness and solemnity are allowed no head. . . . It is a comedy, no doubt about it. The plot is a contrived sequence of cause-and-effect relationships, based on an irregular marriage. . . . comic irreverence informs the book throughout." Nowhere in the criticism of Forster have I found a greater misunderstanding of his work or intent than in Stone's analysis of Where Angels Fear to Tread. A close second is that of George Thomson, who places both Italian novels in the genre of romance, with unchanging characters and plots built on adventure. See George Thomson, "The Italian Romances," The Fiction of E. M. Forster (Detroit, Michigan, 1967), pp. 100-122.

²⁰When we remember that Where Angels Fear to Tread appeared in 1905, perhaps Cyril Connolly was justified in his claim that Forster was one of the first to introduce a style influential to the twentieth century. See Cyril Connolly, Enemies of Promise (New York, 1948), pp. 26-27. (First published London, 1938.)

²¹James McConkey, The Novels of E. M. Forster (Ithaca, New York, 1957), p. 102.

²²The phrase "travelling light" belongs to Fielding, Forster's character in A Passage to India who bragged about his non-involvement but who discovered that "Travelling light is less easy as soon as affection is involved." He is a Forsterian character who belongs in the category of educated culture wanting connection but afraid of it. See Forster, A Passage to India (New York, 1952), p. 280. (First published London, 1924.)

²³Much as Cecil, in a Meredithian moment, invoked the Muse of Comedy when he persuaded the local English landlord to rent to the Emersons, Philip sees the expedition to Italy as one which promised to be "highly comic." See A Room with a View, p. 134.

²⁴Perception, its subjectivity and reliability on sense data will be the main philosophical problem of The Longest Journey, as it was for Forster's Cambridge friends in the group called "The Apostles," many of whom later joined the literary and artistic circle known as "The Bloomsbury Group." See Chapters IV and VII of the present study, and also "Apostles" and "Bloomsbury Group" in the Appendix of the present study.

²⁵See the quotation from this scene (Where Angels Fear to Tread, p. 173) discussed in the present study on p. 114.

²⁶See present study, pp. 114-115.

²⁷Kelvin, pp. 53-54.

²⁸In Miss Raby's case there was less to sacrifice: Gino may have been vulgar but Feo was hopeless.

²⁹Forster, Aspects of the Novel, p. 55.

³⁰Ibid., p. 89.

³¹Ibid.

³²McConkey, p. 61.

³³Thomson, p. 109.

³⁴Forster, Aspects of the Novel, p. 165.

³⁵See the Appendix of the present study for a chart of the dialectic.

³⁶Stephen Wonham, in The Longest Journey, is the English version of the uncontrollable character who can be inconsiderate and unreliable. Both Gino and Stephen contain the less admirable qualities of Pan; only after Rickie Elliot's death in The Longest Journey does Stephen, his half-brother, show some development of conscience, but by then we can hardly believe in his ability to feel guilt. Both Gino and Stephen may form the dim outlines of those equally uncontrollable, unpredictable, unreliable Indians of A Passage to India. Certainly the mysterious, foreboding countryside of Monteriano reminds one of the hills surrounding Chandrapore.

It is interesting, too, that the theme of lost fertility in Where Angels Fear to Tread is repeated in The Longest Journey, with the death of Rickie's baby. Only after Forster felt some cause for hope that the world was worth continuing--only after he had worked out his personal philosophy through his avatar, Rickie, in The Longest Journey--could he allow a baby to survive, as he does in Howards End, but then the child is only an adjunct to symbolic vegetation, the hay at the end. Perhaps not until he wrote A Passage to India was Forster able to combine his fertility theme (Mrs. Moore's children) with the theme of place and the ineffable through a myth older than Greece, a religion more mysterious than Christianity. See Chapters IV, V, and VII of the present study for a discussion of The Longest Journey, Howards End and A Passage to India, respectively.

³⁷Alan Wilde, Art and Order: A Study of E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), pp. 10-11.

³⁸Crews, p. 72.

³⁹J. B. Beer, The Achievement of E. M. Forster (London, 1962), p. 21.

CHAPTER IV

ENGLAND PAST: THE LONGEST JOURNEY

I never was attached to that great sect,
Whose doctrine is, that each one should select
Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend,
And all the rest, though fair and wise, commend
To cold oblivion, though 'tis in the code
Of modern morals, and the beaten road
Which these poor slaves with weary footsteps tread
Who travel to their home among the dead
By the broad highway of the world, and so
With one chained friend, perhaps a jealous foe,
The dreariest and the longest journey go.
Shelly, Epipsychidion

The psychological enclosures which Forster introduced in his second collection of short stories and which marked the first change in method from his earlier dependence on mythology continued to operate in his Italian novels. Beebe's homosexuality, Lucy's timidity, Gino's Latin proprietorship of his wife, Philip's paralyzing detachment--these are the enclosing stuff of thesis, with its emphasis on control and asceticism. The restrictive limitations of thesis are matched in each character by a natural reaching out, a need to connect with the earth and with others which constitutes the antithesis: in Beebe the antithesis is the love of music, in Lucy the acceptance of physical love, in Gino the compassion for his son, in Philip geniality and good will. The conflict thus set up between the thesis and antithesis within the character causes the fluctuations, contradictions and reconciliations of the dialectical movement. A second change in method, one which began

in the Italian novels and which gained noticeable strength in The Longest Journey, is the use of ritual. John Magnus defines mythology as a set of labels for characters and ritual as a set of labels for actions.¹ Ritual labels action, defines it, gives it significance. Once an action is labeled it assumes a value beyond its immediate temporal framework. In Aspects of the Novel Forster wrote that "daily life, whatever it may be really, is practically composed of two lives--the life in time and the life by values. . . ."² The attention in ritual is shifted from action as an event in time to action as value. Although George Thomson was defining the Forsterian "eternal moment" in the following quotation, its meaning could be applied to Forster's use of ritual:

It is important then that the individual event seem more impressive and meaningful than its causes, consequences, and significance in the action, and that it make itself felt as an event rather than as what certain characters did. In this way it will be free to expand beyond the realistic confines of character and action, it will be free to take on that extended body of meaning by virtue of which it assumes its role in the narrative.³

Caroline Abbott said the same thing in Where Angels Fear to Tread when she told Philip that "There's never any knowing--(how am I to put it?)--which of our actions, which of our idlenesses won't have things hanging on it for ever" (p. 153). But ritual in the Italian novels was limited to a Christian context. The dying man's reaching out to Lucy Honeychurch (a theological name) just after he is kissed by his murderer has overtones of Christ's sacrifice; Gino's bathing his infant son proved to be a baptism for Caroline Abbott, who was so affected by Gino's warmth and love that she changed from a practical spinster to a woman in love; the baby's milk which united Gino and Philip became a communion in which

hatred and grief dissolved in reconciliation. But each of these events--the "communion" of milk especially--lost power by being too explicitly ritualistic. Forster's problem with ritual in the Italian novels may have centered around his distrust of Christianity. He felt "a gap in Christianity: the canonical gospels do not record that Christ laughed or played. Can a man be perfect if he never laughs or plays?"⁴ In "What I Believe" he called faith "a sort of mental starch, which ought to be applied as sparingly as possible."

I dislike the stuff. I do not believe in it, for its own sake, at all. . . . My law-givers are Erasmus and Montaigne, not Moses and St. Paul. My temple stands not upon Mount Moriah but in that Elysian Field where even the immoral are admitted. My motto is: "Lord, I disbelieve--help thou my unbelief."⁵

He distrusts Christianity's claim that it can organize goodness: "This claim--solemn as it is--leaves me cold. I cannot believe that Christianity will ever cope with the present world-wide mess [World War II], and I think that such influence as it retains in modern society is due to the money behind it, rather than to its spiritual appeal."⁶ John Crowe Ransom has pointed out that Forster's personal religion "would be distinct technically from the Christian community in that it did not take its text out of the natural badness of man."⁷ Perhaps Forster felt the contradiction in Christian doctrine which tried to organize goodness while denying the natural existence of goodness. He solved the whole problem in "The Challenge of Our Time" by stating bluntly that "the doctrine of laissez-faire is the only one that seems to work in the world of the spirit."⁸ Never comfortable in the Christian framework, Forster in The Longest Journey more successfully employed a syncretic mythology of

Greek, Christian and prehistoric English sources. It is an exciting attempt. Because it could be less explicit, such a combined mythology provided him with a broader area in which the contradictions and reconciliations of his dialectic could move more freely. In The Longest Journey the ambiguity of syncretic ritual and the resulting ambiguous labels for its actions mysteriously direct the characters and illumine the themes. Such vague ritualistic action will become a permanent method for presenting the opposing forces of the dialectic in the remainder of his work.

This is not to say, however, that Forster's earlier work did not contain a mixture of rituals with origins other than Christian. As George Thomson points out, the exchange of a life force between Eustace and Gennaro in "The Story of a Panic" became the Greek "ritual death and re-birth of the god of life."⁹ John Magnus sees Eustace's cutting and shaping the whistle just before the arrival of Pan as a circumcision ritual.¹⁰ Water, with its implication of baptism, had always held for Forster regenerative possibilities. The sea in "The Story of the Siren" contained the hope of the world; George Emerson's dip with Freddy and Mr. Beebe in A Room with a View turned him from a meditative pessimist into a naked god. But in The Longest Journey the baptismal rituals (the elemental character, Stephen Wonham, enjoys four), because Forster relates them so closely to the pagan landscape of Wiltshire, seem to emerge from prehistoric fertility rites rather than from Christian tradition. In a land where Salisbury is a "Gothic upstart," Wiltshire becomes an upland altar with village lights as candles and the hills themselves as great sacrificial stones on which men and animals renew life by expending it.

Lamps flickered, but in the outer purity the villages were already slumbering. Salisbury is only a Gothic upstart beside these. For generations they have come down to her to buy or to worship, and have found in her the reasonable crisis of their lives; but generations before she was built they were clinging to the soil, and renewing it with sheep and dogs and men, who found the crisis of their lives upon Stonehenge. The blood of these men ran in Stephen; the vigour they had won for him was as yet untarnished; out on those downs they had united with rough women to make the thing he spoke of as "himself". . . .¹¹

Although, as Rose Macaulay wrote of Stephen, "one looks now and then rather anxiously at his ears," there is more here than another Pan or the simple faun of "The Curate's Friend."¹² There is a link here with past generations going out of sight into a dim prehistoric past, but alive in the blood of progeny who worship at their old altar, the earth. In Howards End, published three years after The Longest Journey, Forster complained that England did not have a great mythology. "Our folklore has never advanced beyond daintiness, and the greater melodies about our country-side have all issued through the pipes of Greece."¹³ Perhaps in The Longest Journey he was attempting to set up a native mythology in Wiltshire: "The fibres of England unite in Wiltshire, and did we condescend to worship her, here we should erect our national shrine" (p. 137).

But Wiltshire, in The Longest Journey, shares honors with Greece. Stephen Wonham is connected not only with Demeter through a picture he owns of the Cnidian goddess but with Orion, her son. An understanding of Greek attitudes is central to Stephen and to Rickie Elliot, Stephen's half-brother and the main character of the book. Rickie, by Forster's admission, is "more than any" of his characters, like himself.¹⁴ In an

introduction for the 1960 World Classics Edition of the novel, Forster wrote that "in it I have managed to get nearer than elsewhere towards what was in my mind--or rather towards that junction of mind with heart where the creative impulse sparks."¹⁵ "What was in his mind" was certainly a love for Hellenism as an élan vital which could oppose the Christian denial of life. But it was a Hellenism Forster learned at Cambridge: there, Hellenism, like everything else, was submitted to semantic analysis. Forster wrote that the Cambridge of The Longest Journey was "the Cambridge of G. E. Moore which I knew at the beginning of the century: the fearless uninfluential Cambridge that sought for reality and cared for truth."¹⁶ Reuben A. Brower writes of that Cambridge in "Beyond E. M. Forster, Part I--The Earth":

There are and were in Forster's time at least two Cambridges, standing for two very different traditions, the Cambridge of King's College Hellenism, of Forster's friend, G. Lowes Dickinson, and the Cambridge of the analysis of language, of which G. E. Moore and Ogden and Richards are the obvious representatives.¹⁷

If we are to understand the Hellenic mixture in Forster's eclectic rituals in The Longest Journey, some understanding of "the Cambridge of G. E. Moore" is essential before we turn to the plot.

Moore's Principia Ethica, published in 1903, relates directly to The Longest Journey.¹⁸ In the Principia Moore attacked the philosophical definition of "Good" as nothing but a description of subjectively observed "goods." For Bentham, Moore said, the Good had been "the greatest good for the greatest number"; for Mill it had been a utilitarianism based on preference ("desired" became "desirable"; "ought" became "want to"); for Kant it had been "will" in the sense of "desire"; for Spencer it had been

evolution; for the physicists it had been natural law. None of these, for Moore, worked. "The greatest good" might not be the whole Good; what Mill desired could only have been subjective, or, to use Forster's term, one "view." When natural qualities or objects are used to describe the Good, Moore claimed, the result is the "naturalistic fallacy," the use of sense data to describe an essentially non-natural quality, "good." To underscore the terrifying possibilities of such a fallacy, Moore asked the deceptively simple question, "But what if the truly good were thought false?"¹⁹ The whole problem of discovering and describing what is good, Moore concluded in his momentous Section Twenty-Seven, "must be regarded as an open question."²⁰ Thus the concepts of absolutes, central to idealism and to Greek thought, came under fire.²¹ The question of perception, at first seemingly a by-product of Moore's investigation, developed into the sine qua non of his philosophy, as it did also for Forster and for Forster's avatar, Rickie Elliot. Forster wrote that The Longest Journey contained "the ethical idea that reality must be faced."²² Rickie refuses to face reality. At first he invests the earth with Greek fauns and Pans--as Forster had done in his own early short stories. Then he invests people with those qualities he wants them to have. They become images for him: his dead mother becomes a photograph of herself for him. He commits the naturalistic fallacy in a romantic form, and the clearing of his vision is the real story in the novel.

If G. E. Moore represents the analytical Cambridge and G. Lowes Dickinson the Hellenic Cambridge, there was a third Cambridge when Forster was there which relates directly to the story of The Longest Journey:

the mystic domain of a professor of philosophy, John McTaggart Ellis McTaggart.²³ The universe for McTaggart was one substance, spirit. Everything in it--animate and inanimate--interacted through a process he called the theory of "determining correspondences"--which, in Forster's language, could be translated as "connection." Since spirit is indestructible, McTaggart argued, pre-existence and immortality are not only believable but factual.²⁴ And since the one substance existing in the universe is spirit, spirit permeates every thing. Forster's Wiltshire, with its sheep and dogs and men, with its blood of dead generations running in Stephen, becomes a spiritual atmosphere of soil and stones and hills and men not unlike McTaggart's universe. In "The Machine Stops" the dead generations had talked to Kuno, we remember. Now in The Longest Journey Rickie Elliot will glimpse this spiritual universe, as Vashti and Kuno glimpsed it from the vomitory opening and as George and Lucy glimpsed it from their window at the end of A Room with a View. Rickie will hear his dead mother speak to him in dreams and equate his half-brother Stephen with the stars. In each of Forster's stories the outlines of a single-substance, spiritual universe becomes a little clearer; the sense of its presence will grow stronger in the remainder of his fiction. In The Longest Journey it mixes dreams and stars with ritual. Heretofore the antithesis, the life of the spirit, had represented another reality. As we move closer to the Absolute on Forster's dialectical scale there is the stronger-than-hint suggestion that it may be the reality. Mystically, The Longest Journey begins a passage to more than Cambridge, or England, or India.

On the surface, its story is simple. An orphaned undergraduate, Rickie (i.e., "rickety") Elliot, with a club foot and an Oedipus complex, marries an extreme conservative, Agnes Pembroke, after her athletic fiancé, Gerald Dawes, is killed in a football match. He accepts a job teaching at Sawston School with Agnes' brother Herbert and repudiates, with their help, the idealism he shared at Cambridge with Stewart Ansell, a fictional counterpart of G. E. Moore. Agnes and Herbert urge Rickie to refute also his illegitimate half-brother, Stephen Wondam. Rickie realizes later that he has become a prig--the fact that he learns Stephen is his mother's child by a local farmer rather than his father's helps his conversion. Rickie's daughter, born with the paternal congenital lameness, dies. Confronted by Ansell with the truth of his unfeeling rejection of Stephen, Rickie rebels against his marriage and the conventional morality of Sawston--a name, one remembers, which Forster used for the Herriton's home in Where Angels Fear to Tread, and therefore another term for "thesis." Rickie moves in with Ansell and Stephen. He makes the mistake, however, of accepting an invitation to visit his Aunt Failing, who raised Stephen and then turned him out, who told Rickie of him as a sadistic punishment, and who now tries to get Rickie back to Agnes. Stephen obstinately insists on going with Rickie but agrees to wait for Rickie in the village. There he gets drunk, falls over a railroad track--where, earlier in the book, a child is prophetically killed--and gets saved by Rickie, who dies in the effort. The book ends with Stephen and Herbert haggling over the publication of some rather juvenile undergraduate stories Rickie has written (one is Forster's own "Other

Kingdom") and with Stephen sleeping in the open with his daughter. This child, born after Rickie's death, becomes by implication a replacement for Rickie's dead baby girl, thus perpetuating their mother's (and not Rickie's father's) blood. The three sections of the novel represent Rickie's relationships with Stewart Ansell ("Cambridge"), Agnes and Herbert Pembroke ("Sawston"), and Stephen Wonham ("Wiltshire"). People and places reflect one another. At Cambridge one learns to "see," as Ansell does, that abstract reality need not have material manifestation in the physical world. Balanced against this esoteric knowledge is Sawston's machine-like manipulation of people and Wiltshire's earthy intuition, manifested in Stephen. Stephen "lived too near things he loved to seem poetical"--i.e., he avoids Rickie's romantic fallacy of seeing people as symbols and the naturalistic fallacy of looking for the "Good" in nature (p. 260).²⁵ Ansell is articulate; Stephen is not. But both refuse, in different ways, the "poetic view" of life which leads Rickie to subjective illusion and eventually to destruction. Both try, through friendship, to guide him toward reality.

The philosophical theme of perception is introduced by Ansell from the first page, a passage Forster admits writing with G. E. Moore in mind.²⁶ Ansell applies Moore's question, "What is good?" to reality. But when we change "What is good?" to "What is real?" a philosophical problem becomes the possibility for nightmare. Ansell's "The cow is there" are the first words of the novel. His imaginary construct, the cow, challenges the concept of reality, as Moore had done in the Principia when he wrote that the manifestation of a thing--its material existence

in time--is different from its reality, that "whatever does not exist in Nature, must exist in some supersensible reality, whether timeless or not. . . . I think that the only non-natural objects, about which it [metaphysics] has succeeded in obtaining truth, are objects which do not exist at all."²⁷ Thus Ansell's cow, a non-natural object without material existence, can have reality, although no one but Ansell can "see" her. Forster presents Ansell's philosophy in the form of ritual. Ansell is in Rickie's room with friends. As he says "The cow is there" he lights a match and holds it out over the carpet. No one speaks. "He waited till the end of the match fell off. Then he said again, 'She is there, the cow. There, now'"(p. 1). Rickie, feeling that "It was too difficult for him . . . preferred to listen, and to watch the tobacco-smoke stealing out past the window-seat into the tranquil October air" (p. 2). With the device of the smoke, Forster shifts the reader's attention from the room to the court below. We watch with Rickie as, one by one, the kitchen-men pass by with "supper-trays upon their heads." Like a processional they pass bearing offerings: hot food for one, cold food for three, hot food à la carte, cold food for two, at two shillings "going to Ansell's rooms for himself and Ansell, and as it passed under the lamp he saw that it was meringues again" (p. 2). Beyond the processional the elms of midsummer, their leaves hidden in darkness, their outlines rounded against the sky, draw Rickie's attention:

Those elms were Dryads--so Rickie believed or pretended, and the line between the two is subtler than we admit. At all events they were lady trees, and had for generations fooled the college statutes by their residence in the haunts of youth. (p. 3)

Thus Rickie introduces Hellenism, which invests meaning in material things and accepts nature, and which does not need to negate material existence in order to reach reality. Real trees, which seem to stand like caryatids receiving the incense of smoke and the tray-borne offerings of food, are set over against the abstract form of the cow. With these Forster in this first scene gives the philosophical conflict of the book. He explores in this scene the two possibilities of the antithesis: if reality lies somewhere else, must we, like Ansell (and Moore) separate it from material manifestations, or can we, like Rickie (and the Greeks) use nature as an avenue into that supersensible reality where the cow grazes?

Either way it was attractive. If she was there, other cows were there too. The darkness of Europe was dotted with them, and in the far East their flanks were shining in the rising sun. . . .

Suddenly he realized that this, again, would never do. As usual, he had missed the whole point, and was overlaying philosophy with gross and senseless details. For if the cow was not there, the world and the fields were not there either. And what would Ansell care about sunlit flanks or impassable streams? (p. 3)

Rickie, unsure of himself--"He could not even quibble"--deprecates the trees and the "tender sky" as "gross and senseless details" and insists, like a neophyte reciting a litany, that "if the cow was not there, the world and the fields were not there either." Does he really think that material nature depends upon supersensible reality for its existence? Or is he adjusting his ideas to fit those of the more dominant Ansell? His question, "And what would Ansell care about sunlit flanks or impassable streams?" would seem to indicate the latter. Forster ends the passage with "Rickie rebuked his own groveling soul, and turned his eyes

away from the night, which had led him to such absurd conclusions."

Ansell, the male sibyl, the Hebrew prophet (he is Jewish), the "undergraduate high-priest" (Forster's description for him), is certainly a formidable opponent.²⁸ When the others challenge the cow's existence he abandons logic and asserts subjectively, "She's there for me. I don't care whether she's there for you or not. Whether I'm in Cambridge or Iceland or dead, the cow will be there" (p. 1). The real for Ansell is not material and exists always and outside of time; what is not real exists only as "the product of a diseased imagination." This is his definition for Agnes, whom he ignores when she interrupts the philosophical discussion of the first scene because he claims she was "not there." Rickie speaks first:

"Miss Pembroke--whom you saw."

"I saw no one."

"Who came in?"

"No one came in."

.

"Ansell, don't rag."

"Elliot, I never rag, and you know it. She was not really there. . . . Did it never strike you that phenomena may be of two kinds: one, those which have a real existence, such as the cow; two, those which are the subjective product of a diseased imagination, and which, to our destruction, we invest with the semblance of reality? If this never struck you, let it strike you now." (p. 18)

Arbitrarily Ansell does not choose to recognize the existence of Agnes. His insistence has overtones of cruelty, of a philosophical position pushed too far. His ideas follow Moore's, who wrote that "some knowledge of supersensible reality is necessary as a premise for correct conclusions as to what ought to exist."²⁹ Yet when Moore wrote about "correct conclusions as to what ought to exist" he seemed to be setting him-

self up as a judge, as indeed he did later in the Principia when he distinguished between judgment and taste in his section on aesthetics.³⁰ Was he a kind of philosophical Cecil Vyse, as one suspects Ansell is? One remembers Lucy Honeychurch's fears concerning Cecil, that at any moment he might turn and say "It would be wrong not to loathe. . . ." Worse still, we may all be, in Ansell's words, products of someone's "diseased imagination" and may not exist--or deserve to exist. Forster is careful to expose the possibility of cruelty in a philosophical humanitarianism which can speak of "humanity"--as long as that term includes people of one's own choosing--but which cannot accept human beings. For Ansell, friendship is exclusive. He tells Rickie: "You think it is so splendid to hate no one. I tell you it is a crime. You want to love every one equally, and that's worse than impossible--it's wrong. When you denounce sets, you're really trying to destroy friendship" (p. 21).³¹ When Rickie returned to Cambridge after Gerald Dawe's funeral, Ansell is not only unapologetic about not writing, but sarcastic about Rickie's indiscriminate acceptance of people:

"I answer none of your letters. You are quite hopeless by now. You can go to the bad. But I refuse to accompany you. I refuse to believe that every human being is a moving wonder of supreme interest and tragedy and beauty--which was what the letter in question amounted to. You'll find plenty who will believe it. It's a very popular view among people who are too idle to think; it saves them the trouble of detecting the beautiful from the ugly, the interesting from the dull, the tragic from the melodramatic. You had just come from Sawston, and were apparently carried away by the fact that Miss Pembroke had the usual amount of arms and legs."

Rickie was silent. He had told his friend how he felt, but not what had happened. Ansell could discuss love and death admirably, but somehow he would not understand lovers or a dying man, and in the letter there had been scant

allusion to these concrete facts. Would Cambridge understand them either? He watched some dons who were peeping into an excavation, and throwing up their hands with humorous gestures of despair. These men would lecture next week on Catiline's conspiracy, on Luther, on Evolution, on Catullus. They dealt with so much and they had experienced so little. Was it possible he would ever come to think Cambridge narrow? (p. 61)³²

Is it possible--to pick up Forster's tone--that the antithesis can include the more heartless attributes of education which we have come to expect from the thesis?

Admittedly the antithesis in The Longest Journey is more complex than Forster has created before. If Cambridge (Ansell) qua antithesis (supersensible reality) stands against Sawston (the Pembroke) qua thesis (conventional morality), such passages as Ansell's letter cause some confusion. Ansell may be more than simply heartless: he may be not only a more intelligent Cecil Vyse (who would meet his nemesis the following year when A Room with a View was published), but a Cecil with Mr. Beebe's homosexual, enclosing tendencies, tendencies which seek, for a time, to control Rickie Elliot. His intense disappointment at Rickie's engagement is a strange reaction for a clear-headed, analytical philosopher who can dissect reality from unreality so neatly: "He knelt in an arm-chair and hid his face in the back" (p. 85). When Ansell damns all women, his friend Tilliard reminds him that people do get married. "'Damn these women, then,' said Ansell, bounding round in the chair. 'Damn these particular women'" (p. 86). He tries to explain his resentment in philosophical terms. He defines Rickie's relationship with Agnes as a romantic fallacy: "She is happy because she has conquered; he is happy because he has at last hung all the world's beauty on to a single peg. He was

always trying to do it. He used to call the peg humanity. Will either of these happinesses last? His can't. Hers only for a time" (p. 87).³³ But despite such attempts at analysis, his letter to Rickie does little to conceal a peevish jealousy:

This is a letter of the prudent sort. If it makes you break off the engagement, its work is done. You are not a person who ought to marry at all. You are unfitted in body: that we once discussed. You are also unfitted in soul: you want and you need to like many people, and a man of that sort ought not to marry. "You never were attached to that great sect" who can like one person only, and if you try to enter it you will find destruction. . . . Man wants to love mankind; woman wants to love one man. When she has him her work is over. She is the emissary of Nature, and Nature's bidding has been fulfilled. (p. 88)³⁴

This is a contradictory letter from one who, several times in the novel, denounces the unequivocal acceptance of "mankind" and bases friendship on exclusiveness. The possibility of homosexual elements in the character of Ansell cannot be ruled out. McTaggart and Dickinson, Ansell's intellectual ancestors, were both homosexuals, Dickinson advocating and defending his position as the only unprejudiced and free relationship between human beings. In his biography of Dickinson, Forster records Dickinson's hoping "for the 'company of pure spirits related to one another by perfect love,' which constituted McTaggart's heaven."³⁵ The similarity of such language with Ansell's attitudes is striking. Ansell may also reflect Forster's use of the pastoral theme. As old as Colin Clout and The Shepheard's Calendar, the conflict between friendship and the contemplative life on the one hand and the involvement of sex and marriage on the other reaches a stronger statement in The Longest Journey than in any work of Forster. Rickie is drawn out into the world where his

intellect, his creativity, his perceptive powers are clouded, if not almost destroyed. Ansell sees that world as a Moorean naturalistic fallacy empty of meaning (p. 68), and Forster supports his attitude: "The Cambridge chapters are still romantic and crucial for me," he wrote in 1960, "and I still endorse Ansell's denunciation of the Great World."³⁶ In spite of the contradictory elements in his character, Ansell becomes the spokesman for the antithesis, denouncing the world's conspiracy to kill the brotherhood of men.

He is also, in that first section, the medium through which Forster explores the validity of abstract reality. Ansell not only deploras the "Great World" of the thesis, but Rickie's habit of substituting symbols for people. His exposure of Rickie's self-delusion might seem, on the surface, to be a criticism of imagination. It is not. It is rather a plea for the right use of the imagination, a disciplined channeling of imaginative powers away from subjectivity into a discovery of abstract, objective reality. As J. B. Beer rightly explains, Forster's message in this novel is that "the imagination is relevant to the problem of reality. It is an essential component in what we call our 'sense of reality,' working with the world that is presented to our senses to create a world which will be at once true to itself and organized within our own minds. . . the sense of reality weds the earth to the human spirit."³⁷ Forster gives us that search in Ansell's second philosophical construct, the circle-in-the-square-in-the-circle-in-the-square. Ansell draws a square, puts in it a circle, puts in the circle a square, until there is never enough room to draw the real circle, i.e., reality.

Far from implying the unreality of the non-existent circle, Ansell's circle-square construct repeats his premise of the cow. The cow had reality, but did not exist in time; the circle has reality, but does not exist in space. Both support Ansell's belief that physical, material manifestation is not necessary for reality. For Ansell, as for Hegel, pure being corresponds to pure nothingness.³⁸ The fact that his circle lies beyond sense perception makes it not less, but more real.³⁹

Ansell's circle-square is translated into the action of ritual at the Cadbury Rings, old circular fortifications of undetermined origin called by the local people "Cocoa Squares." They lie high on the Wiltshire downs, their center marked by a single tree. Here Rickie meets objective reality for the first time when Mrs. Failing tells him that Stephen is his brother. The obscurity of the Rings' origin contributes to the sense of ritual:

The down was called "Cadbury Range" ("Cocoa Squares" if you were young and funny), because high upon it--one cannot say "on the top," there being scarcely any tops in Wiltshire--because high upon it there stood a double circle of entrenchments. A bank of grass enclosed a ring of turnips, which enclosed a second bank of grass, which enclosed more turnips, and in the middle of the pattern grew one small tree. British? Roman? Saxon? Danish? The competent reader will decide. The Thompson family [shepherds] knew it to be far older than the Franco-German war. It was the property of Government. It was full of gold and dead soldiers who had fought with the soldiers on Castle Rings and been beaten. The road to Londinium, having forded the stream and crossed the valley road and the railway, passed up by these entrenchments. The road to London lay half a mile to the right of them. (p. 105)

There is "a gap, through which chariots had entered," and Mrs. Failing speaks of dead soldiers buried there. But the whole description is derived from legend rather than from fact. Archaeologists have suggested

that such circular embankments in southern England were used as corrals where Britons rounded up cattle for slaughter before the Romans, Saxons, or Danes arrived.⁴⁰ Whether or not Forster was aware of this possible use of the rings, Rickie has been herded there for the same purpose by Mrs. Failing. Yet the slaughter for Rickie becomes regeneration. He faints, but as he regains consciousness, "The earth he had dreaded lay close to his eyes, and seemed beautiful."

He saw the structure of the clods. A tiny beetle swung on the grass blade. On his own neck a human hand pressed, guiding the blood back to his brain.

There broke from him a cry, not of horror but of acceptance. For one short moment he understood. "Stephen--" he began, and then he heard his own name called: "Rickie! Rickie!" Agnes hurried from her post on the margin, and, as if understanding also, caught him to her breast.

Stephen offered to help them further, but finding that he made things worse, he stepped aside to let them pass and then sauntered inwards. (p. 143)

Read as ritual, this passage gains meaning. Rickie's sudden sense of reality allows him to wed, in Beer's words, the earth with the human spirit, the physical manifestation of the world with his human relationship with Stephen. His cry is one of acceptance, followed by understanding. That acceptance has been accomplished in the subconscious. By fainting, Rickie has left the conscious world, and in the dim area of recovery, where the subconscious has not yet quite let go and consciousness has not yet quite taken over, understanding comes. His cry of "Stephen!" is a flooding in of love and recognition made powerful by the trance-like quality of his watching the earth, the beetle, the blade of grass close to his eyes. But Agnes interrupts. Why has Forster chosen to describe her position as a "post on the margin"? The fact that

he does, it seems to me, emphasizes the ritual aspect of the scene: she has been stationed, by arrangement, on the periphery of reality. Agnes, qua thesis, qua world, rushes in and dispels the connection which is about to be consummated between Rickie and Stephen. She acts as if she understands "also"--as Rickie and as Stephen understand. It is significant that Stephen, interrupted by Agnes, "sauntered inwards"--i.e., toward the center, toward reality. George Thomson sees the square as that phenomena described by Ansell as "the product of a diseased imagination" and the circle as the phenomena which is real.⁴¹ If he is correct, Agnes' "post" on the margin becomes significant, and Stephen's going inward at her interruption makes sense. But there is another possibility. Since Forster's dialectic is built upon a constant annihilation, assimilation and preservation--Hegel's process of aufheben--perhaps a more accurate view, in Forster's terms, might be to see the square and circle not as separate but as fusing. If one remembers that the four elements of the earth form a square which is related to the divine circle of completeness in Plato's Timaeus, perhaps the circle in the square, ever vacillating inward through its repetitive manifestations, could indeed be the geometrical statement of the dialectic as it moves inward toward an abstract reality which is paradoxically more concrete as it approaches pure nothingness.

Once Ansell's character is understood as a philosophical position in a dialectical argument for abstract reality and against Rickie's subjective illusions, Forster's defense of him becomes understandable, in spite of Ansell's less desirable aspects. Not only does Forster use him

to illustrate one aspect of reality, but he makes of him a revealer of Rickie's character. In his relationship with Rickie, Ansell is not simply a prig, as Montgomery Belgion thinks, nor is his philosophy a simple form of anti-Berkeleyanism, as Frederick Crews has labeled it.⁴² Nor is he David Shusterman's pragmatist who watches Rickie from the sidelines and rescues him only when he is ready to be rescued. Shusterman is a good example, I believe, of a critic who has failed to consider the philosophy taught at Cambridge when Forster was there and which permeates the novel. Shusterman writes of Rickie:

So Rickie dies just because of the absolutes by which he has lived. . . . if he persists in living according to the simplicities, to the absolutes, he is bound to come to disaster. . . . The heroic picture he had built up in his mind of Stephen, as the natural man to whom he felt closely identified, crumbles away, and it crumbles away so easily that one feels cheated because the author has not adequately prepared us for such a drastic, sudden reversal.⁴³

But Forster has prepared us, through Ansell. Ansell exists, in a sense, for that preparation: it is Ansell who, with his cow and circle-square, delineates Rickie's problem. Rickie does not die because of his belief in absolutes but because he has lost sight of them, and Ansell is there to tell us so. Shusterman wants a realistic novel, and perhaps this is his reason for seeing Ansell as a pragmatist. But Ansell is Hegelian; his whole argument is a restatement of the Phenomenology. He loses his fellowship because his professors think he has read too much Hegel (p. 213). This is not, as Harry T. Moore thinks, "one of Forster's little jokes."⁴⁴ It is central to Ansell's character. What Ansell insists on, as Hegel had, is that there is a difference between an idealism which sees abstracts as concrete and a false, romanticized idealism which

invests concretes with abstractions, i.e., with symbolism. Ansell's realism is realism in its original sense, i.e. idealism in its purest form. The cow is there. For Rickie only the idea of the cow is there, an image which he invents with his imagination, as he invents ideas in his mind for his mother, Stephen, and Agnes. His mother, indeed, has become for him a photograph, which Stephen in a rage tears up to make Rickie realize he has substituted a piece of paper for her--and worse, that he sees Stephen only in relation to a dead woman. To underscore his point, Forster has Stephen shout: "I see your game. You don't care about me drinking, or to shake my hand. It's some one else you want to cure--as it were, that old photograph. You talk to me, but all the time you look at the photograph" (p. 274). After he leaves, Rickie thinks: "The man was right. He did not love him, even as he had never hated him. In either passion he had degraded him to be a symbol for the vanished past" (p. 274). Rickie is not devoted to the inner life, as Lionel Trilling thinks he is.⁴⁵ His problem is precisely that he is devoted to an imaginary life, mistakenly believing it to be the inner. Forster intends irony near the end, I think, when he has Rickie, disgusted with Stephen's drunkenness, tell the servant Leighton that he is bankrupt for the second time because he has "pretended again that people were real" (p. 302). It is precisely because he has not seen anyone as real--either Agnes, or Gerald, or his mother, and now Stephen--but as subjective images which he has invented, that he is really bankrupt. They are unreal for him for a different reason than Agnes had been unreal for Ansell. Ansell thought Agnes was unreal be-

cause she was not honest; she was a physical manifestation without an inner core of reality; she was for Ansell, in other words, a sham. Rickie thinks Agnes is real only when he makes her into a symbol, only when he makes her unreal. Rickie's problem is the Hegelian-Moorean one of perception. How can we know people from the sense data we receive from them? How can we know the True, the Beautiful, and the Good? As Alan Wilde says, Rickie came to Cambridge "with a passionate yearning for beauty and personal affections, the 'goods' G. E. Moore had singled out for discussion in his Principia Ethica."⁴⁶ But the real problem, as Rickie soon learned, was whether, in Frederick Crews' words, "the pursuit of the Good and the Beautiful--the way of life embodied in Lowes Dickinson and justified in ethical terms by G. E. Moore--has a proper right to existence at all."⁴⁷ Rickie gropes toward the Good and the Beautiful through the use of symbols in his short stories. Whether or not The Longest Journey is, as Wilfred Stone thinks it is, a refutation of Forster's own earlier, more romantic self, it presents the problem of perception as its main concern.⁴⁸

If one does not understand that the real conflict of the novel is philosophical, one could, with Shusterman, think that it "falls apart" at the end with Rickie's "melodramatic and ridiculous death."⁴⁹ Actually, that death puts the final stamp of disapproval on Ansell. Forster may admire Ansell's clear view of the Great World as a sham, but he has given him some severe limitations. Ansell possesses the possibility of cruelty and selfishness which an ivory tower-induced exclusiveness develops. Worse, his philosophy, in its search for an abstract reality, rejects

the earth. Like all the Cambridge undergraduates, Ansell has not "tasted the cup--let us call it the teacup--of experience. . . . We must drink it, or we shall die" (p. 66). Although Forster defends Cambridge to such an extent that Rose Macaulay thought it became for him "too alma mater," he submits Cambridge and its representative, Stewart Ansell, to the charge of narrowness.⁵⁰ At the end of the novel Rickie and the earth are "justified." No other idea in the novel has caused critics so much concern. Reuben Brower finds obscurity and confusion "rather than profundity" in the book. "But what can Forster mean," Brower asks, "by the 'earth' being justified?"⁵¹ Forster means that the validity of Ansell's abstract reality is suspect, that his philosophy, which must negate nature in order to experience reality is, in the last analysis, as false as Rickie's romantic idealism which sees nature through its own illusions. Forster means that the contradictions and tensions of the antithesis, outlined in the first scene of the novel when Ansell speaks of the cow and Rickie cannot see it, are at last resolved. Both Ansell's and Rickie's philosophical positions have been examined and have been found wanting. Reality lies neither in abstraction nor in material nature, but in both, as Rickie discovered momentarily and subconsciously on the Cadbury Rings. Rickie's death may be melodramatic but it is not, as Shusterman thinks, ridiculous: it is, in fact, ritual. Only through such a total sacrifice--not just a brief respite from consciousness, like the fainting spell--can Rickie annihilate his illusions and assimilate the earth into a new reconciliation with reality. By dying to save Stephen he allows his mother's blood to continue. He "connects" with those long-dead generations lying in

the soil of Wiltshire and extends his influence beyond the grave.

Stephen, under the stars, thinks at the end:

He was alive and had created life. By whose authority? Though he could not phrase it, he believed that he guided the future of our race, and that, century after century, his thoughts and his passions would triumph in England. The dead who had evoked him, the unborn whom he would evoke--he governed the paths between them. By whose authority? (p. 310)

By Rickie's, whose ear was now deaf and could not hear Stephen's gratitude, whose body was dust and could not share his ecstasy. "The spirit had fled, in agony and loneliness, never to know that it bequeathed him salvation" (p. 311). Salvation cannot come through philosophical discussions about abstract cows, however strong the belief. It can come through aufheben, the reordering of experience and the preservation of the earth in that mystical area of the spirit where abstractions and the material manifestations of abstractions can exist together. Rickie Elliot may have entered G. E. Moore's Cambridge of analytical semantics, but he graduated from McTaggart's, in which a single-substance spiritual universe contains all things.

If, in the first ("Cambridge") section of the novel Ansell almost takes command, in the second ("Sawston") section Forster keeps him off-stage so that the thesis can gain power. Agnes' interruption of that first philosophical discussion, as K. W. Gransden has pointed out, sets the book going.⁵² Action is the clue to the thesis. Sawston is what its name implies: it saws its way through experience, mistaking destruction for progress. The Pembrokes and their ally, Rickie's Aunt Failing--who fails completely as a human being--operate by deliberate acts of will

rather than by love or instinct. Agnes commits a naturalistic fallacy of her own. Rickie makes the mistake of subjectively recreating people into poetic images; Agnes, as John Harvey discovered, translates people into terms of social rather than human relationships.⁵³ If she can label an experience or an attitude with a catchword she is comfortable. The catchword protects her from the necessity of thinking. The label "snob" "mollifies" Agnes when Rickie apologizes for Ansell's rudeness in that first scene. She does not guess that Rickie's "He isn't a gentleman at all" might have its origin in human affection rather than in social judgment:

"Ansell--" Then he burst forth. "Ansell isn't a gentleman. His father's a draper. His uncles are farmers. He's here because he's so clever--just on account of his brains. Now, sit down. He isn't a gentleman at all." And he hurried off to order some dinner.

"What a snob the boy is getting!" thought Agnes, a good deal mollified. It never struck her that those could be the words of affection--that Rickie would never have spoken them about a person whom he disliked. (p. 7)

She dislikes Ansell because his friendship is a threat to her control of Rickie. She is one of "that great 'sect'" described by Shelley "Whose doctrine is, that each one should select / Out of the crowd a mistress or a friend, / And all the rest, though fair and wise, commend / To cold oblivion . . ."--the same sect, in fact, that Ansell refers to in his letter when he argues against Rickie's engagement.⁵⁴ She has "selected" Rickie, but one wonders if she is capable of love. When she "minded" Gerald's death she had to be pushed into tears by the more sensitive Rickie. Forster gives the clue to her character when he first introduces her: "She was willing to find life full of trivialities" (p. 7).

The abnormal frightens her, whether it is Rickie's deformed foot or Stephen's illegitimate birth. She sums up Stephen prudishly: "He has always followed his inclinations, and one knows the result of that" (p. 217). Like Harriet Herriton, whom her brother mentions as someone he should have married, she tries bribery, mistaking a visit from Stephen as a proposal of blackmail. It is Agnes who tells Mrs. Failing of Stephen's ridiculous poem about her and gets him turned out of the house. She is petty and self-centered: her major trait is a desire to control Rickie as a breadwinner for her own comfort. She is a flat character, less complex than the sometimes bewildering Ansell. As such, Agnes qua thesis serves as a foil for the complicated antithesis. Her theme--sex as insidious control of another human being--is a continuation of the Gino-Lilia confrontation in Where Angels Fear to Tread, and no less dangerous. If Gino killed Lilia, Agnes has the same power over Rickie and he knows it.⁵⁵ With Stephen drunk in the village and his hopes gone of "connecting" through him with his mother, with warmth and passion, Rickie sees Agnes clearly for the first time.

Then he leant against the parapet and prayed passionately, for he knew that the conventions would claim him soon. God was beyond them, but ah, how far beyond, and to be reached after what degradation! At the end of this childish detour his wife awaited him, not less surely because she was only his wife in name. He was too weak. Books and friends were not enough. Little by little she would claim him and corrupt him and make him what he had been. . . . (p. 302)

It is significant for the dialectical movement of the book that this confrontation with the thesis shatters the illusion Rickie had created of Agnes. It prepares him for his ritual of death and salvation, which follows immediately after this passage. Agnes' real power had been

Rickie's own self-inflicted image of her. Like an evil witch, her ugliness exposed, Agnes disappears under the wand of Rickie's honesty: she is annihilated. Free of illusion, he can act heroically for the first time in his life.

The other half of the thesis, Agnes' brother Herbert, is equally simple, but because he is not connected with Rickie through the theme of sex-control, he is less vicious. At one point Forster seems to defend him. The Cambridge undergraduates have not tasted the "teacup of experience," but this necessity is what "has made men of Mr. Pembroke's type what they are" (p. 66). Forster may not approve of him, but Herbert seems more befuddled than villainous. He can operate only with compromise and considers truth foolhardy if it endangers success. When Rickie leaves Agnes, Herbert defends him: "But I understand Rickie's position. . . . He imagines himself his brother's keeper. Therefore we must make concessions. We must negotiate" (p. 277). Herbert's creed is nineteenth-century Victorian, with the doctrinaire clichés of the British Empire: "If a man shoots straight and hits straight and speaks straight, if his heart is in the right place, if he has the instincts of a Christian and a gentleman" he must be approved (p. 51). School, he insists, is "the world in miniature," and as he speaks to his boys, impersonal portraits of empire builders look down on him from the walls (p. 170). Herbert is an organizer. Forster's description of him, with its careful use of dental stops, produces the "pursed lip" meticulous educator, a Leyland-Bons-Cecil-Beebe thesis Philistine interested in "getting ahead." The "d's" and "t's" seem to spit competency:

In three years Mr. Pembroke had done much to solidify the day-boys at Sawston School. If they were not solid, they were at all events curdling, and his activities might reasonably turn elsewhere. He had served the school for many years, and it was really time he should be entrusted with a boarding-house. (p. 159)

Herbert is stupid, as Rickie knows, not because he lacks intellect, but because he does not value it. Rickie "saw that for all his fine talk about a spiritual life he had but one test for things--success; success for the body in this life or for the soul in the life to come" (p. 18). But a reader of Forster knows that this success cannot operate "in the life to come." There is no "progress" on the other side of the hedge.

Standing outside the dialectical conflict between thesis and anti-thesis are the Failings, whose function in the novel seems to be that of a Greek chorus. Mr. Failing, dead when the book opens, has written a volume of essays which Mrs. Failing is editing with an introduction. Forster gives quotations from it periodically throughout the novel, and it serves, as a more alive Mr. Emerson had in A Room with a View, to preach a kind of McTaggartian spiritual universe united by love:

"Let us love one another. Let our children, physical and spiritual, love one another. It is all that we can do. Perhaps the earth will neglect our love. Perhaps she will confirm it, and suffer some rallying-point, spire, mound, for the new generations to cherish." (p. 294)

Like McTaggart, with his theory of determining correspondences, Mr. Failing is a man who "believed that things could be kept together by accenting the similarities, not the differences of men" (p. 106). Stephen, the "elemental" character, is his protégé. He carries a copy of Mr. Failing's manuscript with him when he takes his symbolic, ritualistic, baptismal wade through the millpond after Mrs. Failing sends him away "and ink that

had been dry for twenty-three years had begun to run again" (p. 234). In a flashback which explains Stephen's birth, Mr. Failing seems to prophesy Rickie's death when he persuades his wife to go to Stockholm to bring back the lovers: "It is the saddest truth I have yet perceived that the Beloved Republic . . . of which Swinburne speaks . . . will not be brought about by love alone. It will approach with no flourish of trumpets, and have no declaration of independence. Self-sacrifice and--worse still--self-mutilation are the things that sometimes help it most, and that is why we should start for Stockholm this evening" (p. 256). Ansell is reading Mr. Failing's Essays when Stephen introduces himself by throwing a clod of earth into the middle of his back. It is significant for Ansell's subsequent admiration of Stephen that at that moment he is reading Mr. Failing's distinction between coarseness (revealing something) and vulgarity (concealing something). "Attain the practical through the unpractical," Mr. Failing had written. "There is no other road" (p. 225). This is exactly what Stephen does with his drunkenness, which causes Rickie to act heroically at the end.

Mrs. Failing is a female Voltaire whose iconoclasm, as Frederick Crews says, "balances Rickie's symbol-making as a falsification of the real world."⁵⁶ Yet her amused detachment is as unreal, in its own way, as Rickie's illusions. She delights in unleashing the less desirable passions, but her overemphasis of them is a distortion of reality. Sadistically she watches Stephen: "The delightful moment was approaching when the boy would lose his temper: she knew it by a certain tremor in his heels" (p. 103). To Agnes, she calls Stephen a hero, but her

definition hints at vicarious sadism: "To snub people! to set them down! to be rude to them! to make them feel small! Surely that's the life work of a hero?" (p. 111). Mrs. Failing has aesthetic perception, but she cannot really "see," i.e., she cannot really relate to nature:

Mrs. Failing's attitude towards Nature was severely aesthetic--an attitude more sterile than the severely practical. She applied the test of beauty to shadow and odour and sound; they never filled her with reverence or excitement; she never knew them as a resistless trinity that may intoxicate the worshipper with joy. If she liked a ploughed field, it was only as a spot of colour--not also as a hint of the endless strength of the earth. (p. 111)⁵⁷

But her detachment approaches cruelty when she writes a friend of Rickie's funeral: "Agnes and I buried him to the sound of our cracked bell, and pretended that he had once been alive" (p. 303).⁵⁸ Because Flea Thompson, with Stephen, throws rocks and breaks her drawing room windows, she has her overseer, Mr. Wilbraham, turn the family out. Flea has not been an especially diligent shepherd--he gets Stephen to look after his flock while he goes courting--but the rock-throwing episode motivates her to a heartless action. Of the Thompsons, her servant Leighton says later, "Why, that family--they say it's been in the valley hundreds of years, and never got beyond shepherding" (p. 299). They have gone to London, to become part of the nameless herd of clerk-yeomen moved to cities that "are after all excrescences, grey fluxions, where men, hurrying to find one another, have lost themselves" (p. 290).⁵⁹ Her husband had once written, "There's no such thing as a Londoner. He's only a country man on the road to sterility" (p. 264). By condemning the Thompsons to commercialism Mrs. Failing has committed the ultimate

sin in human relationships: she has severed them from the earth. She and her husband may be parodies of the thesis and antithesis: Mrs. Failing actually controls the controller (Agnes); Tony Failing's essays, with their insistence on love, are ineffectual pleas for passion, mere words with no force beyond the grave.

But the final judgment of The Longest Journey must not be that Forster was attempting to dramatize his own pessimism, as Frederick Crews thinks; it was rather to refuse, in Norman Kelvin's words, "to acknowledge pessimism as intellectually mandatory."⁶⁰ The character of Rickie Elliot supports Kelvin's affirmation. Rickie's problem is that he lacks that knowledge of self and of others which will enable him to live heroically. He lacks such knowledge because he cannot "see" reality. His vision of reality is clouded by his lack of self-confidence, which he seeks to cure by a retreat into illusion. He substitutes romantic images for people and symbols for nature. As long as he emphasizes things and people-as-things, he is ineffectual; when he switches that emphasis to action, when he gives value to action--thereby creating ritual--he can at last act heroically. Forster's delineation of his character moves from a detailed, separate treatment of him as an individual to a Janus-like figure which merges with his half-brother Stephen at the end, when the life force is exchanged between the two at Rickie's death. Forster's admiration for the Antigone of Sophocles may be a clue to his method here.⁶¹ Like Antigone, The Longest Journey is a story of blood kin separated by and fighting society. But Forster, with two heroes, has the added problem of reconciliation, if the characters are to satisfy the merger demanded by the dialectical tensions

between them. He has had two heroes before: Eustace-Gennaro, Micky-Harold, Philip-Gino--as he will have Aziz-Fielding in A Passage to India later. But he has never before attempted two protagonists intensely connected not only by blood but by a spiritual necessity which drives them together. Rickie and Stephen are almost a Romulus-Remus pair trying to found Swinburne's Beloved Republic of brotherly love. They do so through ritual, through the Forsterian theme of the persistence of the earth and the stars in a spiritual universe and through the use of a syncretic mythology which becomes more important as the two elements of the double hero fuse at the end.

At the beginning, when Forster treats Rickie as a separate entity, he is little different from the Werther-like, self-pitying victims of society and parental misunderstanding popular in the Bildungsroman of the Post-Romantic period. He shares with Ernest Pontifex a Cambridge education and with Philip Carey a club foot and with both the blunder of unhappy marriage. But he develops beyond the happy ending of Butler's character and the pessimistic conclusions of Maugham's because of Forster's constant attention to the philosophic problem of perception. How does Rickie think of himself, and of others? The development of his perception becomes his character. At first, he is almost comically dependent on Ansell: "'No, Agnes, I have no ideals.' Then he got very red, for it was a phrase he had caught from Ansell, and he could not remember what came next" (p. 16). Like Lucy in A Room with a View, Micky in "The Point of It," and Vashti in "The Machine Stope," he is afraid of direct experience. He fears it because he has, in Forster's

words, "the Primal Curse, which is not--as the Authorized Version suggests--the knowledge of good and evil, but the knowledge of good-and-evil" (p. 186). Intuitively he realizes that the world cannot be divided into neat ethical categories, as Agnes and her brother would divide it. Yet he is influenced by society enough to try. When he first goes to the Failings and takes a horseback ride into Salisbury with Stephen, he loathes him for his uncouth country manners and turns back alone. He is not interested in Stephen until he learns from Mrs. Failing that he is related to him. When Mrs. Failing sends Stephen away "to the sea" to get rid of him temporarily and Stephen is calling good-bye to Rickie under the window, Rickie is persuaded by Agnes not to answer. His surrender to her is significant at this point because he has just insisted vehemently that Stephen must be told they are brothers because "it's a real thing." But he does not explain it as a real thing. "It seems to me," he tells Agnes, "that here and there in life we meet with a person or incident that is symbolical. It's nothing in itself, yet for the moment it stands for some eternal principle. We accept it, at whatever costs, and we have accepted life" (p. 149). Already Rickie has changed Stephen from a sweaty, beefy beer-drinker whom he loathed into "a person that is symbolical," who can "stand for some eternal principle." It is for his half-brother's "symbolical" significance that he is interested, not for Stephen. Rickie's rejection of Stephen is partly a rejection of his father--an old Bildungsroman idea--by whom Rickie thinks Stephen was conceived. In the brilliant flashback section which begins "Wiltshire" Forster recreates Mr. Elliot as a

bebauched version of a Leyland-Bons-Cecil Vyse character who "passed for a cultured man because he knew how to select" pictures, books--and, as we learn later, mistresses. Yet Rickie's mother, in spite of her passionate episode with Stephen's father, is a product of Victorian repression: "She was afraid of intimacy . . . so all her life she held her son at a little distance" (p. 26). It is not inconceivable that, if she had lived, her relationship with Rickie would have been similar to Mrs. Herriton's with Philip. Dead, she could assume the qualities of an obscure Demeter and influence, through his longing for her, her lonely, withdrawn son.

Like his mother, Rickie manages to hold himself not only from others but also from himself. The secret of his confused perception is that he hates himself, his deformity, his physical weakness. When Agnes, on her visit to Cambridge, tells him that he is too intelligent to care about his deformity he answers:

"Perhaps. I care. I like people who are well-made and beautiful. They are of some use in the world. I understand why they are there. I cannot understand why the ugly and crippled are there, however healthy they may feel inside." (p. 76)

This self-deprecation is a clue to his peculiar attitude toward Agnes. Here is a young man actually proposing marriage, but reminding his fiancée of her dead lover, Gerald:

He started, and cried passionately, "Never forget that your greatest thing is over. I have forgotten: I am too weak. You shall never forget. What he said to you then is greater than what I say to you now. What he gave you then is greater than anything you will get from me."

She was frightened. Again she had the sense of something abnormal. Then she said, "What is all this nonsense?" and folded him in her arms. (p. 81)

Even after marriage, when he remembers seeing "his wife and a dead man clasped in each other's arms," he thinks, "She was never to be so real to him again" (p. 181). He had made her, from the first, into a memory. As an image in his mind she was safely detached from him, less able to demand the physical contact of sexual experience. Timidity, a sense of inferiority, a fear of intimacy are at the root not only of his "creation" of Agnes but of his use of mythology in his short stories, for myth can transport intimacy into the safer never-never land of illusion. He rationalizes his avoidance of passion in his writing by blaming language for the inadequacy of communication. He tells Agnes: "My notion just now . . . is to leave the passions on the fringe. . . I can't soar; I can only indicate. That's where the musicians have the pull, for music has wings, and when she says 'Tristan' and he says 'Isolde,' you are on the heights at once" (p. 154). A similar rationalization moves into self pity as he explains himself to Ansell when he leaves Cambridge.

"I never shall come indoors again," said Rickie. "That's the whole point." And his voice began to quiver. "It's well enough for those who'll get a Fellowship, but in a few weeks I shall go down. In a few years it'll be as if I've never been up. It matters very much to me what the world is like. I can't answer your questions about it; and that's no loss to you, but so much the worse for me. And then you've got a house--not a metaphorical one, but a house with father and sisters. I haven't, and never shall have. There'll never again be a home for me like Cambridge. I shall only look at the outside of homes. According to your metaphor, I shall live in the street, and it matters very much to me what I find there." (pp. 68-69)

He fears the loss of Ansell's friendship once he leaves Cambridge. "I wish we were labelled. . . . To know each other again" is his unconscious

admission that he fears growth, that he feels safer when people, like his images of them, remain static (pp. 69-70). He retreats to his "dell," a haven which he has developed, with his imagination, into an outdoor cathedral-confessional. But when he says rather condescendingly that he would admit even the "vulgar herd" there, for "he knew that his own vulgarity would be greater if he forbade its ingress," Forster may be underscoring Rickie's immaturity (p. 19). "Vulgarity" for Rickie is, like "love" and "truth," only a word. When he meets the real thing in his boozy, illegitimate half-brother, he rejects it.

Some critics--Wilfred Stone and Frederick Crews especially--see Rickie's preference of friendship over marriage as a latent homosexuality. Stone quotes the following passage from the scene in which Rickie reluctantly leaves Cambridge:

Nature has no use for us: she has cut her stuff differently. Dutiful sons, loving husbands, responsible fathers--these are what she wants, and if we are friends it must be in our spare time. Abram and Sarai were sorrowful, yet their seed became as sand of the sea, and distracts the politics of Europe at this moment. But a few verses of poetry is all that survives of David and Jonathan. (p. 69)

But Stone does not mention that this speech comes at a time when Rickie is feeling extremely sorry for himself.⁶² Ansell will stay on at Cambridge; Rickie, because he is not academic enough to obtain a fellowship, will not. His longing for a home, for stability, for security, are mixed with his need for friendship, which, because he knows it to be fragile, he clings to even more desperately. Frederick Crews sees "Rickie's vaguely homosexual imagination" as the cause for his interest in Agnes. "He is attracted to her not for her own sake but because he

has idolized the athletic prowess of her dead fiancé, Gerald Dawes; a single glimpse of Gerald embracing Agnes becomes his introduction to the idea of sexual love and his permanent emblem for it. It is not Agnes, but the image of Agnes and Gerald together, that enraptures Rickie. When Gerald dies in a football match, Rickie forces Agnes to 'mind' her loss because he himself minds it, and he marries her on the perverse assumption that both he and she will remain loyal to Gerald's memory."⁶³ Crews bases his interpretation of Rickie on the idea that Rickie has "attached a masochistic significance to the fact that Gerald bullied him as a boy, or that "he is more than half willing to be bullied by Agnes, who has shared Gerald's embrace."⁶⁴ Because Agnes is sadistic ("... she had a thrill of joy when she thought of the weak boy in the clutches of the strong one" pp. 54-55), Crews claims that "The same sadist-masochist relationship that held between Gerald and Rickie is resumed between Agnes and Rickie."⁶⁵ But textual evidence indicates otherwise. Far from having enjoyed Gerald's bullying--or even the memory of it--Rickie tries to avoid discussion of him with Agnes.

"What do you think of him?" she immediately asked.

He murmured civilly.

"Has he changed since he was a schoolboy?"

"In a way."

"Do tell me all about him. Why won't you?"

She might have seen a flash of horror pass over Rickie's face. The horror disappeared, for, thank God, he was now a man, whom civilization protects. (p. 40)

Rickie remembers "a hell that no grown-up devil can devise":

Between Rickie and Gerald there lay a shadow that darkens life more often than we suppose. The bully and his victim never quite forget their first relations. They meet in

clubs and country houses, and clap one another on the back; but in both the memory is green of a more strenuous day, when they were boys together.

He tried to say, "He was the right kind of boy, and I was the wrong kind." But Cambridge would not let him smooth the situation over by self-belittlement. If he had been the wrong kind of boy, Gerald had been a worse kind. He murmured, "We are different, very." (p. 41)

"But Cambridge would not let him. . . ." Here, perhaps, is the first indication that Rickie's perception is capable of development in the direction of a reality apart from labels, images and symbolism.

A further indication of Rickie's development in the direction of the antithesis--and an eventual fusion with Stephen as the elemental character of the antithesis--exists in Rickie's philanthropic offer of money to Gerald so that he and Agnes can marry. It is significant that this offer comes immediately after a discussion with Herbert concerning philosophy and the Greeks, both anathema to Herbert. The offer may be a reaction to the ascetic attitudes of the thesis. Ironically, Herbert believes he is "propping" Rickie's Anglican orthodoxy.

"What does philosophy do?" the proper continued. "Does it make a man happier in life? Does it make him die more peacefully? I fancy that in the long-run Herbert Spencer will get no further than the rest of us. Ah, Rickie! I wish you could move among the school boys, and see their healthy contempt for all they cannot touch!" (p. 50)

One does not have to wonder what Herbert would think of Ansell's cow. Rebuffed by this rejection of everything he loved, Rickie hears Herbert piously approve Gerald's and Agnes' long engagement as "a blessing in disguise." But Rickie has just witnessed an impassioned embrace between the lovers. Now he hears an anti-Greek, ascetic spokesman for the herd, for society, for the conventions, proclaim the advantages of a long en-

agement. Rickie, deformed, reconciled to a lonely existence, makes his offer of money to Gerald and is refused. Cruelly Agnes explains him to Gerald: "He muddles all day with poetry and old dead people, and then tries to bring it into life. It's too funny for words" (p. 54). But Rickie understands the value of passion. He insists that Agnes "mind" Gerald's death, not because he minds it, but because love is important, not the renunciation and resignation approved by society.

As Rickie moves through the second ("Sawston") section, as he succumbs to the efficient machine of Herbert's school, his repudiation of Stephen becomes a torment. He tells Agnes: "It's been like a poison we won't acknowledge. How many times have you thought of my brother? I've thought of him every day--not in love; don't misunderstand; only as a medicine I shirked. Down in what they call the subconscious self he has been hurting me" (p. 208). It is Ansell--again with ritual--who brings Rickie's torment to catharsis. His one excursion to Sawston coincides with Stephen's visit there. But Agnes, thinking Stephen came to blackmail her, sends him off without allowing him to see Rickie. Ansell confronts Rickie with the truth in the dining room of Dunwood House. His "Don't be afraid. I bring good news" and his repetitive phrases turn him into a Hebrew prophet. His plea for salvation through love is a restatement of the antithesis. Rickie, surrounded by the boys, corralled by civilization as he had been corralled in the Rings, faints when he meets reality, as he had done there. Now, as then, he awakens with a new sense of reality. He tells Herbert that he has been "too far back" to blame his mother, to think in terms of morality: "Ansell took

me on a journey that was even new to him. We got behind right and wrong, to a place where only one thing matters--that the Beloved should rise from the dead" (p. 267). A "journey" to a place "where . . . the Beloved should rise from the dead" reflects the ritualistic aspects of Ansell's confrontation. Before he came to Sawston, Ansell explained to a friend that he had kept away from Rickie because he was "just waiting For the Spirit of Life" (p. 296). Rickie had lost it, in his marriage, in his surrender to society, where "the shadow of unreality" had descended on him (p. 165). Sawston had been for Rickie a descent into hell. Now, with the ritual at Sawston, that shadow is lifted, and more: there is a hint that the ritual also, mysteriously, mystically, resurrected Rickie's mother.

Her presence seems to direct the rest of the book. After his traumatic scene with Ansell in the dining hall, Rickie remembers a dream he had after his baby died. The baby had become for Rickie a symbol of his earthly continuity. When she dies he thinks jealously that Stephen, not he, "would have children: he, not Rickie, would contribute to the stream; he, through his remote posterity, might be mingled with the unknown sea" (p. 209). But he has a strange dream. His mother appears, crying. "He whispered, 'Never mind, my darling, never mind,' and a voice echoed, 'Never mind--come away--let them die out--let them die out'" (p. 209). He wakes, goes to the window and sees Orion. This dream is extraordinary for two reasons. Rickie does not know yet that Stephen is his mother's son and not his father's, so that the words "let them die

out," a reference to the physically deformed Elliots, could have no meaning for him at this point and could not have come from his own subconscious. Now, after his scene with Ansell at Sawston when he knows the truth, he remembers this dream.

On the banks of the grey torrent of life, love is the only flower. A little way up the stream and a little way down had Rickie glanced, and he knew that she whom he loved had risen from the dead, and might rise again. "Come away--let them die out--let them die out." Surely that dream was a vision! To-night also he hurried to the window--to remember, with a smile, that Orion is not among the stars of June. (p. 268)

This passage, with its imagery of love as a flower, life as a stream, and its conjecture that the dead "might rise again," is prophetic of the ritual Rickie shares with Stephen as they drive toward Cadover for the last time. The same words--"I suppose they die out"--come to Rickie as he talks aimlessly with Stephen about the Wiltshire dialect. Forster follows this remark with a passage sensitive to its implications. The italics are mine:

The conversation turned curiously. In the tone of one who replies, he said, "I expect that some time or other I shall marry."

"I expect you will," said Rickie, and wondered a little why the reply seemed not abrupt. (p. 291)

As John Magnus points out, Rickie is "not conscious that he is echoing the voice from the grave. But in some sense, Stephen makes the connection at once."⁶⁶ Their mother will live only if Stephen marries. While he muses about finding a girl "even the road vanished, and invisible water came gurgling through the wheel-spokes. The horse had chosen the ford" (p. 291). Stephen gets out and calls to Rickie to throw him

some crumpled paper, which he lights with a match. It is a trick Mr. Failing taught him.

The paper caught fire from the match, and spread into a rose of flame. "Now gently with me," said Stephen, and they laid it flower-like on the stream. Gravel and tremulous weeds leapt into sight, and then the flower sailed into deep water, and up leapt the two arches of a bridge. "It'll strike!" they cried; "no, it won't; it's chosen the left," and one arch became a fairy tunnel, dropping diamonds. Then it vanished for Rickie; but Stephen, who knelt in the water, declared that it was still afloat, far through the arch, burning as if it would burn forever. (p. 293)

Overhead the constellation Orion looks down on them, as it did when Rickie had the dream. The link between the dream and the ritual of the paper rose is now obvious. "On the banks of the grey torrent of life, love is the only flower" is translated now into a rose of flame drifting into deep water. The rose, symbol of love, of completion and perfection, can be related to the Virgin Mother and to the mystic center of Ansell's abstract circle of reality; fire, symbol of purgation and regeneration, combines with the rose to promise spiritual consummation and completion.⁶⁷ It may not be too imaginative, given the tone of ritual in this scene, to see the two arches of the bridge as the two sons, Rickie and Stephen. "It's chosen the left" gives the flaming rose a will capable of choosing. The chosen arch becomes a fairy tunnel, but the rose vanishes for Rickie. Stephen, kneeling in the water (of life?) could still see it "far through the arch, burning as if it would burn forever." Rickie will die, Stephen will live: the mother's blood will continue "as if forever" in Stephen's progeny.

But Stephen stays behind, to swim in the stream and get drunk in the village. Rickie goes to Cadover where Mrs. Failing gives the

valedictory for the thesis. She tells Rickie to beware of the earth:

"Beware of her, surely. Going back to her really is going back--throwing away the artificiality which (though you young people won't confess it) is the only good thing in life. Don't pretend you are simple. Once I pretended. Don't pretend that you care for anything but for clever talk such as this, and for books. . . . I am not being sentimental. I say once more, beware of the earth. We are conventional people, and conventions--if you will but see it--are majestic in their way, and will claim us in the end. We do not live for great passions or for great memories, or for anything great. . . . I tell you solemnly that the important things in life are little things, and that people are not important at all. Go back to your wife." (pp. 294-295)

After she leaves he sits musing by the fire, thinking of the horse "in the dark drinking . . . the mystic rose, and the tunnel dropping diamonds. He had driven away alone, believing the earth had confirmed him. He stood behind things at last, and knew that conventions are not majestic, and that they will not claim us in the end" (p. 298). By the fire, he fondles a piece of chalk which Stephen had thrown through the window when he left Cadover for the last time.

As he mused, the chalk slipped from his fingers, and fell on the coffee-cup, which broke. The china, said Leighton, was expensive. He believed it was impossible to match it now. Each cup was different. It was a harlequin set. The saucer, without the cup, was therefore useless. Would Mr. Elliot please explain to Mrs. Failing how it happened.

Rickie promised he would explain.

He had left Stephen preparing to bathe, and he heard him working up-stream like an animal, splashing in the shallows, breathing heavily as he swam the pools; at times reeds snapped, or clods of earth were pulled in. By the fire he remembered it was again November. (p. 198)

His breaking the delicate cup with the piece of chalk has hardly interrupted his thoughts, and yet that action contains the elements of ritual, coming as it does after Mrs. Failing's speech about trivialities and

Rickie's thoughts of the rose, the tunnel dropping diamonds, the conviction that conventions "will not claim us in the end." He has, by breaking the cup, confirmed the ritual of the rose. The rough chalk, representative of Stephen, has broken the refined clay of the cup, representative of Rickie. Ritually Rickie has chosen his mother's blood over his father's blood, as the rose had chosen Stephen over himself when Stephen could see it drifting under the bridge and Rickie could not. Stephen will continue and Rickie will not: the breaking of the cup predicts Rickie's choice at the railroad track. The earth will overcome the artifice of culture--but McTaggart would be the first to remind Rickie that both are made of the same substance. For it was again November, and Orion was visible again, as it had been the night of the dream: his mother watches again from the stars.

And yet Rickie is unaware of the message this small event is trying to communicate to him. When Leighton tells him Stephen is drunk, Rickie rejects Stephen. Searching the countryside, on the bridge where the paper had drifted, he is furious with Stephen, not for Stephen's sake but for his mother's:

. . . the woman he loved would die out, in drunkenness, in debauchery, and her strength would be dissipated by a man, her beauty defiled in a man. She would not continue. That mystic rose and the face it illumined [Stephen's] meant nothing. The stream--he was above it now--meant nothing. . . . The bather, the shoulders of Orion--they all meant nothing, and were going nowhere. (pp. 302-303)

Mechanically he walks to the level-crossing, and "In the glare of the engine he saw that his brother had come this way, perhaps through some sodden memory of the Rings, and now lay drunk over the rails" (p. 303).

Why "through some sodden memory of the Rings"? Does Stephen remember their brief reconciliation there, and is now searching for that reality again? Trance-like, Rickie reacts rather than acts:

Wearily he did a man's duty. There was time to raise him up and push him to safety. It is also a man's duty to save his own life, and therefore he tried. The train went over his knees. He died up in Cadover, whispering, "You have been right," to Mrs. Failing. (p. 303)

David Shusterman is the only critic I have read who interprets this passage correctly. He writes that Rickie "saves Stephen's life as a sleep-walker might, his conditioned reflexes acting without much conscious stimulation; and he attempts to get out of the path of the train in the same semiconscious, almost unwilling, way."⁶⁸ This is, I believe, precisely Forster's point. Rickie acts subconsciously, without will. He is driven by the haunting memory of his mother and the intense need for her to survive in Stephen. His conscious "You have been right" to Mrs. Failing is--for me, at least--too weak an affirmation of the thesis, after Forster has shown us, through the ritual of the rose and the cup, how powerful the antithesis of spiritual love in Rickie has become.

The presence of Rickie's mother and the need for spiritual love is made intense not only by ritual but by the increasing complexity of fusing mythologies toward the end. With centrifugal force they gather characters and themes and splay out their meanings in the ragged ends of the conclusion.⁶⁹ Stephen may be, in a mystic sense, Orion (as the cow is), and Demeter may be his mother (she is in the earth). When Rickie sees the "shoulders of Orion" on the bridge over the stream and repudiates the drunken Stephen, he links him with Orion: "The bather, the

shoulders of Orion--they all meant nothing . . ." (p. 303). By rejecting Stephen-Orion he also rejects his mother, Demeter-earth. This rejection is the reason behind his remark to Leighton: "My God receive me and pardon me for trusting the earth" (p. 302). Stephen's picture of the Demeter of Cnidus hangs from the ceiling of his attic room at Cadover, relegated there by Mrs. Failing. Responsive to the least stir of air, it seems organically alive and in touch with the universe: "Now she faced the sunrise; and when the moon rose its light also fell on her, and trembled, like light upon the sea. For she was never still, and if the draught increased she would twist on her string, and would sway and tap upon the rafters until Stephen woke up and said what he thought of her. 'Want your nose' he would murmur. 'Don't you wish you may get it.' Then he drew the clothes over his ears, while above him, in the wind and the darkness, the goddess continued her motions" (p. 129). Rickie is equally connected with her. At the British Museum, when Ansell learns from a friend that Rickie is to become a father, he passes by a statue of Demeter on his way to study and admits his own inability to cope with her (p. 198). The Demeter of Cnidus has "shattered knees," prophetic of Rickie's crushed knees at the railroad track. Herbert, arguing with Stephen over the publication of Rickie's stories after his death, links the two subconsciously:

He stood deep in thought before the only other picture that the bare room boasted--the Demeter of Cnidus. Outside the sun was sinking, and its last rays fell upon the immortal features and the shattered knees. Sweet-peas offered their fragrance, and with it there entered those mysterious scents that come from no one flower or clod of earth, but from the whole bosom of evening. He tried not to be cynical. But in his heart he could not regret that

tragedy, already half-forgotten, conventionalized, indistinct. Of course death is a terrible thing. Yet death is merciful when it weeds out a failure. If we look deep enough, it is all for the best. He stared at the picture and nodded. (pp. 308-309)

Demeter accomplishes a further reconciliation between Stephen and Rickie after Rickie's death. As Stephen carries his little girl out to sleep on the Wiltshire hillside under the stars he tells her to "Wish everything good-night." "'Good-night, dear mummy,' she said sleepily. 'Good-night, dear house. Good-night, you pictures--long picture--stone lady. I see you through the window--your faces are pink'" (p. 310). Again, Forster supplies the elements of ritual. With the picture of Demeter in the window--like a saint's in a niche--Stephen takes his daughter's hand in his and thinks of Rickie's sacrifice, which allowed him to live, and their mother to live, through his child.

But Forster's mythology is not limited to Demeter or Orion. Stephen's spiritual connections may be older than the Greeks. He is of Wiltshire, knowing local words that are already passing out of the language. He is of nature: when he gets caught in the rain "he seemed a piece of the wet" (p. 99). Ansell thinks of him:

Certain figures of the Greeks, to whom we continually return, suggested him a little. One expected nothing of him--no purity of phrase nor swift edged thought. Yet the conviction grew that he had been back somewhere--back to some table of the gods, spread in a field where there is no noise, and that he belonged for ever to the guests with whom he had eaten. (p. 231)

Stephen can be flip, sacrilegious, cruel and ungrateful--an English Gino who introduces himself to Ansell by throwing a clod of earth into his back, who settles disagreements with fistfights, who breaks windows with

pieces of chalk. Rickie, too, may have connections other than Greek. John Magnus thinks he functions as Thoth, the Egyptian lame god of writing.⁷⁰ But Forster's mythology is syncretic, and Magnus also remembers that the Hermes of Praxiteles, holding the child Dionysus, lacks both legs from the knees. Stephen in a drunken fit at Sawston broke the statue of Hermes in the hall as he fell over the bannister outside Rickie's room. Possibly, at his death, Rickie becomes Hermes, who rescued Persephone, daughter of Demeter, as Rickie rescues the unborn daughter of Stephen from non-existence. The dark stream of the rose-ritual may be for Stephen a Lethe through which he forgets his promise not to drink while Rickie is at Cadover. Stephen's connection with Dionysus may be stronger than most critics think. Dionysus was the son of Demeter, as Orion was. Rickie has called Stephen's weakness for alcohol a "sacred passion" (p. 286). I cannot agree with Norman Kelvin that Rickie is a substitute sacrifice in Stephen's Dionysian frenzy, or that Stephen's survival is an evasion of the myth.⁷¹ I would suggest, rather, that Stephen becomes Dionysus, the son of Demeter--of the earth--who is reborn (as Dionysus is constantly reborn) on the railroad tracks and that Rickie becomes Hermes, who saves Stephen's unborn child (Persephone?) from oblivion. Such a metamorphosis is not unlikely in Forster's dialectic, but rather a part of the process of aufheben. The annihilation of a past self, the assimilation of a new, the preservation of this new combination in a fresh reality open to vision: this is the method and process through which all Forster's characters have developed.

Certainly Stephen is a different person after Rickie's death. He changes from inarticulate into articulate, from a badly educated boor (he had read Col. Ingersoll and Mrs. Julia P. Chunk) into a literary critic. He is the recipient of mysterious energies unleashed by that moment at the railroad track. The tensions of two opposing forces, the primitive and the poetic, collapse and merge as a metamorphosis containing both characters. He becomes the dual hero which was promised all along. And yet this change, for me, is not entirely satisfactory. Forster has simply not made him educated or sensitive enough to criticize and edit a collection of short stories. He seems, as David Shusterman has found him to be, not much better than Herbert in his haggling over the spoils of publication.⁷² Can we believe in Stephen as the manifestation of Rickie's vision of spiritual love? I think not. Since this has been Rickie's story and not Stephen's, Forster's expectation that we accept Stephen as a prophetic hero at the end--a "not yet" hero, as Wilfred Stone kindly calls him--seems too quick, too demanding.⁷³ Even if we accept Stone's definition of The Longest Journey as a revelation rather than a definition, this shift to Stephen does not seem justified.⁷⁴ He has been presented as too primitive to suddenly assume the sensitivity of Cambridge and combine with its astuteness the native insight of Wiltshire. Romulus and Remus are not quite one, after all. Perhaps Forster realized the problem when he switched the focus to Stephen's little girl at the end. She represents the next generation, that continuity of Demeter which had been Stephen's link with Rickie. And yet she seems more of the past than of the future. The whole tone of this journey has been

back, not forward. As Stephen leans over her reverently at the end, he thinks of her as one "to whom he had given the name of their mother" (p. 311). His words are deliberately ambiguous. With the taboo attached to the Earth Mother, we never learn her name.

How far can the autobiographical aspects of Rickie Elliot be related to his creator? An answer to that question must be attempted before a final statement can be made concerning The Longest Journey. Wilfred Stone sees Rickie as Jung's infantile hero and his death as "the ritual sacrifice of a childish self that releases the libido for active life." "He exists to be sacrificed;" Stone continues, "he is a totem for all those childish disabilities that his creator hates in himself--the weakness, self-contempt, and repressed hostility that must be got rid of if he is ever to achieve a man's estate."⁷⁵ This is strong language. Rickie's weakness and self-contempt are no different from the same feelings in other struggling heroes of the Post-Romantic period. It is unfair to see Forster as Rickie, whom Stone calls a "moral zombie," especially since Forster's novel sets out deliberately to expose Rickie's subjective illusions as self-pitying retreats from reality. I cannot agree with Alan Wilde that "The novel is rather a spiritual biography of what Forster felt himself to be, what he thought he might become, and what he would like to have been."⁷⁶ Rickie's problem of willing people into images was Mildred Peaslake's mistake in "Albergo Empedocle," the first story Forster published. It is an unreal "view," the old Forsterian theme of a character succumbing to society, to the force of the thesis, with its pressures of empty goals and false morality void of

love. It can hardly be taken as a portrait of what Forster "would like to have been." Nowhere do the autobiographical aspects of Rickie break down more than in a passage often quoted to support them. When Rickie sees Gerald kiss Agnes, his reaction is taken by many critics to be an example of Forster's own late Victorian sentimentalizing:

Rickie limped away without the sandwiches, crimson and afraid. He thought, "Do such things actually happen?" and he seemed to be looking down coloured valleys. Brighter they glowed, till gods of pure flame were born in them, and then he was looking at pinnacles of virgin snow. While Mr. Pembroke talked, the riot of fair images increased.

They invaded his being and lit lamps at unsuspected shrines. Their orchestra commenced in that suburban house, where he had to stand aside for the maid to carry in the luncheon. Music flowed past him like a river. He stood at the springs of creation and heard the primeval monotony. Then an obscure instrument gave out a little phrase.

The river continued unheeding. The phrase was repeated and a listener might know it was a fragment of the Tune of tunes. Nobler instruments accepted it, the clarinet protected, the brass encouraged, and it rose to the surface of the whisper of violins. In full unison was Love born, flame of the flame, flushing the dark river beneath him and the virgin snows above. His wings were infinite, his youth eternal; the sun was a jewel on his finger as he passed it in benediction over the world. Creation, no longer monotonous, acclaimed him, in widening melody, in brighter radiances. Was Love a column of fire? Was he a torrent of song? Was he greater than either--the touch of a man on a woman? (p. 43)

D. S. Savage accused Forster of employing in this passage "'poetical' vagueness of the most embarrassing kind." He believes that "The prevalence of this sort of false, overripe writing indicates some basic uncertainty in Forster's grasp of life. . . ."77 What Mr. Savage misses--and, since Forster has invited his critics to view Rickie as more like himself than any other character he created, one cannot completely condemn Savage's assumptions--is the brief paragraph which closes this scene:

It was the merest accident that Rickie had not been disgusted. But this he could not know.

Such a conclusion does not support the "false, overripe writing" but condemns the person who thinks such "poetical vagueness"--who is Rickie, not Forster.

Why does Forster use the word "disgusted" to describe Rickie's reaction to the Agnes-Gerald love scene? There are two possible answers: (1) homosexuality or (2) fear of a sexual relationship of any kind. In Forster's work, from the first story, "Albergo Empedocle," through Where Angels Fear to Tread, sex is portrayed as a way of controlling people; or rather, misused as a way of controlling people. D. H. Lawrence, who knew Forster, wrote the following in a letter to Bertrand Russell concerning sexual intercourse:

What do I then embrace her for, hold the unknown against me for? To repeat the experience of self discovery. But I have discovered myself--I am not infinite. Still I can repeat the experience. . . . That is, I can get a sensation. The repeating of a known reaction upon myself is sensationism. That is what nearly all English people do now. . . . And this is like self-abuse or masturbation [sic]. The ordinary Englishman of the educated class goes to a woman now to masturbate [sic] himself. . . .

When this condition arrives, there is always Sodomy. The man goes to the man to repeat this reaction upon himself. It is a nearer form of masturbation. But still it has some object--there are still two bodies instead of one. A man of strong soul has too much honour for the other body--man or woman--to use it as a means of masturbation. So he remains neutral, inactive. That is Forster.⁷⁸

Rickie may share with his creator "too much honour for the other body--man or woman--to use it. . . ." Forster undoubtedly agrees with Rickie's fear of sex qua control: Forster never married. But to push the comparison towards homosexuality seems hardly justified. Forster wrote of

homosexuality as an outsider examining with objectivity a phenomenon of society. In "Society and the Homosexual: A Magistrate's Figures" he is sympathetic but puzzled by the homosexual's motivations: "They are impelled by something illogical, by an unusual but existent element in the human make-up."⁷⁹ As long as there are "unusual but existent elements in the human make-up" an artist is obligated to recognize them and portray them if they serve his theme. Rickie may be a younger, non-clerical Beebe: his name has the feminine ending. Forster saw Rickie as clearly as he saw Beebe--too clearly for Rickie to be a mere mirror image of himself. Although both Forster and Rickie may share the fear that sex is used as control, Rickie is at heart a sexual snob--the term is Forster's--as Forster proves when he has Rickie reject his half-brother because Stephen is illegitimate (p. 151). It is my contention that, far from revealing some basic uncertainty concerning life, as Mr. Savage would have it, Forster knows exactly what he is doing with the character of Rickie Elliot. He is, as John Harvey thinks, exposing Rickie's diseased imagination. He is exhibiting the tragedy of an intelligent human being who, in Harvey's words, "literally destroys himself by investing subjective illusions with the semblance of reality."⁸⁰

Larger than the theme of sex is the one of perception. The misuse of sex is but one result of a "muddled" view, of society's control of the individual, of the thesis side of the dialectic. To know what is really important in life is to know reality. Without such knowledge the self cannot attain selfhood, cannot become human. Only through a spiritual love can the soul have a "currency."⁸¹ Where that currency goes bankrupt

is not in love but in substituting an unreal image for the loved one-- whether human or divine--as Rickie does with his mother, with Agnes, with Stephen. Once the danger of this falsification is realized Rickie can move from a separate entity into a spiritual fusion with his brother. Once he abandons thinking of people as "symbolical" he can annihilate his previous concept of reality and assimilate his experience onto a new level of dialectical vision. That he does so in a seeming defeat is consistent with the "eternal moments" of Forster's characters. Miss Raby, Vashti, Mr. Andrews, Micky and Philip Herriton touched bottom before they rose to the surface for a new view of reality. In The Longest Journey ritual and a fusion of mythologies contribute to that attained perception. "Understanding itself," as Wilfred Stone has written, "is a kind of action."⁸² Margaret Schlegel, from Forster's next novel, Howards End, would certainly think so.

NOTES
Chapter IV

¹John Magnus, "Ritual Aspects of E. M. Forster's The Longest Journey," Modern Fiction Studies, XIII, No. 2 (Summer, 1967), 206-207.

²E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1954), p. 28. (First published London, 1927.)

³George Thomson, "Symbolism in E. M. Forster's Earlier Fiction," Criticism, III (Fall, 1961), 316.

⁴E. M. Forster, The Hill of Devi (New York, 1953), pp. 181-182.

⁵E. M. Forster, "What I Believe," Two Cheers for Democracy (New York, 1951), p. 67. (First published London, 1938.)

⁶Ibid., pp. 75-76.

⁷John Crowe Ransom, "E. M. Forster," Kenyon Review, V (Autumn, 1943), 620. Ransom's analysis is discussed by Edwin Nierenberg, "The Prophecy of E. M. Forster," Queen's Quarterly, LXXI, No. 2 (Summer, 1964), 194.

⁸E. M. Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 57.

⁹George Thomson, "Symbolism in E. M. Forster's Earlier Fiction," p. 305.

¹⁰John Magnus, p. 197.

¹¹E. M. Forster, The Longest Journey (New York, 1962), pp. 265-266. (First published London, 1907.) All quotations in the present study are taken from this Vintage edition.

¹²Rose Macaulay, The Writings of E. M. Forster (New York, 1938), p. 34.

¹³E. M. Forster, Howards End (New York, 1960), p. 267. (First published London, 1910.)

¹⁴P. N. Furbank and F. J. H. Haskell, "E. M. Forster," Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews, ed. Malcolm Cowley (New York, 1959), p. 33. Forster was interviewed in June, 1952.

¹⁵E. M. Forster, "Introduction," The Longest Journey, World Classics edition (London, 1960), p. ix.

¹⁶Ibid., xi.

¹⁷Reuben A. Brower, "Beyond E. M. Forster, Part I: The Earth," Foreground, I (Spring-Summer, 1946), 173.

¹⁸For a fuller discussion of G. E. Moore, see Chapter VII of the present study.

¹⁹G. E. Moore, Principia Ethica, Section 82 (Cambridge, 1965), pp. 135-137. (First published Cambridge, 1903).

²⁰Ibid., Section 27, pp. 41-44.

²¹Although Moore thought of himself as a rebel against the Neo-Hegelian idealism of the Cambridge of his day, the ultimate definition he gives the Good in his Principia is "Summum Bonum," a non-natural quality--in essence an ideal. See Chapter VI of the Principia, entitled "The Ideal," pp. 183-225, and "Absolute Good" in the Appendix of the present study.

²²Forster, "Introduction," The Longest Journey, World Classics edition (London, 1960), p. ix.

²³Through his work on Hegel, McTaggart was known as the leading Neo-Hegelian at Cambridge. He incorporated the essentially spiritual implications of Hegel's Phenomenology into his own Nature of Existence, I (Cambridge, 1921), II (Cambridge, 1927). He was a member of the "Apostles," an exclusive discussion group Forster belonged to. For a fuller treatment of McTaggart, see Chapter VII, the present study. McTaggart's books on Hegel are: Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic (Cambridge, 1896); Studies in Hegelian Cosmology (Cambridge, 1901); and A Commentary on Hegel's Logic (Cambridge, 1910).

²⁴See J. M. E. McTaggart, Human Immortality and Pre-Existence (London, 1915).

²⁵See Frederick Crews, E. M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism (Princeton, New Jersey, 1962), p. 62.

²⁶Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain (Stanford, California, 1966), p. 193.

²⁷Moore, Principia Ethica, Section 68, p. 117; Section 66, p. 112. In an 1897 issue of Mind, Moore challenges the existence of time. If only duration (the material existence of a thing) exists in what we mistakenly think of as "time," and if the reality of things is apart from their manifestations in this duration, Moore is dangerously close not only to challenging the existence of time but the reality of material objects. It is not surprising that his ultimate definition of Good admits the term "non-natural" quality. See "In What Sense, if any do Past

and Future Time Exist?" Mind, VI, n.s. (1897), 235-289, and Principia Ethica, Chapter VI, "The Ideal," pp. 183-225. It is interesting that McTaggart's Hegelian idealism, against which Moore considered himself rebelling, could accommodate the non-natural quality of a man's being "not-phoenix." See The Nature of Existence, I, Section 31, 28.

²⁸Forster, "Introduction," The Longest Journey, World Classics edition, p. xi.

²⁹Moore, Principia Ethica, Section 67, p. 114.

³⁰Ibid., Section 122, pp. 203-205. See "Judgment of taste" in the Appendix of the present study.

³¹Ansell's separation of "beautiful" from "ugly" and "interesting" from "dull" is a restatement of Bloomsbury aesthetics based on Moore's philosophy--or, as Bertrand Russell thought, Bloomsbury's misunderstanding of Moore's philosophy. See Chapter VII of the present study.

³²See note 4, Chapter III, of the present study for a comparison of Ansell with Cecil Vyse.

³³It is interesting that Cecil uses the image of a peg in A Room with a View. He tells Lucy: "I have just used you as a peg for my silly notions of what a woman should be" (p. 202).

³⁴It is significant that Ansell at the time he wrote this letter was interested in Schopenhauer. On page 70 Rickie mentions a paper Ansell wrote on Schopenhauer, and on page 81 Forster writes that "Ansell had disputed late last night concerning Schopenhauer. . . ." Although Forster denied to Wilfred Stone in a conversation on May 14, 1958 that he had read Schopenhauer, Stone finds "many parallels in the shape of their thought." Stone writes:

"Schopenhauer's idea of the dualistic nature of man, divided between compulsive sexual force (akin to the Freudian id) and a yearning toward the transcendence of Idea, is one way of expressing the essential symbolic dichotomy in Forster's work: Pan vs. Sawston, Stephen vs. Rickie, etc. And Schopenhauer's notion, derived indirectly from Kant, that the esthetic state offers the one hope of unity between these contending forces, the one chance for the mind to escape the bondage of the will, seems very close to Forster's notions about the uses of art." (Stone, p. 209)

Stone refers to Forster's article on T. S. Eliot in Abinger Harvest for Forster's attitudes toward art and the will, and to Frederick Crews for a discussion of the Apollonian and the Dionysian principles which also reflect the duality in man. See E. M. Forster, "T. S. Eliot," Abinger Harvest (New York, 1955), p. 84. (First published London, 1936); Crews, pp. 124-132. See also Chapter VII in the present study for Forster's attitudes toward art, and his "Art for Art's Sake," Two Cheers for

Democracy, pp. 88-95, in which he sees art as "the only material object in the universe which may possess internal harmony" (p. 92). See Chapter I in the present study for Forster's distrust of the will, which perhaps led him to Hinduism. His distrust of the will was shared by D. H. Lawrence, who hated America as "a land of tight, iron-clanking little wills. . . ." Lawrence wrote to Mabel Sterne, "You have striven so hard, and so long, to compel life. Can't you now slowly change, and let life slowly drift into you." See The Selected Letters of D. H. Lawrence, ed. Diana Trilling (New York, 1958), pp. 202-210.

³⁵See Forster, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (London, 1962), p. 76. (First published London, 1934.) Bertrand Russell, in his Autobiography, complained about the homosexuality among the "Apostles," the discussion group to which McTaggart, Forster and Russell belonged. See Russell, The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell: 1872-1914 (Boston, 1967), p. 99.

³⁶Forster, "Introduction," The Longest Journey, World Classics edition, p. xi.

³⁷J. B. Beer, The Achievement of E. M. Forster (London, 1963), pp. 78, 82.

³⁸See McTaggart, A Commentary on Hegel's Logic (London, 1910), p. 20.

³⁹Ansell's circle-square construct has long been associated with the pursuit of reality. The Hindu mandala of circle within square represents the dualistic aspects of the external-internal world. Contemplation of it is an effort to exclude disorder. It is "the visual, plastic expression of . . . the longing to be reunited with the pristine, non-spatial and non-temporal 'Centre.' . . ." See J. E. Cirlot, A Dictionary of Symbols (London, 1962), pp. 190-194.

⁴⁰Geoffrey Grigson, Wessex (London, 1951), pp. 11-12. The counterpart of the Cadbury Rings are the Figsbury Rings near Salisbury, visited by Forster in September, 1904. See his introduction for the World Classics edition of The Longest Journey, p. x.

⁴¹George Thomson, "Symbolism in E. M. Forster's Earlier Fiction," p. 309. The circle-square may also be related to the Chinese symbol, Yang-Yin, in which the circle represents the masculine principle (Yang, oneness, completion, perfection) and the square represents the feminine principle (Yin, the earth). If so, Thomson's equating the square with Agnes ("the product of a diseased imagination") would fulfill the description of Yin, with reality (the circle) as Yang, completion, oneness. See Cirlot, pp. 44-45.

⁴²Montgomery Belgion, "The Diabolism of Mr. E. M. Forster," Criterion, XIV (October, 1934), 61; Crews, p. 61.

⁴³David Shusterman, The Quest for Certitude in E. M. Forster's Fiction (Bloomington, Indiana, 1965), pp. 104, 116.

⁴⁴Harry T. Moore, E. M. Forster (New York, 1965), p. 23.

⁴⁵Lionel Trilling, E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 78. (First published New York, 1943.)

⁴⁶Alan Wilde, Art and Order: A Study of E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 29.

⁴⁷Crews, p. 50.

⁴⁸Stone, pp. 212-213.

⁴⁹Shusterman, p. 105.

⁵⁰Macaulay, p. 62. In his biography of Dickinson Forster wrote: "He had no idea what Cambridge meant--and I remember having the same lack of comprehension about the place myself, when my own turn came to go up there. It seems too good to be real. That the public school is not infinite and eternal, that there is something more compelling in life than team-work and more vital than cricket, that firmness, self-complacency and fatuity do not between them compose the whole armour of man, that lessons may have to do with leisure and grammar with literature--it is difficult for an inexperienced boy to grasp truths so revolutionary, or to realise that freedom can sometimes be gained by walking out through an open door."

See Forster, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, p. 26. In The Longest Journey there is a passage similar to this. "They taught the perky boy that he was not everything, and the limp boy that he might be something. They even welcomed those boys who were neither limp nor perky, but odd--those boys who had never been at a public school at all, and such do not find a welcome everywhere. And they did everything with ease--one might almost say with nonchalance,--so that the boys noticed nothing, and received education, often for the first time in their lives" (p. 63).

⁵¹Brower, p. 164.

⁵²K. W. Gransden, E. M. Forster (New York, 1962), p. 40.

⁵³John Harvey, "Imagination and Moral Theme in E. M. Forster's The Longest Journey," Essays in Criticism, VI (October, 1956), 418-433. Reprinted in and quoted here from Malcolm Bradbury, Forster: a Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966), p. 123.

⁵⁴The quotation is from Shelley's Epipsychidion, used as an epigraph for this chapter. Ansell refers to it in his letter to Rickie, quoted on page 156.

⁵⁵The similarity between Forster's analysis of sexual control and D. H. Lawrence's "war of the sexes" is remarkable. Wilfred Stone's comparison of Forster and Lawrence is illuminating. See The Cave and the Mountain, pp. 227, 381-387. "Both writers," Stone writes on page 383, "visit Pan on the residents of suburbia for the same reason--to awaken civilized society from its sleep of death."

⁵⁶Crews, p. 103.

⁵⁷In her passionless detachment, Mrs. Failing could qualify for the "Art for Art's Sake" group. Her attitudes may be a fictional reflection of Roger Fry's aesthetics. Forster, in "Not Looking at Pictures," gives an amusing contrast between himself and Fry. Forster saw dragons, hills and sacks of potatoes if the artist painted these; Fry saw "structural significance." See Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 131. Eric Newton, in The Meaning of Beauty (London, 1962), p. 190, describes "Homo aestheticus" in terms reminiscent of Forster's picture of Mrs. Failing: "The green meadow patterned with spots of white and yellow would be the same to him whether the spots were daisies and buttercups or torn paper and orange peel."

⁵⁸Wilfred Stone links Mrs. Failing with Marianne Thornton, Forster's great-aunt (The Cave and the Mountain, pp. 204-205). But there is another autobiographical possibility which is more meaningful, I believe, in terms of Forster's opinion of Mrs. Failing. Mrs. Failing's first name is Emily, and Henry Sykes Thornton, son of Henry, M. P. (founder of Battersea Rise, and Forster's great-grandfather), married his dead wife's sister--then a criminal offence--whose name was Emily Dealtry. They eloped to Denmark, and it was their marriage which caused Marianne Thornton to move from Battersea Rise and for the dynasty to break apart. In effect, Emily was the villainess of Forster's ancestors. The similarity between that Scandinavian elopement and Mrs. Elliot's seventeen days in Stockholm when she conceived Stephen are too remarkable to ignore. There is also the possibility that, by giving the elopement to Rickie's adored mother, Forster may be alleviating some family guilt at its wholesale rejection of the unconventional Miss Dealtry. My main point here, however, is not autobiographical so much as it is psychological in terms of the character of Mrs. Failing. She is intended to be a villainess, but a complex, and at times an understandable one. I cannot agree with George Thomson, who tries to make her into a dragon in a fairy tale, although he cleverly uses snake images to do so. The important fact of Mrs. Failing's character which emerges from the autobiographical implications is that her actions and motivations are not abnormal: they have historical counterparts. See Forster, Marianne Thornton, a Domestic Biography (New York, 1956), pp. 189-217 and George Thomson, The Fiction of E. M. Forster (Detroit, Michigan, 1967), p. 139.

⁵⁹Flea Thompson may be the germ of Leonard Bast, the yeoman-clerk of Howards End, published three years after The Longest Journey. See Chapter V of the present study.

⁶⁰Crews, p. 70; Norman Kelvin, E. M. Forster (Carbondale, Illinois, 1967), p. 85.

⁶¹"Of all the great tragic utterances," Forster wrote of Antigone, "that comes closest to my heart, that is my central faith." See "A Book That Influenced Me," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 222.

⁶²Stone, p. 193.

⁶³Crews, pp. 57-58.

⁶⁴Ibid., p. 58. Actually, the fact that Agnes has shared Gerald's embrace, far from making her a substitute for Gerald, causes Rickie to withdraw from her. He thought that she had been "consecrated" to Gerald because she had loved him first, and this idea kept him from even dreaming of her. It made his love "vile." See The Longest Journey, pp. 71-72.

⁶⁵Crews, note, p. 58.

⁶⁶Magnus, p. 199.

⁶⁷The rose as a symbol of completion is also one form of imagining the mandala, which Jung describes as "a kind of nucleus about whose intimate structure and ultimate meaning we have no direct knowledge." See Cirlot, p. 263 and Carl Jung, Psychology and Alchemy (London, 1953), quoted by Cirlot, p. 193.

⁶⁸Shusterman, p. 118.

⁶⁹Forster wrote in Aspects of the Novel: "Unlike the weaver of plots, the story-teller profits by ragged ends" (p. 33).

⁷⁰Magnus, p. 205. Magnus also thinks Gerald Dawes represents Osiris, who was also "broken up." Gerald dies with his knees drawn up in the Egyptian burial position.

⁷¹Kelvin, p. 79.

⁷²Shusterman, p. 123.

⁷³Stone, p. 213.

⁷⁴Ibid., p. 214. In his next novel, Howards End, Forster will make the shift earlier and more subtly from Mrs. Wilcox, who dies offstage, to Margaret Schlegel, who only vaguely and slowly undergoes a change for which her character has been prepared even before she met Mrs. Wilcox.

⁷⁵Stone, pp. 212-213.

⁷⁶Wilde, p. 28.

⁷⁷Derek S. Savage, "E. M. Forster," The Withered Branch: Six Studies in the Modern Novel (London, 1950), pp. 44-69. Quoted by Malcolm Bradbury, Forster: A Collection of Critical Essays, pp. 59-60.

⁷⁸D. H. Lawrence, D. H. Lawrence's Letters to Bertrand Russell, ed. Harry T. Moore (New York, 1948), pp. 33-34. Discussed by Stone, p. 344.

⁷⁹Forster, "Society and the Homosexual: A Magistrate's Figures," New Statesman and Nation, n.s. (October, 1953), p. 509.

⁸⁰John Harvey, "Imagination and Moral Theme in E. M. Forster's The Longest Journey," Essays in Criticism, VI, No. 4 (October, 1956), 418-433.

⁸¹This idea is the subject of the much-discussed one-page Chapter XXVIII which ends the "Sawston" section of The Longest Journey. It is a cry against "making a standard of the dead," as Rickie did. But it also investigates the sterile love of God which "has no concern" for "our fellow-mortals." The answer, Forster seems to suggest, is to turn away from religion if it, like the "great sect" of Shelley's poem, demands our loyalty at the expense of our love for one another. Forster ends the chapter with the question, "Will it really profit us so much if we save our souls and lose the whole world?" That question and the answer it implies--that Rickie will choose to lose his soul so that he can gain the whole world (his mother's endless progeny through Stephen)--introduces the last, "Wiltshire," section. See The Longest Journey, pp. 245-246.

⁸²Stone, p. 346.

CHAPTER V

ENGLAND PRESENT: HOWARDS END

Here, though the bombs are real and dangerous,
And Italy and King's are far away,
And we're afraid that you will speak to us,
You promise still the inner life shall pay.

As we run down the slope of Hate with gladness
You trip us up like an unnoticed stone,
And just as we are closeted with Madness
You interrupt us like the telephone.

For we are Lucy, Turton, Philip, we
Wish international evil, are excited
To join the jolly ranks of the benighted

Where Reason is denied and Love ignored:
But, as we swear our lie, Miss Avery
Comes out into the garden with the sword.

W. H. Auden, To E. M. Forster

The train that killed Rickie Elliot in The Longest Journey was a product of England's industrial empire. Howards End vindicates his death by exposing that empire as a great naturalistic fallacy empty of meaning, purpose, or direction. It does so through a house called Howards End, embodiment of rural England, folklore and the spiritual presence of its owner, Mrs. Wilcox. The house emerges victorious at the end. But its victory is only momentary and precarious, for its opponent is monstrous London, encroaching like a relentless ocean on the retreating heels of rural England. Howards End is a shoal in that ocean doomed to be undermined and washed away, for this novel is a novel of the present, and there is not much time. In The Longest Journey Sawston, for all its

machine-like qualities, had been essentially rural; now we meet the thesis on its home ground--London. There the false humanitarianism, sterile aesthetics and muddled perception of Sawston and Cambridge are transposed into a larger world, and their effects, by ratio, become more dangerous because they threaten a whole civilization. Caught among the bulldozers and house-wreckers, the spiritual life and personal relations of the antithesis confront the doomsters of progress who mistakenly and sincerely believe their holocaust is a blessing. The thesis in The Longest Journey had been a trap from which Rickie Elliot, with great effort, could escape. Now it is a way of life. The question which confronts a reader and which demands to be articulated by the critic of Howards End is whether or not Forster has overstated the case for the thesis. Industrialism is the Medusa of the twentieth century, but if we kill her those "nice fat dividends" which support personal relationships and do so much to ease the inner life will vanish.¹ Then whither go we? The remnant of a meadow at Howards End produces a little hay; even Demeter would admit this is not enough.

Howards End is a "problem" novel. Because its stage is larger than Forster has employed before, its plot is more complex. The dual hero of The Longest Journey is now a dual heroine: the parentless Schlegel sisters, Margaret and Helen, whose father moved to England from imperialistic Germany and repudiated the madness of militarism. The Schlegel sisters and their younger brother Tibby represent the Germany of Beethoven and books, the inner life of personal relations. On a trip to the Continent they meet the Wilcox family. Henry Wilcox is a tycoon

and nouveau riche; his wife is of yeoman stock and the inheritor of Howards End. Their children are Charles, Evie and Paul--all grown, all their father's rather than their mother's children: Charles is a tycoon in embryo, Evie is athletic and Paul is a potential empire-builder. Mrs. Wilcox spiritually bathes herself in the atmosphere of Howards End, whose pollen-laden air chases the others indoors with hay fever. Helen Schlegel visits them and writes to Margaret:

The house is covered with a vine. I looked out earlier, and Mrs. Wilcox was already in the garden. She evidently loves it. No wonder she sometimes looks tired. She was watching the large red poppies come out. Then she walked off the lawn to the meadow, whose corner to the right I can just see. Trail, trail, went her long dress over the sopping grass, and she came back with her hands full of the hay that was cut yesterday--I suppose for rabbits or something, as she kept on smelling it. The air here is delicious. Later on I heard the noise of croquet balls, and looked out again, and it was Charles Wilcox practising; they are keen on all games. Presently he started sneezing and had to stop. Then I hear more cricketing, and it is Mr. Wilcox practising, and then, "a-tissue, a-tissue": he has to stop too. Then Evie comes out, and does some calisthenic exercises on a machine that is tacked on to a greengage-tree--they put everything to use--and then she says "a-tissue," and in she goes. And finally Mrs. Wilcox reappears, trail, trail, still smelling hay and looking at the flowers.²

This vignette is the novel in miniature; the languid Mrs. Wilcox, communicating with nature, walks offstage; the energy-driven Wilcoxes, busy with calisthenics, enter, then flee indoors, their natural habitat; the languid Mrs. Wilcox returns. In the novel Mrs. Wilcox will die, but will return to have the last word. At the end, her spirit will still be at Howards End, smelling hay and looking at the flowers. The earth will have its vengeance on those who tack machines on greengage-trees.

In the meantime, the Wilcoxes will have their say. Paul, who will

go to Africa to uphold the Empire, attracts Helen with a kiss. The impulsive Helen, thinking this event constitutes an engagement, writes to Margaret that they are in love, then recants with a telegram. Margaret, nursing Tibby with the flu, cannot leave London and sends her aunt, Mrs. Munt, to rescue Helen. They return, and "the Wilcox episode" seems to end. Margaret and Helen attend a concert where Helen mistakenly carries home an umbrella belonging to a young insurance clerk, Leonard Bast. Leonard retrieves his umbrella, but his visit awakens in the sisters a maternal interest in him. When the Wilcoxes rent a flat opposite the Schlegels in Wickham Place, Margaret and Mrs. Wilcox become friends. Mrs. Wilcox dies, leaving instructions that Howards End should be given to Margaret. Henry and Charles burn her note and decide, with Evie, that she had been too ill to know what she was doing. Two years pass. One day the Schlegels are interrupted by Jacky Bast, Leonard's wife, painted and "tinkling like a chandelier." Leonard has disappeared overnight and Jacky, finding the Schlegel's card (from the umbrella incident) in one of his books, has come to find him. Later Leonard pays the Schlegels a visit to retrieve his reputation as he had retrieved his umbrella. He has been out, he explained, walking all night on the North Downs, just to get in touch with nature. He has read, it seems, too much Borrow, Thoreau and "R.L.S." Their interest in him increases, and when Margaret meets by accident Henry Wilcox and learns from him that Leonard's insurance company will "smash," she invites Leonard to tea to warn him. He quits his job and takes another with a bank at a lesser salary. Meanwhile, Margaret has consented to marry Henry. They are at his Shropshire estate, Oniton,

for Evie's wedding when Helen descends with the Basts in tow; Leonard has lost his job because the bank decided to economize and the Basts are starving. Margaret sends them to the local inn for the night. Helen, furious at what she considers a condescending act on her sister's part, follows them. Margaret subsequently marries Henry, despite the fact that she has discovered at Oniton that Jacky Bast has been his mistress. Henry sells Oniton and they move to London. Helen goes to Germany. The Schlegel furniture--the Schlegel house in Wickham Place has been razed for new flats--is stored at Howards End where Helen, mysteriously returned from the Continent and refusing to see Margaret, goes to get a few things. Her visit is really a trap set by Margaret, Henry, and a doctor, who think she may be mentally ill. When Margaret discovers Helen is pregnant she packs Henry and the doctor off and spends the night at Howards End with her sister to savour their childhood possessions for the last time. In the morning the Wilcoxes, en masse, arrive to take possession of the house. While they are there Leonard appears. In a fit of remorse at his "transgression" with Helen (he does not know of the pregnancy), Leonard has come to ask forgiveness. Charles hits him over the head with the Schlegel family sword--a memento conveniently at hand--and Leonard dies, upsetting a bookcase and getting buried under a pile of books. Although an inquest reveals that Leonard succumbed to a bad heart, Charles is sent to prison for three years on the charge of manslaughter. Henry, now a broken man, returns to Howards End, where Margaret will care for him, Helen and Helen's baby boy, who will inherit the house.

Margaret, indeed, is in command from the beginning to end. The tensions between the antithesis and thesis, between the spiritual need for personal affection and the realization that such affection often depends on materialism create in her character a mirror for the larger dialectical conflicts of the novel. Forster shared those conflicts in his own thinking, and Walter Allen may be right when he claims that within Margaret there is a tape recorder giving us Forster's views.³ Like Forster, she can be critical of her own position. After an unsuccessful luncheon-party where her own talkative friends seemed silly beside the dull-but-deep Mrs. Wilcox, Margaret tells her that "We lead the lives of gibbering monkeys" (p. 78). Later at a discussion club she thinks, "Doing good to humanity was useless. . . . To do good to one, or, as in this case [Leonard's] to a few, was the utmost she dare hope for" (p. 128). Her words could be an echo of Forster's own thoughts when he wrote, "I have no mystic faith in the people. I have in the individual."⁴ Sensitive and intuitively, Margaret knows the limits of her own humanitarianism. Her main trait is scepticism. For her both the circle of the spirit and the square of the earth are real, and her personal preference for the inner life does not blind her to the "outer" one:

"I've often thought about it, Helen. It's one of the most interesting things in the world. 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 [is] my difficulty. This outer life, though obviously horrid, often seems the real one--there's grit in it. It does breed character. Do personal relations lead to sloppiness in the end?" (p. 27)

Her doubts arise from her knowledge that the inner life depends for its sustenance on the outer. She knows that "independent thoughts are in nine cases out of ten the result of independent means" (p. 127). To Mrs. Munt she says, "Money pads the edges of things," and adds, "God help those who have none" (p. 60):

"You and I and the Wilcoxes stand upon money as upon islands. It is so firm beneath our feet that we forget its very existence. It's only when we see someone near us tottering that we realize all that an independent income means. Last night, when we were talking up here round the fire, I began to think that the very soul of the world is economic, and that the lowest abyss is not the absence of love, but the absence of coin."

"I call that rather cynical."

"So do I. But Helen and I, we ought to remember, when we are tempted to criticize others, that we are standing on these islands, and that most of the others are down below the surface of the sea." (p. 61)

For Margaret, money is "the warp of civilization, whatever the woof may be" (p. 127). When her discussion club hears of Leonard they want to make an imaginary case study of him in their imaginary dispensing of money, but Margaret argues impatiently: "Money: give Mr. Bast money, and don't bother about his ideals. He'll pick up those for himself" (p. 127). At the concert, as Helen rushes off with Leonard's umbrella and Tibby is too late to catch her, "Margaret really minded, for it gave her a glimpse into squalor. To trust people is a luxury in which only the wealthy can indulge; the poor cannot afford it" (p. 35). When Mrs. Munt fears for the apostle spoons if they let Leonard into the house, Margaret quotes her father, that Teutonic Mr. Emerson figure whose remembered sayings remind one of Mr. Failing's essays: "the confidence trick is the work of man, but the want-of-confidence trick is the work of the devil" (p. 42).

Her appreciation of money prepares the reader for her understanding of the Wilcoxes. She tells Helen:

"If Wilcoxes hadn't worked and died in England for thousands of years, you and I couldn't sit here without having our throats cut. There would be no trains, no ships to carry us literary people about in, no fields even. Just savagery. No--perhaps not even that. Without their spirit, life might never have moved out of protoplasm. More and more do I refuse to draw my income and sneer at those who guarantee it." (p. 175)

Her analysis of truth is a restatement of the dialectic:

The business man who assumes that this life is everything, and the mystic who asserts that it is nothing, fail, on this side and on that, to hit the truth. . . . truth, being alive, was not halfway between anything. It was only to be found by continuous excursions into either realm, and though proportion is the final secret, to espouse it at the outset is to insure sterility. (p. 195)⁵

One cannot attain proportion without working through the contradictions of "continuous excursions" between the inner and the outer, the antithesis and the thesis, and attempting constantly to reconcile them.

If Ansell in The Longest Journey had represented the Cambridge of G. E. Moore, and Rickie--eventually--had come to understand the mystic universe of McTaggart, Margaret Schlegel may be the feminized, fictionalized version of Forster's friend Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, whose biography Forster would write in 1934. Dickinson divided the world into "Mollycoddles" and "Red-bloods." A "Red-blood" is self-explanatory: he is the empire-builder, the cricket player from the fields of Eton.

The Mollycoddle, on the other hand, is all inner life. He may indeed act, as I said, but he acts, so to speak, by accident; just as the Red-blood may reflect, but reflects by accident. The Mollycoddle in action is the Crank: it is he who accomplishes reforms; who abolished slavery, for example, and revolutionised prisons and lunatic asylums. Still, primarily, the Mollycoddle is a critic, not a man of action.

He challenges all standards and all facts. If an institution is established, that is a reason why he will not accept it; if an idea is current, that is a reason why he should repudiate it. He questions everything, including life and the universe.⁶

When Margaret acts she becomes a Crank. Because she has money and knows the secret of its power she wants to apply that knowledge to Leonard Bast. She may, indeed, be a latter-day Marianne Thornton, that great-aunt of Forster's who represented for him the strength and the weakness of his evangelical ancestors, the Clapham Sect. He might have been writing of Margaret when he described them in "Battersea Rise": "Riches, evangelical piety, genuine goodness, narrowness, complacency, integrity, censoriousness, clannishness, and a noble public spirit managed to flourish together in its ample bosom without mutual discomfort."⁷ Margaret, for all her understanding of the world of "telegrams and anger," is narrow and clannish. She denies that Leonard "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). In her ability to "hit out lustily" she is like Ansell, who promised to "hit out like any ploughboy" when the right moment came" (The Longest Journey, p. 196). But Margaret's "hitting out" assumes a privilege of judgment which her dilettantish, female-Fabian activities do not seem to justify.

One wonders how much of Margaret's evangelical desire to "set" Henry's "soul in order" and to "show" Leonard "how he may get upside with life" is not involved with her desire to dominate the male (p. 145). Although Margaret is primarily a character of the antithesis, a prophetic

of the inner life, she contains within her complexity the thesis theme of sexual control. Such a theme has been, from Forster's first short stories, a familiar one in his work: in Howards End, through the character of Margaret, it assumes the volume of a Laurencian battle cry between the sexes. When Henry tries to explain his relationship with Jacky, Margaret "knew that Henry was not so much confessing his soul as pointing out the gulf between the male soul and the female, and she did not desire to hear him on this point" (p. 245). Trying to help the Bastis and Helen, she had learned to manipulate Henry "by the methods of the harem," but when Helen is in real danger, she fights in earnest (p. 230). She stands at the door of Howards End, a Demeter transcending sex, refusing Henry entrance: "A new feeling came over her: she was fighting for women against men. She did not care about rights, but if men came into Howards End, it should be over her body" (p. 290). Henry is there, one remembers, with a doctor because of Margaret's fears that Helen is mad. One wonders if such histrionics are necessary, if Margaret's sense of "proportion" has vanished. After she rejects Henry she feels that she had "spoken not only to her husband, but to thousands of men like him--a protest against the inner darkness in high places that comes with a commercial age" (p. 331). Is this fair? She is transferring one man's inability to feel onto every male in the business world. Moreover, this thought comes to her not in anger, but afterwards, in a moment of contemplation, without hysteria. At the end she seems to have reduced Leonard into a thing--or at best, a process--when she tells Helen that he was at least "a better growth than madness" (p. 313). Howards End, as Wilfred Stone

notes, has become a "feminine sanctuary" where the battle of the sexes is won by women who "finally disappear into Howards End almost as Miss Beaumont disappears into a tree," who await there a brave new world "detached, autonomous, preserving 'proportion' like an egg for the future to hatch."⁸

Helen, with her impulsive defense of Leonard and her quick temper, seems more human than Margaret. Lionel Trilling reminds his readers that "Not for nothing do Margaret and Helen bear the names of the heroines of the two parts of Faust, one the heroine of the practical life, the other of the ideal life. . . ." ⁹ But Helen's "ideal life" is a little Dionysian in its frenzied Fabianism. She has, as Margaret says, "an odd notion . . . running about at the back of her brain, that poverty is somehow 'real'" (p. 180). Her mating with Leonard is her ultimate attempt to rectify social injustice, as Margaret says of her own marriage to Henry Wilcox, "to adjust the lopsidedness of the world" (p. 331). And yet Helen is not without the ability to analyze intuitively the tragic and terrifying emptiness of life without affection. Paul's inability to feel makes her reject him: "When I saw all the others so placed, and Paul mad with terror in case I said the wrong thing, I felt for a moment that the whole Wilcox family was just a fraud, just a wall of newspapers and motor-cars and golf-clubs, and that if it fell I should find nothing behind it but panic and emptiness. . . . I remember Paul at breakfast . . . I shall never forget him. He had nothing to fall back upon. I know that personal relations are the real life, for ever and ever" (pp. 26, 28). That same panic and emptiness which lies behind the facade of the Wilcox motor

cars also threatens all life. It represents not only the inability to feel, but a larger nihilism which would prevent men everywhere from living heroically. The "panic and emptiness" Helen detects behind the Wilcoxes she hears again in the "goblins" of Beethoven's Fifth Symphony:

They were not aggressive creatures; it was that that made them so terrible to Helen. They merely observed in passing that there was no such thing as splendour or heroism in the world. . . . Panic and emptiness! Panic and emptiness! The goblins were right . . . as if things were going too far, Beethoven took hold of the goblins and made them do what he wanted. He appeared in person. He gave them a little push, and they began to walk in major key instead of in a minor, and then--he blew with his mouth and they were scattered! . . . And the goblins--they had not really been there at all? They were only the phantoms of cowardice and unbelief? One healthy human impulse would dispel them? Men like the Wilcoxes, or President Roosevelt, would say yes. Beethoven knew better. The goblins really had been there. They might return--and they did. It was 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.

Beethoven chose to make all right in the end. . . . But the goblins were there. They could return. He had said so bravely, and that is why one can trust Beethoven when he says other things. (pp. 33-34)

No amount of rationalization will get rid of the goblins, of the possibility of the annihilation of heroism--and possibly of life itself. Jacky Bast's visit brings the goblins back, for Jacky "had risen out of the abyss, like a faint smell, a goblin footfall, telling of a life where love and hatred had both decayed" (p. 114). For Helen, hatred is not as bad as indifference; indifference spells nihilism. But death exists to prevent our indifference to life. To Leonard's "the real thing's money and all the rest is a dream" she says, "If we lived for ever, what you

say would be true. But we have to die, we have to leave life presently. Injustice and greed would be the real thing if we lived for ever. As it is, we must hold to other things, because Death is coming. I love Death-- not morbidly, but because He explains. He shows me the emptiness of Money" (p. 238). Perhaps "He" shows her the emptiness of personal relations, too, for Helen makes the same mistake that Rickie Elliot made in The Longest Journey: she creates a false Leonard. To her "Leonard seemed not a man, but a cause" (p. 311). "Helen loved the absolute. Leonard had been ruined absolutely, and had appeared to her as a man apart, isolated from the world" (p. 316). She is not unlike the "new woman" appearing in Ibsen's and Shaw's plays, one who, in Alan Wilde's words, "tends to be somewhat hysterical or extreme, full of proposals and suggestions, eager to espouse schemes, and perhaps equally ready to abandon them."¹⁰ J. B. Beer thinks that Forster has made her too "round," too playful to carry the weight of an allegorical character which Forster expects of her.¹¹ The violence her impulsiveness leads her to may be, as Frederick Hoffman thinks it is, pathetic rather than heroic, "which comes from misunderstanding rather than passion."¹² Certainly she has used Leonard as an outlet for her own misplaced humanitarianism, and seems to view his death with peculiar detachment. Forster prepares us for her attitude when she prophetically and nostalgically passes by the bookcase which will help kill Leonard: "She looked at the bookcase lovingly, as if she was saying farewell to the past" (p. 296). Has she loved Leonard, after all? Forster has described her night with him cryptically: "She and the victim seemed alone in a world of

unreality, and she loved him absolutely, perhaps for half an hour" (p. 317).

Her brother Tibby has no such problems. He simply holds himself aloof from others. Like an Ansell without philosophy, he is interested in only two things: his physical comfort and that aesthetic detachment which will allow him to enjoy life without becoming involved. He tells Margaret that he wants "civilization without activity," a remark to which Margaret replies, "You can find it at Oxford" (p. 112). He does. When Helen comes to him with her plea to send money to the Bastis, he is unmoved. Her going to Germany does not seem to concern him, either. But when she cries, her tears "touched him as something unusual. They were nearer the things that did concern him, such as music" (p. 251). When he can translate her into aesthetics, he is interested. "In short," Wilfred Stone writes, "he likes her the way Browning's Duke likes his Duchess, dead and hanging on a wall." But Stone continues, "Is Helen any kinder than this to Leonard, or Margaret to Henry? Because they cannot bring these men into harmony with their private symphony, they destroy them in the loud noises of the fourth movement and quietly settle down to make their own kind of music."¹³ All the Schlegels, in effect, are trying for treasures in heaven via treasures on earth. Although Forster in an interview said that the Schlegel sisters were a reduced version of Dickinson's three daughters, Stone may be more correct when he reminds us that the Schlegels, "Their parents dead, unattended by guardians, their situation is like that of Virginia and Vanessa Stephen living at Gordon Square with their brother Thoby ("Tibby"?) in the early days of

Bloomsbury."¹⁴ One must admit that the three Schlegels juxtapose the Bloomsbury attitudes of exclusive personal relations against those of the "outside" world.¹⁵

That world belongs to the Wilcoxes, and Dickinson's description of a "Red-blood" could have been written of Henry:

He steps without reflection into the first place offered him and goes to work like a machine. The ideals and standards of his family, his class, his city, his country, and his age, he swallows as naturally as he swallows food and drink. He is therefore always "in the swim"; and he is bound to "arrive," because he has set before himself the attainable. You will find him everywhere, in all the prominent positions. In a military age he is a soldier, in a commercial age a business man. He hates his enemies, and he may love his friends; but he does not require friends to love. A wife and children he does require, for the instinct to propagate the race is as strong in him as all other instincts. His domestic life, however, is not always happy; for he can seldom understand his wife.¹⁶

Henry fits the pattern. He justifies a detached "tolerance" that is really indifference with the slogan "live and let live" (p. 146). He compromises with integrity when he ignores his first wife's will, in which she leaves Howards End to Margaret. He compromises with honesty when he excuses his relationship with Jacky as "one crop of wild oats" (p. 259). With the Middle Ages as his "only moral teacher," he operates under an "incomplete asceticism" which tells him that passion is bad, with the result that he is "a little ashamed of loving a wife" (pp. 259, 186). Civilization, he believes, is "molded by great impersonal forces," and as he says this, Forster inserts: "his voice grew complacent; it always did when he eliminated the personal" (p. 192). Henry treats Bryce, a tenant of Howards End, as a thing, as he treats the men who work for him. But his chief sin is an obtuseness which defeats Margaret's efforts to get him

to "connect": "For there was one quality in Henry for which she was never prepared, however much she reminded herself of it: his obtuseness. He simply did not notice things, and there was no more to be said" (p. 187). Henry fits Forster's description of the Englishman in "Notes on the English Character": he has "an undeveloped heart--not a cold one."¹⁷ The Wilcoxes fear emotion and affection and, like "the sailors of Ulysses voyaged past the Sirens, having first stopped one another's ears with wool" (p. 101). One can imagine the puzzlement Henry must have felt at Margaret's missionary efforts to get him to "connect." Forster's language deliberately seeks a high altitude, then ends with a full-stall landing:

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. The roads of his soul lie clear, and he and his friends shall find easy going. . . .

It did not seem so difficult. She need trouble him with no gift of her own. She would only point out the salvation that was latent in his own soul, and in the soul of every man. 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. . . .

But she failed.

And no wonder. Henry is a Red-blood: "He lived for the five minutes that have past, and the five to come; he had the business mind" (p. 249).

Henry is the Pierpont Morgan of the novel. Helen tells Leonard in Ayn Randish terms that "there are two kinds of people--our kind, who live straight from the middle of their heads, and the other kind who

can't, because their heads have no middle? They can't say 'I.' They aren't in fact, and so they're supermen. Pierpont Morgan never said 'I' in his life" (p. 234). Because the Wilcoxes are unreal--the similarity between Helen's pronouncement and Ansell's judgment of Agnes is striking here--they cannot connect with the earth. The price they pay is a restlessness which robs them of a sense of place. Just as Margaret, on her honeymoon, is settling down to the idea that Henry's Shropshire estate, Oniton, will be her home, he sells it, with the excuse that it is too damp:

She never saw it again. Day and night the river flows down into England, day after day the sun retreats into the Welsh mountains, and the tower chimes: "See the Conquering Hero." But the Wilcoxes have no part in the place, nor in any place. It is not their names that recur in the parish register. It is not their ghosts that sigh among the alders at evening. They have swept into the valley and swept out of it, leaving a little dust and a little money behind. (pp. 249-250)

Henry belongs to the "civilization of luggage" (p. 150). Systematically and relentlessly his kind are uprooting rural England, spreading brick and mortar and factory subdivisions over Howards End, Oniton, the Purbeck Downs, those places which might, Forster suggests, be "the earth beating time," counting the years of pastoral survival in "the melting-pot [that] was being prepared for them" (p. 339). Henry represents Progress, but a Progress built on an individualism which may prove to be, if not destructive, at least anti-social. It may manipulate, as well as be manipulated:

Margaret smiled. Though presenting a firm front to outsiders, no Wilcox could live near, or near the possessions of, any other Wilcox. They had the colonial spirit, and were always making for some spot where the white man

might carry his burden unobserved. Of course, Howards End was impossible, so long as the younger couple [Charles and his wife Dolly] were established in Hilton. His [Henry's] objections to the house were plain as daylight now. (p. 204)

The result of Henry's "colonial spirit" is alienation and a lack of affection which Forster juxtaposes with Margaret's warmer nature:

She would be told: "Oh, So-and-So's a good sort--a thundering good sort," and find on meeting him, that he was a brute or a bore. If Henry had shown real affection, she would have understood, for affection explains everything. But he seemed without sentiment. The "thundering good sort" might at any moment become "a fellow for whom I never did have much use, and have less now," and be shaken off cheerily into oblivion. Margaret had done the same as a schoolgirl. Now she never forgot anyone for whom she had once cared; she connected, though the connection might be bitter, and she hoped that some day Henry would do the same. (p. 208)

Henry, in his arbitrary rejection of people, may be an older Cecil Vyse, who, as Lucy Honeychurch feared, might say at any time, of anyone, "It would be wrong not to loathe. . . ."

Such arbitrary acceptance and rejection explains Henry's relation with Jacky Bast. In "the inner darkness in high places that comes with a commercial age" Henry had "connected" with Jacky (p. 331). But can we believe, as Helen and Forster would have us believe, that Henry "ruined" Jacky? We have met her before: she is Ellen of The Way of All Flesh, Arabella of Jude the Obscure, Mildred of Of Human Bondage, a sensuous, dishevelled femme fatale of Edwardian, Georgian, Post-Romantic fiction, an over-dressed, under-intelligent catch-all of physical desire. If Henry's "ruining" her seems unlikely, his having been attracted to her coarseness is even more unconvincing. Even in his youth he must have been as discerning as a horse trader: Forster calls him one of those

millionaires who collect villas "with the steadiness of the half-closed eye" (p. 323). There is no reason to assume that Henry could not have been just as selective in his collection of mistresses, if he so desired. His arbitrary use of people, however, could explain his temporary alliance with the unattractive Jacky. It was an alliance which, one suspects, was accepted as both arbitrary and temporary by Jacky herself--that "victim" who seems capable of some arbitrary manipulation of her own, in her marriage with the meek, naive Leonard. From Henry's point of view he owes Jacky nothing, and Margaret's condemnation of him as a man "who ruins a woman for his pleasure, and casts her off to ruin other men" seems a little hysterical (p. 308). Forster presents Henry's relationship with Helen as less arbitrary but still based on self-interest. His dislike of Helen is understandable because her escapades uncover his past, threaten his marriage and invade his possessions. When Helen, pregnant, frightened and outcast, wants to stay overnight at Howards End, Henry, scandalized, speaks to Charles of "the rights of property" (p. 326). He is in effect a very vividly dyed Red-blood, and Forster, by making him so, is faced with a problem: how can he make Margaret's love and marriage to him convincing? He relies for part of his answer on Margaret's sensitivity and sense of fair play. In her attempts to understand him she is constantly defending his position. The dilettantes could not enjoy their "islands" if it were not for Wilcoxes. But has Forster allowed Margaret to overstate Henry's case? She admires Henry for his "grit," for "having his hands on the ropes," for "saving Howards End" from the engulfing tide of London. She does a fair job of convincing

us that Henry is an efficient, strong character who can step in when disaster threatens, devise plans, and moreover carry them out, as he proceeds to do when he lays the medical trap for Helen. Surely, if Helen had been mad, his operation would have been a success? The fact that she is pregnant turns Margaret against him, against all men, as she stands at the door of the house as if it were a bastion of beleaguered femininity. And can we really believe that a Red-blood like Henry, that astute man of business who has built a financial empire, could crumble so quickly because his son was sent to prison for three years on a manslaughter charge, when everyone knew Leonard really died of a bad heart? Henry's chief trait has been his inability to love: did he really love Charles that much? His "fortress gave way" and he "shambled" up to Margaret and "asked her to do what she could with him" (p. 334). Is this that unassailable tycoon, the Pierpont Morgan without an "I"? This denouement, for me, is entirely too neat. Alan Wilde claims that the plot takes over in an attempt to bring events to a close, that he cannot believe in Margaret's return to Henry after she left him.¹⁸ Surely Forster has not made his point as clearly as he could have, when D. H. Lawrence could write to him in 1922, "You did make a nearly deadly mistake, glorifying those business people in Howard's [sic] End. Business is no good."¹⁹ For Lawrence, at least, Forster did overstate the case for the thesis. A final answer to that problem must wait, however, until we have investigated the sibyl of the book, Henry's first wife, Ruth, and Forster's treatment of spirituality.

Ruth Wilcox would have agreed with Lawrence's last remark, that

"Business is no good": "She and daily life were out of focus: one or the other must show blurred" (p. 76). Forster makes his choice, and it is Mrs. Wilcox who shows blurred. She must, for she is mystical. When we first meet her she quells the family tempest caused by Paul's kiss:

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. One knew that she worshipped the past, and that the instinctive wisdom the past can alone bestow had descended upon her--that wisdom to which we give the clumsy name of aristocracy. High-born she might not be. But assuredly she cared about her ancestors, and let them help her. When she saw Charles angry, Paul frightened, and Mrs. Munt in tears, she heard her ancestors say: "Separate those human beings who will hurt each other most. The rest can wait." (p. 22)

At first glance we seem to have learned something positive about Mrs. Wilcox: at second, we hold less than a wisp of hay in our minds about the elusive Ruth. Exactly what has "descended upon her," and exactly how do her ancestors "help her"? When Margaret confronts her with a similar question concerning her knowledge of the Helen-Paul broken "engagement," of which she could not have had knowledge, she answers evasively, "There is nothing to be gained by discussing that" (p. 69). She knows folklore and believes that the pigs' teeth embedded in the overhanging wych-elm at Howards End can cure toothache. When she asks Margaret "Do you think that the tree really did cure toothache, if one believed in it? and Margaret answers "Of course it did. It would cure anything--once," they may be making the first of several psychic exchanges (p. 73). How is Margaret so certain that the tree had once cured toothache? She is so certain that she extends its powers to "any-

thing." Her "once" implies the necessity of belief, of receptivity to the supernatural, to noumena. Yet, Forster insists, "Mrs. Wilcox cannot be accused of giving Margaret much information about life" (p. 73). At the luncheon party Margaret gives for her Ruth appears dull, if not stupid. "Clever talk alarmed her. . . . She was not intellectual, nor even alert. . ." (pp. 74, 76). When they discuss art and one of the men at the party tries to draw her out with "I am not sure that I agree. Do you?" Ruth answers with "I think Miss Schlegel puts everything splendidly." Forster adds: "and a chill fell on the conversation" (p. 76). Things do seem to swim into focus at least once. To Margaret's "Discussion keeps a house alive. It cannot stand by bricks and mortar alone," Mrs. Wilcox answers, "It cannot stand without them," and for a moment they hope she has an idea.

"It cannot stand without them" said Mrs. Wilcox, unexpectedly catching on to the thought, and rousing, for the first and last time, a faint hope in the breasts of the delightful people. "It cannot stand without them, and I sometimes think--But I cannot expect your generation to agree, for even my daughter disagrees with me here."

"Never mind us or her. Do say!"

"I sometimes think that it is wiser to leave action and discussion to men."

There was a little silence. (p. 77)

The only idea Mrs. Wilcox seems to have is expressed in a cliché: "we are all in the same boat, old and young. I never forget that" (p. 78). The idea of Death, which Helen exults in intellectually, is a real presence for Mrs. Wilcox and seems to hover over her constantly. Forster writes that, in spite of her dullness, "it was odd that, all the same, she should give the idea of greatness" (p. 76). That greatness may be the vastness beyond the grave. At the party "she seemed more out of

focus than usual, and nearer the line that divides daily life from a life that may be of greater importance with each word she spoke, the outlines of known things grew dim" (pp. 76, 78). She does not reject the things of this world ("It cannot stand without them . . ."), but they are simply not important to her: she decides not to order Christmas cards, then thanks Margaret for helping her choose them. She may be seeing through matter into another reality on the other side. Dying, she was a "curious seeker," one who "stood for a while at the verge of the sea that tells so little, but tells a little, and watched the outgoing of this last tremendous tide. . . . She had told a little of her grim secret to her friends, but not too much; she had shut up her heart--almost, but not entirely" (p. 102). Somewhere in the equivocal see-sawing between "enough--not too much" and "almost--not entirely" Mrs. Wilcox lies, out of focus.

It is not surprising that her husband cannot understand her and that Mrs. Wilcox, in her mystic compassion, makes such an effort unnecessary by playing the role of the attentive matron. Only once did she give Henry a hint of her spirituality. When she was younger she "had expressed a desire for 'a more inward light.'" But she had been careful to add: "not so much for myself as for baby [Charles]." "Inward light must have been granted," Forster writes--hinting at Henry's complacency--"for he heard no complaints in later years" (p. 90). How could Henry know, Red-blood that he is, that his wife had withdrawn, like her light, into herself? Forster gives us an example of her role-playing when she meets Margaret by accident at King's Cross station and impulsively invites her

to spend a night at Howards End. The unexpected appearance of her family changes her completely.

You are coming to sleep, dear, too. It is in the morning that my house is most beautiful. You are coming to stop. I cannot show you my meadow properly except at sunrise. These fogs"--she pointed at the station roof--"never spread far. I dare say they are sitting in the sun in Hertfordshire, and you will never repent joining them."

"I shall never repent joining you."

"It is the same." (p. 86)

The cadences of Ruth Wilcox's sentences, slowed by repetition and the interrupting gesture upward, the use of "repent," which is repeated like a catechism phrase by Margaret, lend a pontifical dignity to the stature of the older woman. Then:

They began the walk up the long platform. Far at its end stood the train, breasting the darkness without. They never reached it. Before imagination could triumph, there were cries of "Mother! Mother!" and a heavy-browed girl darted out of the cloak-room and seized Mrs. Wilcox by the arm.

"Evie!" she gasped. "Evie, my pet--"

The girl called: "Father! I say! look who's here."

"Evie, dearest girl, why aren't you in Yorkshire?"

"No--motor smash--changed plans--Father's coming."

"Why, Ruth!" cried Mr. Wilcox, joining them. "What in the name of all that's wonderful are you doing here, Ruth?" Mrs. Wilcox recovered herself.

"Oh, Henry dear!--there's a lovely surprise--but let me introduce--but I think you know Miss Schlegel."

"Oh, yes," he replied, not greatly interested. "But how's yourself, Ruth?"

"Fit as a fiddle," she answered gaily.

"So are we and so was our car, which ran A-1 as far as Ripon, but there a wretched horse and cart which a fool of a driver--"

"Miss Schlegel, our little outing must be for another day."

"I was saying that this fool of a driver, as the policeman himself admits--"

"Another day, Mrs. Wilcox. Of course."

"--But as we've insured against third-party risks, it won't so much matter--"

"--Cart and car being practically at right angles--"

The voices of the happy family rose high. Margaret was

left alone. No one wanted her. Mrs. Wilcox walked out of King's Cross between her husband and her daughter, listening to both of them. (pp. 86-87)

Contrasted with the dignified tones of Mrs. Wilcox's speech to Margaret, the clichés and broken gasps of Henry and Evie--Evie is "heavy-browed" and "seizes" her mother--take command. Before the imagination could "triumph" the whirlwind of patter descends, ill-concealing--with its half-apologetic but self-satisfied notations about third-party risks--the damage done to the cart, horse and driver. Behind that "--Cart and car being practically at right angles--" lurks a tragedy for the driver of the cart which makes "happy family"heavily ironic. Ruth's "Fit as a fiddle" and her reluctant but complete abandonment of Margaret underscore her surrender to that family. Alan Wilde writes that "Mrs. Wilcox, by being herself, is fighting against the twentieth century, against rootlessness, against movement, against the culture of the machine. . ." and Frederick Crews thinks that Margaret, by marrying Henry, resumed Ruth's "interrupted program of civilizing those who might otherwise melt down the world."²⁰ I disagree. In this scene at King's Cross Ruth does not fight but succumbs to the Wilcox avalanche of action and motor cars. The mask she assumes is one of retreat, not of control or resistance; her family, as Lionel Trilling has said, is her alien corn.²¹ She is rather an anima figure, a source of being more than becoming, a principle of spirit rather than a criterion of action. Only after death does her influence triumph. After she dies Margaret tells Helen that "you and I and Henry are only fragments of that woman's mind. She knows everything. She is everything" (p. 313). Margaret's "It is impossible to see modern

life steadily and see it whole" could be applied with even more justification to Ruth Wilcox (p. 161). For Ruth life was "out of focus." It may have been so because her camera was set on infinity.

It is interesting that Forster gives to Leonard Bast several thoughts which belong also to Margaret. She thinks of the Wilcoxes that "their hands were on all the ropes" and Leonard admires "Those Miss Schlegels . . . their hands were upon the ropes" (pp. 103, 51). Leonard echoes Margaret when he thinks "To see life steadily and to see it whole was not for the likes of him" (p. 55). He is lower on the Great Chain of Being; he is a creature under the sea, beneath one of those islands of money that the Schlegels and their kind stand on. Like Prufrock, he listens for mermaids. Culture is his naturalistic fallacy: "he hoped to come to Culture suddenly, much as the Revivalist hopes to come to Jesus" (pp. 50-51). He is the Bast (ard) of society, "at the extreme edge of gentility," homeless, rootless, whose yeoman blood has been thrown off the land to struggle without a sense of place, family, or tradition (p. 45). No passages in all of Forster's work give critics more trouble than those concerning Leonard. The beginning of Chapter VI has been seen as a banner of snobbery which Forster waves unashamedly. Lifted out of context, it would seem so. But one has only to read the next paragraph to realize that Forster is aiming at something much larger than class prejudice:

We are not concerned with the very poor. They are unthinkable, and only to be approached by the statistician or the poet. This story deals with gentlefolk, or with those who are obliged to pretend that they are gentlefolk.

The boy, Leonard Bast, stood at the extreme verge of gentility. He was not in the abyss, but he could see it,

and at times people whom he knew had dropped in, and counted no more. He knew that he was poor, and would admit it: he would have died sooner than confess any inferiority to the rich. This may be splendid of him. But he was inferior to most rich people, there is not the least doubt of it. He was not as courteous as the average rich man, nor as intelligent, nor as healthy, nor as lovable. His mind and his body had been alike underfed, because he was poor, and because he was modern they were always craving better food. Had he lived some centuries ago, in the brightly coloured civilizations of the past, he would have had a definite status, his rank and his income would have corresponded. But in his day the angel of Democracy had arisen, enshadowing the classes with leathern wings, and proclaiming: "All men are equal--all men, that is to say, who possess umbrellas," and so he was obliged to assert gentility, lest he slipped into the abyss where nothing counts and the statements of Democracy are inaudible. (pp. 45-46)

The word "unthinkable" connected with "the very poor" can be read as heartless snobbery, if one does not remember "His mind and his body had been alike underfed, because he was poor. . . ." Because he is modern Leonard craves something better. Democracy tells him that he is equal to Henry, that he can have something better--that he should have it. If he will read "R. L. S." and go to concerts at Queen's Hall, perhaps one day he may be able to "push his head out of the grey waters and see the universe" (p. 50). Democracy has made him a romantic: "He believed in sudden conversion. . . ." "If only I had a bit of luck," Leonard tells himself, "the whole thing would come straight . . ." (p. 50). He is obviously not unthinkable because Forster invites us to think of him. He is made suspensefully interesting because he clings to the edge of a financial and spiritual abyss by the crook of a shabby umbrella. It is his black badge of gentility as he walks the charter'd streets of London. It is sacred, and Helen's joking that "it's all gone along the seams. It's an appalling umbrella. It must be mine" emphasizes the gulf between

them. Leonard is inferior. He is less courteous, intelligent, healthy, or lovable than a wealthy man, simply because he does not have the time to be courteous, the education to be intelligent, the diet or exercise to be healthy, the serenity to be lovable. These are simply the facts, and Forster gives them to us. C. B. Cox thinks that Forster is arrogant, Montgomery Belgium that he is sneering, and D. S. Savage that he is simply lying.²² Savage writes:

The wretched Leonard is a lay figure, an effigy made to walk and talk in such a way as to bolster up the liberal philosophy which inspires the book. For culture is not dependent upon wealth; it is only to the parasites of the spirit that it appears as an object which can be externally appropriated.²³

But it is precisely the "liberal philosophy" of the Schlegels which makes a victim of Leonard through their misplaced humanitarianism.²⁴ It may inspire the book, but only to provide Forster with an opportunity to expose its vicious--although well-meaning--guilt-laden missionary efforts. As it tries to share with Leonard its sympathy, it shares with him also its inner misery. The moneyless Leonard is a "parasite of the spirit" who thinks culture depends on wealth, but so is the moneyed Henry, who meets the Schlegels on the Continent "viewing" a cathedral, much as Leonard meets them "listening" to Beethoven. Forster does not agree with either; Mr. Savage is extremely unfair to imply that Forster shares their attitude.²⁵

Actually a critic would be more justified in seeing Forster's portrayal of Leonard not as too cruel, but as too sympathetic. Pathetically Leonard recounts to the Schlegels how many times he has been to the opera, and then wonders feverishly, "Was it 'Tannhouser' or 'Tannhoys'er'?"

Better not risk the word" (p. 38).

If only he could talk like this, he would have caught the world. Oh, to acquire culture! Oh, to pronounce foreign names correctly! Oh, to be well informed, discoursing at ease on every subject that a lady started! But it would take one years. With an hour at lunch and a few shattered hours in the evening, how was it possible to catch up with leisured women who had been reading steadily from childhood? His brain might be full of names, he might have even heard of Monet and Debussy; the trouble was that he could not string them together into a sentence, he could not make them "tell," he could not quite forget about his stolen umbrella. Yes, the umbrella was the real trouble. Behind Monet and Debussy the umbrella persisted, with the steady beat of a drum. "I suppose my umbrella will be all right," he was thinking. "I don't really mind about it. I will think about music instead. I suppose my umbrella will be all right." Earlier in the afternoon he had worried about seats. Ought he to have paid as much as two shillings? Earlier still he had wondered: "Shall I try to do without a programme?" There had always been something to worry him ever since he could remember, always something that distracted him in the course of beauty. For he did pursue beauty, and, therefore, Margaret's speeches did flutter away from him like birds. (p. 40)

Hounded by financial worry, nagged by loss and the threat of loss, who could relax long enough to be lovable, who could keep one's brain clear enough to allow intelligence to develop, who could find the inclination to be courteous, when the rest of the world appeared hostile, threatening one's security, one's umbrella? The shadow of Dickens seemed to lean over Forster's shoulder as he wrote of Leonard.

One guessed him as the third generation, grandson to the shepherd or ploughboy whom civilization had sucked into the town; as one of the thousands who have lost the life of the body and failed to reach the life of the spirit. Hints of robustness survived in him, more than a hint of primitive good looks, and Margaret, noting the spine that might have been straight, and the chest that might have broadened, wondered whether it paid to give up the glory of the animal for a tail coat and a couple of ideas (p. 115)

Forster asked D. H. Lawrence once if there was anything good in his work.

Lawrence answered, "Yes, Leonard Bast. That was courageous."²⁶

Leonard's basement flat in Camelia Road with its metallic gas fumes is the scene of much bravery, much sacrifice, mistaken as honor. Leonard is a boy--the word is used several times--married to the prostitute Jacky, whose first name, combined with "Bast," relates her phonetically (Jackass?) to the barnyard. Forster emphasizes the comparison: "Teeth of dazzling whiteness extended along either of Jacky's jaws. . . . the eyes of Jacky did not accord with her smile, but were anxious and hungry" (p. 48). It is with this woman, "all strings and bell-pulls--ribbons, chains, bead necklaces that clinked and caught--and a boa of azure feathers . . . with the ends uneven" that Leonard feels protective and chivalrous (p. 51). Cooking their supper while she rests in the bedroom, he calls out: "I'm not one of your weak knock-kneed chaps. If a woman's in trouble, I don't leave her in the lurch. That's not my street. No, thank you."

"I'll tell you another thing too. I care a good deal about improving myself by means of Literature and Art, and so getting a wider outlook. For instance, when you came in I was reading Ruskin's Stones of Venice. I don't say this to boast, but just to show you the kind of man I am. I can tell you, I enjoyed that classical concert this afternoon."

To all his moods Jacky remained equally indifferent. When supper was ready--and not before--she emerged from the bedroom, saying: "But you do love me, don't you?"

They began with a soup square, which Leonard had just dissolved in some hot water. It was followed by the tongue--a freckled cylinder of meat, with a little jelly at the top, and a great deal of yellow fat at the bottom--ending with another square dissolved in water (jelly: pineapple), which Leonard had prepared earlier in the day. . . . And Leonard managed to convince his stomach that it was having a nourishing meal. (p. 54)

After his night with Helen Leonard treats Jacky with compassion and began

"to regard her with a strange new tenderness, and to think: 'There is nothing to choose between us, after all'" (p. 317). Patient with a Jacky whose only vocabulary consists of "What ho?" and "Do you love me?" Leonard displays a sense of honor that is "British" and "Christian." There is irony in the fact that he dies fulfilling the Christian medieval idea of repenting his "sin" when he goes to tell Margaret "I have been wrong." His confession is comparable to Henry's idea that Helen has sinned, and Forster may be saying again, as he had with Cecil Vyse and Mr. Beebe, that the whole notion of asceticism--in Henry's case an "incomplete asceticism" and in Leonard's a misdirected "code of honor"--is against life.

That code of honor was inherited with Leonard's English-Western-Christian upbringing. With Democracy and Culture, it contributes to his romanticism--a romanticism which may not be greatly different from Helen's and which may have attracted her to Leonard in the first place. But behind his rose-colored glasses his yeoman's eyes see clearly. He knows, when he meets a Cambridge undergraduate on a train, that he must not pursue the friendship. The undergraduate is for him, like the Schlegels, one of those "denizens of Romance, who must keep to the corner he had assigned to them, pictures that must not walk out of their frames" (p. 123). Some critics find in his avoidance of the undergraduate an unreal, abject shyness.²⁷ That avoidance, it seems to me, is practical protection. Leonard has created for a half-hour a "good impression." He wants to preserve that, unspoiled by any faux pas or bad table manners which could ruin everything. He is, like Rickie Elliot, afraid of direct experience.

Like Rickie, too, he creates people into images which can comfort him, although Leonard, less shielded from the abyss than Rickie, knows what he is doing. Like Henry, Leonard is racing on this side of the hedge, but unlike Henry, he will never catch up. He will never acquire that totem of the new nomadic gentry, a motor car. He will never indulge his longing for the country by buying estates in Shropshire: one night of walking is the extent of his powers. But he knows his limitations, and with a perception oddly clear for one so dazzled by "R. L. S.," he can recognize defeat. Just as he forfeited the undergraduate's friendship, he renounces Margaret's help and with it--hopelessly--his dreams. In an empire which needs to add up interest rates and figure dividends, Leonard had his groove. Once out of it, he is lost and he knows it.

"I shall never get work now. If rich people fail at one profession, they can try another. Not I. I had my groove, and I've got out of it. I could do one particular branch of insurance in one particular office well enough to command a salary, but that's all. Poetry's nothing, Miss Schlegel. One's thoughts about this and that are nothing. Your money, too, is nothing, if you'll understand me. I mean if a man over twenty once loses his own particular job, it's all over with him. I have seen it happen to others. Their friends gave them money for a little, but in the end they fall over the edge. It's no good. It's the whole world pulling. There always will be rich and poor." (p. 227)

All Margaret's money cannot save him. Nor can "culture." Instinctively, perhaps, he realizes that the humanitarianism of the aesthetic Schlegels, who talk so glibly of poetry and art, ruined him. He is Stephen without Wiltshire, Rickie without Cambridge, Helen without money. Between the world of the affluent "cultured" and the condition which Henry calls "the shoe pinching" Leonard struggles and succumbs. Yet it is to Leonard that Forster gives the only ritual of the novel. Leonard is killed not by the

Schlegel sword wielded by Charles Wilcox in a parody of the ceremony of knighthood, but by his own weak heart confronted by the power of materialism. He dies beneath a pile of books, products of culture, substitutes for life masquerading as Poetry and Art, excuses for crimes sanctioned as History. Culture and materialism will continue to intimidate, if not kill, its Leonards, its country-boys-come-to-town, its primitives lost and uncomprehending in a sea of financial muck, but Leonard's progeny can hold in his baby hands--for a little while, at least--the redemptive hope of England in the form of a little hay.

Yet something is wrong with Leonard. As Frederick McDowell notes, Helen's "distaste for the painted cupids on the ceiling of the concert hall--she would hate to marry a man like them--connects with the fact that Leonard, the only man with whom she becomes sexually intimate, himself has "a draped mantel-shelf bristling with Cupids'" (pp. 32, 48).²⁸ A sensitive critic is tempted to share Helen's reservations. K. W. Gransden finds that Forster can only draw Leonard sitting down: when he moves he turns into a symbol.²⁹ Walter Allen thinks he is a "dummy based on sentimentality."³⁰ The clue to problems raised by Leonard's character may give a clue to the problems of the novel as a whole. Leonard may simply be as dated as his cupids. As Gransden wittily prophesies: "The liberal and socialist movements of the last fifty years have done something for the Bastis: Leonard today would be better fed, he would have more spunk and be less innocent, he would leave Jacky, and the B.B.C. would teach him how to pronounce Tannhauser. . . . Henry's motor-car has spawned millions; the civilisation of luggage has become a

conveyer-belt on which movables are multiplied until England has become a vast supermarket."³¹ The prophecy came true for Forster in 1946 when he wrote, in "The Challenge of Our Time":

I was brought up as a boy in one of the home counties, in a district which I still think the loveliest in England. . . . Life went on there as usual until this spring. Then someone who was applying for a permit to lay a water pipe was casually informed that it would not be granted since the whole area had been commandeered. Commandeered for what? Had not the war ended? Appropriate officials of the Ministry of Town and Country Planning now arrived from London and announced that a satellite town for 60,000 people is to be built. The people now living and working there are doomed; it is death in life for them and they move in a nightmare.³²

Leonard may be better fed, but as he eats, his view is of brick walls and smokestacks and other windows with other Leonards listening to the B.B.C. And yet people must have houses:

They must, and I think of working-class friends in north London who have to bring up four children in two rooms, and many are even worse off than that. But I cannot equate the problem. It is a collision of loyalties. I cannot free myself from the conviction that something irreplaceable has been destroyed, and that a little piece of England has died as surely as if a bomb had hit it. I wonder what compensation there is in the world of the spirit, for the destruction of the life there, the life of tradition.³³

The bomb had not yet hit in 1910, when Howards End was published. Its world has now completely disappeared, and Leonard, with his self-effacing timidity and his worry over "Tannhoysen" is an Edwardian fossil. It is unfair to judge him otherwise. Without the Third Program and socialized medicine, he was the natural victim of the Schlegel's fumbling, undirected reforms, as they in turn were victims of their own ignorance of social forces larger than Wilcoxism.

But more than Leonard is dated in Howards End. The novel marks a

new attitude toward mythology and the earth which will significantly affect Forster's dialectic. The mythology which had supported his themes from the short stories through The Longest Journey is dismissed cryptically with "Of Pan and the elemental forces, the public has heard a little too much" (p. 108). The only Greek word used in Howards End is "Porphyrion," the name of Leonard's insurance company. The fact that this company, with its dubious financial status, should bear the name of Plotinus' disciple is a joke more than anything else. Even the novel's "Demeters" are not true Demeters, as Mrs. Elliot was. They are not really of the earth: Miss Avery, the sibylline housekeeper of Howards End, is too shadowy, peeking behind kitchen windows; Margaret is too analytical, examining her states of mind as carefully as a female G. E. Moore; even Mrs. Wilcox who, more than the others, should claim the title, has abandoned Howards End, we must remember, as much as the Wilcoxes, by joining them in their nomadic existence. Mythology demands more than an occasional visit to a meadow or toying with wisps of hay. It needs for its operation a connection between man and nature. It needs that connection because mythology is, in a sense, that connection. It is man's reminder that, although he may cut himself off from the earth and the universe, he is irrevocably a part of the nature they represent. Until he reconciles himself with nature he will be incomplete. But nature, in Howards End, shares with society, progress, culture, and Leonard a frightening precariousness. It is not the stable, reliable, indestructable force that Rickie knew in The Longest Journey. In Howards End "every westerly gale might blow the wych-elm down and

bring the end of all things" (p. 336). The dominant note of the novel is one of loss. "London's creeping," Helen reminds her sister:

She pointed over the meadow--over eight or nine meadows, but at the end of them was a red rust.

"You see that in Surrey and even Hampshire now," she continued. "I can see it from the Purbeck Downs. And London is only part of something else, I'm afraid. Life's going to be melted down, all over the world."

Margaret knew that her sister spoke truly. Howards End, Oniton, the Purbeck Downs, the Oderberge, were all survivals, and the melting-pot was being prepared for them. Logically, they had no right to be alive. One's hope was in the weakness of logic. Were they possibly the earth beating time? (p. 339)

But man tends to be logical; it is so much more sensible to make money by spreading red rust than to preserve a beauty that is unmarketable. The problem was still with Forster in 1949 when he restated the theme of Howards End in "Art for Art's Sake": "How can man get into harmony with his surroundings when he is constantly altering them?"³⁴ Margaret seems to answer that question in the novel when she thinks, "Under cosmopolitanism, if it comes, we shall receive no help from the earth. Trees and meadows and mountains will only be a spectacle, and the binding force that they once exercised on character must be entrusted to Love alone. May Love be equal to the task!" (p. 261). But love, like mythology and the earth, suffers a loss in Howards End. The earth insidiously refutes love. When Margaret sits on the hillside with Henry after Leonard's death and learns that Charles will be imprisoned she "drove her fingers through the grass. The hill beneath her moved as if it was alive"--as the Wiltshire hill had done for the curate's teakettle (p. 334). But what is the earth's "message" to Margaret? What is her response? "No sudden warmth arose in her. She did not see that to break him was

her only hope. She did not enfold the sufferer in her arms" (p. 334). To "break" Henry is not only against sex, but against the procreative, elemental powers associated with the earth. In this scene the earth reinforces the battle of the sexes rather than reconciles man with his fellow men through love. It is a significant change in the earth-theme of Forster. It is a loss by betrayal.

The earth's betrayal of love is shared by those people in the novel who think they are most devoted to "personal relations." Snug in the feminine bastion of Howards End, the sisters coldly discuss Leonard. "I can't have you worrying about Leonard," Margaret tells Helen. "Don't drag in the personal when it will not come. Forget him."

"Yes, yes, but what has Leonard got out of life?"

"Perhaps an adventure."

"Is that enough?"

"Not for us. But for him." (p. 338)

It is Helen's turn to pick up a bunch of grass. To Margaret's "Is it sweetening yet?" Helen answers, "No, only withered." "It will sweeten tomorrow," Margaret tells her complacently: the implication is that tomorrow Helen will have forgotten the miserable Leonard and all will be well. This was the Leonard of whom Helen had said, when they first met, "Such a muddle of a man, and yet so worth pulling through. I like him extraordinarily" (p. 148). But, as Rose Macaulay points out, her "Efforts to pull poor Leonard through end in his financial ruin, disgrace, and finally death."³⁵ Margaret passes judgment on Henry with the ease she uses on Leonard: "He has worked very hard all his life," she pronounces, "and noticed nothing. Those are the people who collapse when they do notice a thing" (p. 336). Earlier she had told her sister,

"I believe we shall come to care about people less and less, Helen. The more people one knows, the easier it becomes to replace them. It's one of the curses of London. I quite expect to end my life caring most for a place" (p. 130). And she does.

If unfeeling manipulation and condescension were all, one could still hope that an occasional individual might develop strong enough to break through the levelling surface of mass thought, mass dangers, mass armies and the red rust which threatens to asphyxiate him. There is, after all, sexual desire. Perhaps the need for animal warmth will drive men and women together physically, if not spiritually. But the levelling process of a mass age dictates, and Margaret's fear that "Life's going to be melted down, all over the world" is echoed by K. W. Gransden, who writes of Howards End: "even love is a weapon in the new class-war, by the waging of which everyone hopes to be indistinguishable from everyone else."³⁶ The Lawrencian "sex war" of The Longest Journey brooks now no truce, accepts no solution other than total female victory. When Margaret hears Henry say "I'm broken--I'm ended," she does not comfort him but thinks rather that "all through that day and the next a new life began to move" (p. 334). That new life will be built around Margaret and her sister, not Henry. As Norman Kelvin says, we feel that Margaret has given up hope of connecting with Henry by the end of the book.³⁷ By the end of the book, also, a sensitive reader wonders if Margaret ever really wanted to connect. Harry T. Moore writes: "She indulges in a rare moment of private gloating after Henry has announced that Howards End will be hers: 'She, who had never expected to conquer anyone, had

charged straight through these Wilcoxes and broken up their lives.' This stresses breaking, not connecting--breaking followed by submission" (p. 341).³⁸ "Henry's fortress gave way" and Margaret takes him to Howards End, where she becomes a fussy housewife, giving little cries of annoyance when Paul brushes against the front door paint and picking gloves out of a vase (p. 340). Our last view of her, like our last view of Lucy Honeychurch, is of a woman sewing. She is, in her own way, for all her talk of understanding the new England of commercialism, as dated as Leonard. Alan Wilde complains that in her final phase Margaret betrays her ideal of proportion: "love of stability turns into love of comfort; concern for order becomes concern for neatness; desire for significance leads to desire for busyness. An anti-intellectual Margaret is a poor substitute for Miss Schlegel of Wickham Place. . . ."³⁹ She admits that she cannot love children, and wants none. "It is not entirely a happy picture," Trilling writes, "on which Forster concludes, this rather contrived scene of busyness and contentment in the hayfield; the male is too thoroughly gelded. . . ."⁴⁰ Margaret's cry of "Only connect!" seems to have been thwarted at the end. Wilfred Stone thinks that "Forster does not really want connection at all, but only the rewards of connection; he does not want sex, but only the heir."⁴¹ The inner life, personal relationships, intellectual adventure, everything the Schlegels fought for has retreated into the rhythm of a sewing needle and the harvest of one small meadow, threatened by petrol and progress.

A reader could leave Howards End with these remarks and feel that he had given it a fair evaluation. The baby with hay in its hands and

Helen's ecstatic "The field's cut! . . . the big meadow! We've seen to the very end, and it'll be such a crop of hay as never!" seem a little silly, with London only nine meadows away. The yardstick of realism can with justification record the shortcomings of Leonard, Margaret, the earth and the theme of personal relations. But the marks on the yardstick are put there by the experience of the critic, his milieu, his particular decade in his particular century. As a device of measurement, realism--that hallmark of objectivity--is limited by subjectivity. Applied to Forster's dialectic, it can be true only as far as its critic's experience can measure: beyond its last mark, there are ciphers only. Forster, from his own experience, is aware of. One of those ciphers which could be called realistic is his "sense of society" in this novel. The phrase belongs to John McCormick, who insists, in Catastrophe and Imagination, that such a sense is indispensable to the creation of a novel.⁴² Howards End contains a stronger sense of society than any of Forster's earlier stories. It is this sense of society, I believe, which prevents a satisfactory presentation of mythology, the theme of the earth, and the use of ritual in the book. Myth, nature and ritual all demand intimacy, the solitude of the personal, for their connections between man and the universe, between man and his fellow men. Howards End is a public book, for all its talk of intimacy. Helen must seduce Leonard and bear his child not through love but in service to a cause: Leonard must be saved from the red rust of London in spite of himself. Margaret must destroy Henry not through hatred of his shortcomings as an individual but as a protest against materialism and modernity. But if the sense of society is strong in Howards End, there is a second

cipher which marks an even stronger force beyond the public realm and which, for most critics, cannot be called realistic: the sense of the spiritual. Margaret may be able to exorcise Wilcoxism from Howards End but she cannot dispel the presence of Ruth Wilcox, who seems to direct proceedings from beyond the grave. There seems to be another book which exists behind the one the reader holds in his hands. The word "unseen" is used like a drumbeat. Margaret's "conclusion was that any human being lies nearer to the unseen than any organization, and from this she never varied" (p. 30). "'Don't brood too much,' she wrote to Helen, 'on the superiority of the unseen to the seen. It's true, but to brood on it is mediaeval. Our business is not to contrast the two, but to reconcile them'" (p. 104). When the Wilcoxes refuse Ruth's request to give the house to Margaret, "the unseen had impacted on the seen, and all that they could say was 'Treachery'" (p. 99).

To them Howards End was a house: they could not know that to her it had been a spirit, for which she sought a spiritual heir. And--pushing one step farther in these mists--may they not have decided even better than they supposed? Is it credible that the possessions of the spirit can be bequeathed at all? 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 even perceive a problem. (pp. 98-99)

But--"pushing one step farther in these mists"--Ruth does seem to speak to Margaret through the house. As Margaret spends the night there with Helen, as the "peace of the country" which "has no commerce with memory . . . was entering into her," she thinks of Leonard, but then immediately of Ruth: "Was he also part of Mrs. Wilcox's mind?" (p. 315). She has just told Helen:

"She is 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. She knew when people were in love, though she was not in the room. I don't doubt that she knew when Henry deceived her." (pp. 313-314)

Mrs. Wilcox looms and pervades, annihilates and assimilates and preserves, even beyond death. Margaret's "even if there is nothing beyond death, we shall differ in our nothingness" is a restatement of McTaggart's interpretation of Hegel, that pure being may be nothingness, that nothingness may be positive.⁴³ When she learns that Ruth intended the house for her-- after she owns it, ironically, by marrying Ruth's husband--"Margaret was silent. Something shook her life in its inmost recesses, and she shivered" (p. 342).

Forster has prepared the reader for Margaret's reaction. At lunch with Henry she jokes, "Never heard of an aura? Oh, happy, happy man! I scrub at mine for hours. Nor of an astral plane?" (p. 154). Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson was an active member of the Society of Psychical Research⁴⁴ from 1890 until 1920 and, although in his biography of Dickinson Forster calls psychical research "that dustbin of the spirit," his own feelings may be closer to Margaret's when she tells Henry, "Theosophy's only a halfway-house. . . . It may be halfway in the wrong direction. I can't explain. I don't believe in all these fads, and yet I don't like saying I don't believe in them" (p. 154).⁴⁴ Theosophy, societies for psychical research, the 1890's interest in the occult and its chief priestess, Mme. Blavatsky--these were still in the air in 1910. Mrs. Wilcox's ancestors had "helped" her in the Paul-Helen crisis (p. 22). Forster's first

description of Margaret is of a person with "a continual and sincere response to all that she encountered in her path through life" (p. 10). It is significant that one cannot speak of an "eternal moment" in Howards End. There seems to be rather a continual communicative flow between Mrs. Wilcox and Margaret. Margaret is receptive to influence: there may be psychic transference when she, like Ruth, plays "with the grass which trickled through her fingers like sand" as Henry talks to her of his affair with Jacky. She left a "long trickle of grass . . . across the hall," as Mrs. Wilcox had earlier trailed hay (p. 248). As a receptive character, Margaret seems to be in contact with a spiritual world which may surround her. Forster's characters live inside the paper sacks of their egos, their limited perspectives. The break, the tear in the bag which sets his receptive characters free, as always in Forster, comes from the outside and can occur only when the character is ready--i.e., contains within him or her the psychic wave length which can connect with the spirituality implicit in the visionary moment. Margaret joins Rickie, Eustace, Vashti, Kuno, the boy from Agathox Lodge, and Miss Beaumont in intuitive receptivity as she feels Ruth's presence at Howards End. Ruth Wilcox may have become Howards End, and the implications are that Howards End may not be a house at all, but a material manifestation--to use Ansell's analysis--of another reality. "Through the influence of Ruth Wilcox and Ruth's ancestral home," James McConkey writes, Margaret "gains awareness of the unity beyond all physical divisions."⁴⁵ "Unity beyond all physical divisions" is another way of describing McTaggart's one-substance spiritual universe; spirituality can claim at least equal billing with a realistic sense of society in any criticism

of Howards End.

Forster finds in spirituality an answer for the two dilemmas which twentieth-century commercialism has produced in this novel: the disappearance of affection between the sexes and the loss of a regenerative power in the earth. Matthew Arnold, Forster's favorite Victorian, is the author of Margaret's favorite phrase, "to see life steadily and to see it whole."⁴⁶ Like Arnold, Margaret has a concern for society that preserves a detachment through which her perspective can focus. She can remain detached from physical involvement with her world, but not from spiritual involvement. Her championing of affection--"It all turns on affection now" she cries when, protecting a pregnant Helen, she confronts Henry--is closer to the spiritual than to the physical. Her attitude can be compared with Dickinson's, who wrote in The Meaning of Good: "whatever Reality may ultimately be, it is in the life of the affections . . . it is in this intricate commerce of souls that we may come nearest to apprehending what perhaps we shall never wholly apprehend, but the quest of which alone, as I believe, gives any significance to life, and makes it a thing which a wise and brave man will be able to persuade himself it is right to endure."⁴⁷ One feels that Margaret is trying to replace Henry's commerce of materialism with a commerce of souls; her victory at the end is a victory of spirit over matter. The earth, too, in Howards End attempts to compensate for the loss of physical stability by becoming spiritual.

England was alive, throbbing through all her estuaries,
crying for joy through the mouths of all her gulls, and
the north wind, with contrary motion, blew stronger against

her rising seas. What did it mean? For what end are her fair complexities, her changes of soil, her sinuous coast? Does she belong to those who have moulded her and made her feared by other lands, or to those who had added nothing to her power, but have somehow seen her, seen the whole island at once, lying as a jewel in a silver sea, sailing as a ship of souls, with all the brave world's fleet accompanying her towards eternity? (pp. 175-176)

A "ship of souls" which can carry "all the brave world's fleet . . . towards eternity" is much more than the earth-as-human-form which Forster used in "The Story of a Panic." It has lost form, but gained spirit. The earth, in Howards End, undergoes aufheben, an annihilation and assimilation into a new metamorphosis. Rickie's Orion had represented Stephen and heroism; the wych-elm represents "all things."

But is this enough? Our original question, which we posited at the beginning of this investigation of Howards End, insists on an answer. Is the antithesis strong enough to overcome the intensity of the thesis? Can wych-elms outlast Wilcoxes? Is not Henry in defeat more human than Margaret in triumph? Is the Medusa of commercialism really a twentieth-century Demeter in disguise? If one measures the novel with realism, the answer will be affirmative: the materialism of society and the thesis wins. If the weight Forster gives to spirituality is placed on the scales the antithesis becomes his ultimate message. But somehow neither answer seems satisfactory for this novel. "There are moments when the inner life actually 'pays,'" Forster writes, "when years of self-scrutiny, conducted for no ulterior motive, are suddenly of practical use. Such moments are still rare in the West; that they come at all promises a fairer future" (p. 195). But has not the inner life paid perhaps too well? Leonard is dead, Charles is imprisoned and Henry is

broken physically at the end. The battle of the sexes prevented real connection between Margaret and Henry, Helen and Leonard. Can we believe in affection as spiritual? The sense of society, with its machines and flux, eliminated mythology and robbed the earth of that solidity and force through which man could achieve serenity. Can we believe in the earth as a ship of souls? "Such moments are still rare in the West": perhaps the main problem of Howards End is that the spirituality it searched for in 1910 had already disappeared in Europe. For Forster "a fairer future" lay in India.

NOTES
Chapter V

¹E. M. Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," Two Cheers for Democracy (New York, 1951), p. 56. (First published London, 1938.) Forster's guilt over the money he earned through stocks is discussed in Chapter I, the present study.

²E. M. Forster, Howards End (New York, 1960). (First published London, 1910.) All quotations in this study from the novel are taken from this Vintage Books edition by Alfred Knopf, Inc.

³Walter Allen, "Reassessments: Howards End," New Statesman and Nation (March 19, 1955), p. 408. See also Chapter I, the present study, for Forster's personal dilemma over money.

⁴E. M. Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 57.

⁵Margaret's analysis of truth is also quoted in Chapter I of the present study to explain the dialectic. See p. 13.

⁶Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, Appearances: Notes of Travel, East and West (New York, 1914), p. 182.

⁷E. M. Forster, "Battersea Rise," Abinger Harvest (New York, 1955), pp. 236-237. (First published London, 1936.)

⁸Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain (Stanford, California, 1966), pp. 265, 273, 275.

⁹Lionel Trilling, E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 134. (First published New York, 1943.) Henry Wilcox, Trilling adds, bears Faust's Christian name. How far one can carry this comparison is doubtful.

¹⁰Alan Wilde, Art and Order: A Study of E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 108.

¹¹J. B. Beer, The Achievement of E. M. Forster (London, 1962), p. 115.

¹²Frederick J. Hoffman, "Howards End and the Bogy of Progress," Modern Fiction Studies, VII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1961), 248.

¹³Stone, p. 275.

¹⁴P. N. Furbank and F. J. H. Haskell, "E. M. Forster," an interview in Writers at Work: The Paris Review Interviews, ed. Malcolm Cowley (New York, 1959), p. 32; Stone, p. 239.

¹⁵For Bloomsbury attitudes of exclusiveness, see Chapter VII, the present study, and "Bloomsbury" in the Appendix of the present study.

¹⁶Dickinson, Appearances: Notes of Travel, East and West, p. 181. Forster has a description similar to that of Dickinson's "Red-blood" in "Notes on the English Character": "For it is not that the Englishman can't feel--it is that he is afraid to feel. He has been taught at his public school that feeling is bad form. He must not express great joy or sorrow, or even open his mouth too wide when he talks--his pipe might fall out if he did. He must bottle up his emotions, or let them out only on a very special occasion." See E. M. Forster, "Notes on the English Character," Abinger Harvest, p. 5.

¹⁷E. M. Forster, "Notes on the English Character," Abinger Harvest, p. 8.

¹⁸Wilde, p. 117.

¹⁹D. H. Lawrence, D. H. Lawrence's Letters to Bertrand Russell, ed. Harry T. Moore (New York, 1948), pp. 33-34.

²⁰Wilde, p. 102; Frederick Crews, E. M. Forster: the Perils of Humanism (Princeton, New Jersey, 1962), p. 112.

²¹Trilling, p. 120.

²²C. B. Cox, The Free Spirit: A Study of Liberal Humanism in the Novels of George Eliot, Henry James, E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf and Angus Wilson (London, 1963), p. 82; Montgomery Belgion, "The Diabolism of E. M. Forster," The Criterion, XIV (October, 1934), 71; Derek S. Savage, "E. M. Forster," in The Withered Branch: Six Studies in the Modern Novel (London, 1950), p. 66, quoted by Malcolm Bradbury, Forster: a Collection of Critical Essays (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966), p. 68.

²³See Savage, p. 66.

²⁴K. W. Gransden sees the novel as an exposé rather than as a support of liberalism. Gransden thinks that Henry's "joining with Margaret represents a considerable modification of Forster's earlier views, a more subtle and surprising criticism of Bloomsbury academic liberalism than anything provided by Italy, Cambridge or Wiltshire." See K. W. Gransden, E. M. Forster (New York, 1962), p. 75.

²⁵D. S. Savage, as Malcolm Bradbury points out, writes from a Marxist viewpoint. The rest of Savage's paragraph continues the implicit disparagement of Forster's sympathy with the "dispossessed." The italics

are mine.

Nor can Forster's pressing of this point home find any response in the mind of the genuine champion of the dispossessed, for the depth of his concern with the sufferings of the underprivileged masses may be judged from the fact that it is Henry Wilcox with whom Margaret, "keen to derive the modern capitalist from the warriors and hunters of the past," "connects,"

Mr. Savage obviously sees in Henry what he wants to see and ignores Forster's denunciation of him as an impersonal, unfeeling wielder of money and motor cars. See Bradbury, pp. 13, 68, and Savage, p. 66. Forster seemed to answer Savage when he wrote of Schiller: "he knew that freedom is not the perquisite of any one section of the community: neither the employing classes nor the working classes nor the artistic and literary classes can be truly free unless all are free." See E. M. Forster, "Ronald Kidd," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 50. In "The Challenge of Our Time" Forster was even more explicit: "The poor have kicked. The backward races are kicking--and more power to their boots." See Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 56.

²⁶Angus Wilson, "A Conversation with E. M. Forster," Encounter, IX (November, 1957), 54.

²⁷Harold J. Oliver claims that a Leonard shy with an undergraduate would certainly be too timid to make love to Helen. See Harold J. Oliver, The Art of E. M. Forster (Melbourne, Australia, 1960), p. 46.

²⁸Frederick P. W. McDowell, "The Mild Intellectual Light : Idea and Theme in Howards End," PMLA, LXXIV (September, 1959), 457.

²⁹Gransden, p. 74.

³⁰Walter Allen, p. 407.

³¹Gransden, pp. 78-79.

³²E. M. Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 58.

³³Idem. The intensity of that "collision of loyalties " not only translates itself into the themes of Howards End but has its origin in Forster's own experience. He has admitted that the house in Hertfordshire he shared with his mother was his model. In his biography of Marianne Thornton he writes with bitter nostalgia: "From the time I entered the house at the age of four . . . I took it to my heart and hoped, as Marianne had of Battersea Rise, that I should live and die there. We were out of it in ten years." See Forster, Marianne Thornton: A Domestic Biography (New York, 1956), p. 301.

³⁴E. M. Forster, "Art for Art's Sake," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 91.

³⁵Rose Macaulay, The Writings of E. M. Forster (New York, 1938), p. 11.

³⁶Gransden, p. 79.

³⁷Norman Kelvin, E. M. Forster (Carbondale, Illinois, 1967), p. 117.

³⁸Harry T. Moore, E. M. Forster (New York, 1965), p. 36.

³⁹Wilde, p. 118.

⁴⁰Trilling, p. 135.

⁴¹Stone, p. 266.

⁴²John McCormick, Catastrophe and Imagination: A Study of the Impact of Society on the Novel (London, 1957), p. 6.

⁴³As absence will imply presence in A Passage to India. See Chapter VI, the present study, and J. M. E. McTaggart, A Commentary on Hegel's Logic (Cambridge, 1910), p. 20.

⁴⁴E. M. Forster, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (London, 1962), p. 122. (First published London, 1934). See also Chapter I, the present study, for a brief discussion of the 1890's interest in the occult, and Chapter VI of the present study for Forster's use of the occult in A Passage to India.

⁴⁵James McConkey, The Novels of E. M. Forster (Ithaca, New York, 1957), p. 32.

⁴⁶E. M. Forster, "William Arnold," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 197; Stone, p. 271.

⁴⁷Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, The Meaning of Good (New York, 1907), p. 244.

CHAPTER VI

INDIA

Down from the gardens of Asia descending radiating,
Adam and Eve appear, then their myriad progeny after them,
Wandering, yearning, curious, with restless explorations,
With questionings, baffled, formless, feverish, with never-happy
 hearts,
With that sad incessant refrain, Wherefore unsatisfied soul? and
 Whither O mocking life?

Whitman, Passage to India

There is not that gulf between A Passage to India and Forster's earlier work which some critics think exists. This last novel does not, as Alan Wilde claims, differ "in kind as well as in degree, from its predecessors. . . ." ¹ It intensifies, as Harry Moore says, the "only connect" message of Howards End. ² It goes one step beyond Howards End and asks the question, with Rex Warner, "Can any faith exist, once . . . panic and emptiness is admitted?" ³ Can Forster, like Beethoven--in Helen Schlegel's words--"make things right again?" For the panic and emptiness of Helen's goblins are admitted in A Passage to India, and the question of faith--in the earth, in ourselves, in the spirit--is its central problem. The plot centers around Adela Quested's visit to India to see her fiancé, Ronny Heaslop. As her last name implies, her trip is a quest for reality. She wants to see Ronny in his role as empire builder--more specifically, as the City Magistrate of Chandrapore--before she commits herself to marriage with him. Accompanying Adela as chaperone is Ronny's mother Mrs. Moore. Both ladies want to "see" India, and are

invited by the head of the local college, Fielding, to his home where they meet the Mohammedan medical doctor, Aziz, and the Hindu professor, Dr. Godbole. Mrs. Moore had met Aziz briefly in a mosque when she fled there from a performance of Cousin Kate at the Chandrapore Club, nucleus of Anglo-India. At Fielding's party Aziz invites the ladies to his home, then quickly, as he remembers its dishevelled state, impulsively changes his invitation to everyone to visit the nearby Marabar Caves. Adela's fiancé Ronny interrupts the party to take Adela to a polo match where Adela breaks her engagement. Afterwards they accept a ride in the car of a wealthy Mohammedan, the Nawab Bahadur. They have an accident and are taken home by a Miss Derek, who happens to be traveling to Chandrapore in a car she delightfully reports having stolen from her employer, the Maharajah of Mudhul. The excitement of the accident and a mutual dislike of the boisterous Miss Derek reconcile Ronny and Adela. The appointed day for the Marabar visit arrives, but Fielding is delayed because Professor Godbole takes too long over a prayer, and Mrs. Moore and Adela travel by train with Aziz. At the caves Mrs. Moore has a strange, psychic experience which leaves her weary and apathetic. Adela and Aziz leave her to rest, and with a native guide climb to another cave. The boulders over which they crawl seem to throb with life. Adela thinks of her approaching marriage and realizes, when she sees a nicked rock which reminds her of the tire tracks in the dust at the accident--that fateful hand-touching experience which caused the reconciliation--that she does not love Ronny. She looks at Aziz and wonders if his marriage is successful. "What a handsome little Oriental he was, and no doubt his wife and

children were beautiful too. . . . she regretted that neither she nor Ronny had physical charm'.⁴ Ignorant of Aziz's grief for his dead wife or of his belief in monogamy, she asks him how many wives he has. Her question not only insults him but flusters him, and he dashes into a cave to escape her. She enters one of the caves half-wondering about marriage, unaware that she has said the wrong thing. Outside, Aziz and the guide see Miss Derek's car far down on the road. Aziz runs back to tell Adela, cannot find her, sends the guide in all directions, then sees her down at the road by the car. Full of relief and joyful with the discovery that Fielding has ridden out with Miss Derek and has joined Mrs. Moore, Aziz now thinks that his party is a success. But Miss Derek's chauffeur appears with the news that Miss Derek has driven back to Chandrapore. Aziz, caught in his own enthusiasm, brushes off Miss Derek's sudden decision as a whim of the ladies; after all, he has promised his guests they must do as they pleased. Fielding at once suspects that "something had gone queer" (p. 157). When they return to town Aziz is arrested on a charge of attempted rape. Aziz is tried, but Adela, tormented by an echo which she cannot dispel, testifies in the courtroom that he is innocent. Anglo-India, which had come to her rescue as to a martyred virgin, is appalled. She is totally rejected and marriage to Ronny--even if she desired it, which she does not--is impossible now. Before the trial Ronny sends Mrs. Moore back to England: the old lady has become indifferent if not hostile to everyone around her. Mrs. Moore dies on shipboard and is buried at sea. Although her death occurs before the trial, they learn of it only afterwards. Fielding provides

Adela with a temporary refuge until her ship leaves, and he and Adela decide that Mrs. Moore must have had telepathic powers. Fielding, too, returns to England on leave, and marries Mrs. Moore's daughter, Stella. Aziz moves to Mau, where he is court physician to the local maharajah. Fielding meets him there later on a tour of schools and they are momentarily reconciled--Aziz had thought that Fielding married Adela in England for her money. Their reconciliation is aided by Mrs. Moore's son, Ralph, who is simpatico with Aziz, and, in another accident, the colliding of their boats during the festival of Gokul Ashtami, the birth of Krishna. At the end Aziz and Fielding ride horses and ask the question which began the novel, "Can Indians and Englishmen be friends?" Rocks thrust up between them and the earth give the final answer: "not yet."

Such is the plot. But Adela's echoes linger, after one sets the book aside: there are reverberations which continue in inordinate proportion to the events of the story. Helen's goblins were let loose at Aziz's arrest. Fielding had felt "that a mass of madness had arisen and tried to overwhelm them all; it had to be shoved back into the pit somehow, and he didn't know how to do it" (p. 163). But in A Passage to India the goblins have become echoes, and echoes are extremely difficult to shove. The possibility has been admitted that the universe is meaningless, an Absolute Nothingness balancing, like the Kawa Dol, that hollow boulder crowning the Marabar hills which reminds us by its presence that an abyss is there and, moreover, that it may come crashing down at any time. A detailed examination of the story exposes unheard vibrations beneath surface incidents. Image, action and innuendo swell and dove-

tail like tidal waves fusing, to be sucked back into themselves only to appear again in altered form. This swell-and-suck becomes the rhythm of the novel and will indeed overflow the plot until its separate scenes all but disappear in the larger themes. Structurally A Passage to India is a dialectical sonata. Its three sections, entitled "Mosque," "Caves," and "Temple," form an exposition, development and reconciliation. Furthermore each part emphasizes certain images which, although they recur like leitmotifs, seem especially to belong to their assigned sections: "Mosque is associated with arch," V. A. Shahane writes, "Caves with echo, Temple with sky."⁵ Mrs. Moore has two special images: wasp and moon. Yet none alone conveys that inundation of feeling accomplished by the end of the book. Each gives a clue, however, to the totality of the reader's final experience because each contains the possibility of assimilation and preservation, of a reassembling of internal forces toward an external meaning which demands, in its turn, new articulation.

The changed attitude toward the earth and personal relations evident in Howards End becomes the fulcrum on which the dialectical movement of A Passage to India swings upward towards the Absolute. The hostility of the earth toward man will be intensified, the fragile honesty of personal relations all but annihilated. Forster had written, even before that change, of Rickie Elliot: "He knew once for all that we are all of us bubbles on an extremely rough sea. Into this sea humanity has built, as it were, some little breakwaters--scientific knowledge, civilized restraint--so that the bubbles do not break so frequently or so soon. But the sea has not altered . . ." (The Longest Journey, pp. 61-62).

Man's tenuous relationship with nature has not altered in A Passage to India. The town of Chandrapore maintains a precarious foothold by the banks of the Ganges.

So abased, so monotonous is everything that meets the eye, that when the Ganges comes down it might be expected to wash the excrescence back into the soil. Houses do fall, people are drowned and left rotting, but the general outline of the town persists, swelling here, shrinking there, like some low but indestructible form of life. (p. 7)

The habitation of man is now an excrescence; in relation to nature man is a "low but indestructible form of life." There are no votive trees in India, no natural forms through which man can seek peace. The toddy palms and neem trees of Chandrapore rise above the town: "Seeking light and air, and endowed with more strength than man or his works, they soar above the lower deposit to greet one another with branches and beckoning leaves, and to build a city for the birds" (p. 8). "The lower deposit"--the town, man's works and by implication man himself--lies beneath the haughty indifference of vegetation intent on building a city for a more worthy form of life. But the earth, too, is precarious. Margaret Schlegel had worried that, if a westerly gale came, it might "blow the wych-elm down and bring the end of all things . . . (Howards End, p. 336). That same fearful possibility pervades A Passage to India. Under the enormous sky of India, going vault-by-vault out of sight, "League after league the earth lies flat, heaves a little, is flat again. . . . By herself she can do little--only feeble outbursts of flowers" (p. 9). The Dravidian hills are "older than anything in the world. . . . older than all spirit" and yet if the Kawa Dol "falls and smashes, the cave will smash too--empty as an Easter egg" (p. 125). If man cannot expect

help from nature where can he turn? To personal relations? But the most intimate form of personal relations in Howards End--the sexual--disintegrated into a battle, with victory a vicious form of control. In A Passage to India the sexual relationship degenerates even further, with the only intimacy in the book an imaginary attempt at rape. The international question of friendship between Indians and Englishmen is the peg upon which Forster hangs his story, but the final answer at the end is "No, not yet" (p. 322). Personal relations, like the earth, seem to lie helpless under the vaulting sky.

Where can one look for reality, for meaning in life? The dead Mrs. Elliot spoke to Rickie through a dream and Mrs. Wilcox's ancestors helped her. Is there, perhaps, an answer for man's search for reality beyond the earth and personal relations in the world of the spirit? In Howards End economic and social dilemmas robbed the earth of strength and personal relations of affection; Mrs. Wilcox qua spirit was present but strangely silent because Forster chose to tell of her influence on Margaret Schlegel rather than to allow the reader to feel it convincingly. Perhaps, as I suggested at the end of the last chapter, a spiritual world could not operate in England in 1910. In A Passage to India Forster's elemental-Demeter figure, Mrs. Moore, grows convincingly stronger after death and dominates the book. She fulfills as her avatar, Mrs. Wilcox, never did, Margaret Schlegel's belief that some people can "go farther still, and move outside humanity altogether" (Howards End, p. 338). She is Forster's largest Demeter, assuming all the previous Wiltshire fauns, Pan-powerful Ginos and Stephen Wonhams and transmuting the insights of

Mrs. Elliot and Mrs. Wilcox into an ultimate metamorphosis. Large as she is, however, she remains infinitesimal in the psychic experience of the Marabar Caves. The spiritual world with which she communicates leaves her exhausted; like its counterpart, the physical world of earth and sky, it is larger than humanity. Sensing this disparity between characters and their experiences, several critics have complained that Forster's characters in A Passage to India are too small for the story. Lionel Trilling finds that their disproportionate size causes a sense of separateness which "broods over the book . . . and perhaps accounts for the remoteness of the characters."⁶ Trilling, by emphasizing the smallness of the characters, misses, I believe, the largeness of the themes, which is the vital characteristic of the book. The characters are small because Forster's themes loom larger than they have ever done before. The universe has never been so limitless, the insidiousness of personal relations so devastating, the power of the spiritual world so convincing, as in this last novel. It brings to culmination and to a final transformation all the themes Forster had used previously: his insistence on connecting, his preachment against controlling people, his belief in the individual, his distrust in organization, his willingness to look into the abyss, however Dantean it might be. With annihilation, assimilation and preservation, his themes fuse in the process of aufheben into a new metamorphosis which leads his dialectic to its ultimate goal, the Absolute attained through mysticism. Rose Macaulay wrote in 1938:

Imagination cried "Greek! Greek!" to him not only at Cnidus, but in the English countryside, in Italy, all over the place. This passed. But what was fundamental in it remained: the mysticism through which he sees people as

transcending themselves, as symbols, each surrounded by the aura of some strange other world in which his other true being walks, while the being's phenomenal self amusingly, agreeably, or deplorably gestures on the revealed stage before the dropped curtain.⁷

Characters "surrounded by the aura of some strange other world" will necessarily be smaller than that world; otherwise we could not sense its presence around and beyond them. We would concentrate, like Trilling, on a lack in the characters rather than on the transcendence they experience. Because that transcendence occurs in a spiritual world, the puzzlement it causes Forster's critics is understandable. Spirit defies analysis.

Forster's themes had been stealing the stage for a long time. The mysticism which Rose Macaulay found fundamental in his first work developed, as she noted, into a transcendent spirituality larger than the characters. Elizabeth Bowen correctly guessed that "His 'development' has been a matter of equipping himself more fully, and with wider and wider reference, to express what he has from the first felt."⁸ One can trace those "wider references" in the shifting movements of Forster's dialectic as he emphasizes each step toward vision. Martin Buber's analysis of intellect, instinct and intuition in Pointing the Way, although written without Forster in mind, could be read as a guide through Forster's dialectic:

The intellect, which divides the self, holds us apart from the world that it assists us in utilizing. [Mr. Bons, Mr. Worters, Cecil Vyse, Mr. Beebe, Philip Herriton]. Instinct joins us to the world, but not as persons [Miss Beaumont, Vashti and Kuno, George Emerson and Lucy Honeychurch, Caroline Abbott, Helen Schlegel]. Intuition, through vision, binds us as persons with the world which is over against us, binds us to it without being able to make us one with it, through a vision that cannot

be absolute [Rickie Elliot, Margaret Schlegel]. This vision is a limited one, like all our perceptions, our universal-human ones and our personal ones. Yet it affords us a glimpse in unspeakable intimacy into hidden depths.⁹

In A Passage to India that vision will be complete. Mrs. Moore, with her cancellation of intellect--like Mrs. Wilcox, she is not very bright--and her refocusing of instinct and intuition, achieves a culmination of vision which Forster's work had anticipated from the beginning. K. W. Gransden writes of A Passage to India:

From the very outset of his career--from his first story of all, "Albergo Empedocle"--Forster has been attracted by the visionary; he has always required it to be included in any complete understanding; but now it begins to undermine surface responses and rationality; it begins to criticise by a complete devastation of those mental faculties Western humanism would regard as "normal." With A Passage to India it is, indeed, the norm itself which vanishes. (Geographically, it vanishes at Suez).¹⁰

For Forster, too, the norm vanished at Suez. During his three-year wartime stint with the Red Cross in Alexandria he gathered the material which would become Alexandria: A History and a Guide. His description of Alexander's visit to the temple of Ammon in the Siwan Oasis could be applied to himself: "henceforward his Greek sympathies declined. He became an Oriental, a cosmopolitan almost, and though he fought Persia again, it was in a new spirit. He wanted to harmonize the world now, not to Hellenise it. . . ." ¹¹ "Of Pan and the elemental forces, the public has heard a little too much" Forster wrote in Howards End (p. 108). He no longer depended on Greece. He sought rather, in this last novel, to extend the "connection" of personal relationships not only to a harmony between peoples but onto a spiritual plane. How well he succeeds a detailed examination of "Mosque," "Caves" and "Temple" should reveal.

Mosque

The dominant note of "Mosque" is one of vastness. As the neem trees and toddy palms rise above Chandrapore, so the sky rises above the earth, limitless, overpowering, underscoring the insignificance of man and the indifference of the universe. Arch beyond arch, vault beyond vault, it expands beyond any view, any color and hence any attribute. It is Ansell's circle-square into infinity with no hope of a central point, no single tree in the middle of any Cadbury Ring to promise stability:

The sky too has its changes, but they are less marked than those of the vegetation and the river. Clouds map it up at times, but it is normally a dome of blending tints, and the main tint blue. By day the blue will pale down into white where it touches the white of the land, after sunset it has a new circumference--orange, melting upwards into tenderest purple. But the core of blue persists, and so it is by night. Then the stars hang like lamps from the immense vault. The distance between the vault and them is as nothing to the distance behind them, and that farther distance, though beyond colour, last freed itself from blue. (pp. 8-9)

It is interesting that the word "blue," the dominant word in the passage, links the sky with man's perception: it is through such a word that man identifies the sky. But what of those distances between and behind the stars, those vaults beyond color? They must be, by implication, also beyond man's perception: they must approach an absolute nothingness beyond identification by language. Such immensity overshadows man to the point of annihilating him. "The sky settles everything--not only climates and seasons but when the earth shall be beautiful. . . . The sky can do this because it is so strong and so enormous. Strength comes from the

sun . . ." (p. 9). Beneath those arches the earth lies prostrate, heaving a little. "Only in the south, where a group of fists and fingers are thrust up through the soil, is the endless expanse interrupted. These fists and fingers are the Marabar Hills, containing the extraordinary caves" (p. 9). One remembers the "many-fingered green hand, palm upwards, which was clutching convulsively to keep us in its grasp" from the "Story of a Panic."¹³ The ominous "fists . . . thrust" and the delayed "extraordinary caves" links the caves with the cosmic vastness of vaults and arches, but more importantly, with the possibility of absolute nothingness.

Against this cosmic backdrop Forster presents his people. As in The Longest Journey, he does so through a discussion. But unlike Ansell's and Rickie's, this discussion is described by Hamidullah, a Cambridge-educated Mohammedan barrister, as "a very sad talk." The question is: Can one be friends with an Englishman? The answer is attempted: Perhaps in England, perhaps, for a while, in India. "I only contend that it is possible in England," replied Hamidullah. . . . "It is impossible here. . . . they have no chance here, that is my point. They come out intending to be gentlemen, and are told it will not do" (p. 10). Mahmoud Ali, less generous than Hamidullah, claims the only reason the wife of "Red-nose"--his term for Ronny Heaslop--will not take bribes is that there is no Mrs. Red-nose. Aziz, who arrived late, is enjoying a hookah and brushes off the problem with "Why be either friends with the fellows or not friends? Let us shut them out and be jolly" (p. 12). But a call from Major Callendar, the Civil Surgeon and his superior at the hospital,

pulls Aziz away, and his irritation proves to be even more childish than Mahmoud Ali's: he thinks Callendar has called him away because he found out his dinner hour and wants to interrupt him. Aziz cannot accept the English as casually as he pretends. As he enters the civil station's "arid tidiness, depression suddenly seized him": "The roads, named after victorious generals and intersecting at right angles, were symbolic of the net Great Britain had thrown over India. He felt caught in their meshes" (p. 16). Heroically--Aziz is rather like an Eastern version of Leonard Bast who ventures into personal relations with the English as Leonard had ventured into the English countryside--Aziz rides his bicycle furiously downhill without a brake or a bell as an act of joyous rebellion. But of what use would a brake or a bell be, he thinks, "in a land where the cyclist's only hope is to coast from face to face, and just before he collides with each it vanishes?" (p. 16). Lack of connection, the impossibility of friendship, is his concern, and his fears prove justified: although he summoned Aziz, the Civil Surgeon, Major Callendar, is "out" when Aziz arrives. Aziz has had to abandon his bicycle on the way with a flat tire and now watches two English women at Callendar's house appropriate the tonga with which he finished his journey. They ignore him and screech at his driver "Why doesn't the fool go?" Aziz begins to weary. "'Go, I will pay you tomorrow,' said Aziz to the driver, and as they went off he called out courteously, 'You are most welcome, ladies.' They did not reply, being full of their own affairs" (p. 17). Fatigued from walking--"There is something hostile in that soil"--he turns into a mosque to rest (p. 18). There he meets Mrs. Moore.

Forster presents her from the first as mystical, vaguely wavering, an atmosphere rather than a woman: "one of the pillars of the mosque seemed to quiver. It swayed in the gloom and detached itself. Belief in ghosts ran in his blood, but he sat firm. Another pillar moved, a third, and then an Englishwoman stepped out into the moonlight" (p. 20). Aziz directs his irritation with Callendar and the English women at her, assuming that she has forgotten to remove her shoes. When he finds she has he is polite but becomes instantly emotional when she makes the right response.

"Yes, I was right, was I not? If I remove my shoes, I am allowed?"

"Of course, but so few ladies take the trouble, especially if thinking no one is there to see."

"That makes no difference. God is here."

"Madam!"

"Please let me go."

"Oh, can I do you some service now or at any time?"

"No, thank you, really none--good night."

"May I know your name?"

She was now in the shadow of the gateway, so that he could not see her face, but she saw him, and she said with a change of voice, "Mrs. Moore." (p. 20)

Encouraged, he tells her of the stolen tonga, the interrupted dinner. She listens, and he bursts out, "You understand me, you know what others feel. Oh, if others resembled you!" But the enigmatic Mrs. Moore, "rather surprised," replies, "I don't think I understand people very well. I only know whether I like or dislike them." "Then you are an Oriental," Aziz answers (p. 23). He escorts her to the club, where he cannot, as an Indian, accept her invitation to enter, but where he no longer feels his grievances. Her sympathy has made him happy. "As he strolled downhill beneath the lovely moon," he feels as if he owns the land as much as the English or the Hindus.

Just as the second chapter sets up the contact between Mrs. Moore and India through Aziz, the next three extend that contact to Anglo-India. From the first, the civil station at Chandrapore has been presented as limited, physically and mentally. From its perch on a hill it cannot see Chandrapore as an excrescence washing back into the Ganges, choking with vegetation. "Viewed hence Chandrapore appears to be a totally different place. It is a city of gardens" (p. 8). With its view of tree-tops, Anglo-India has a distorted sense of reality. The civil station is "sensibly planned"; its "gridiron of bungalows . . . provokes no emotion." "It charms not, neither does it repel" (p. 8). It is Sawston East: its religion endorses the National Anthem, the King and the police; its rulers, with undeveloped hearts, pump up their emotions with fear and justify their cruelty as self-preservation. Anglo-India is the world of telegrams and anger, Wilcoxism turned official. While its members watch a performance of Cousin Kate Mrs. Moore makes her excursion to the mosque. One need not wonder why:

Their ignorance of the Arts was notable, and they lost no opportunity of proclaiming it to one another; it was the Public School attitude; flourishing more vigorously than it can yet hope to do in England. If Indians were shop, the Arts were bad form, and Ronny had repressed his mother when she enquired after his viola; a viola was almost a demerit, and certainly not the sort of instrument one mentioned in public. She noticed now how tolerant and conventional his judgments had become; when they had seen Cousin Kate in London together in the past, he had scorned it; now he pretended that it was a good play, in order to hurt nobody's feelings. An "unkind notice" had appeared in the local paper, "the sort of thing no white man could have written. . . ." (p. 40)

From this atmosphere Mrs. Moore escaped to visit the mosque. When she returns Cousin Kate is well into the third act, but Mr. Turton, the

Collector, extricates himself from the audience to compliment her son. "The long and the short of it is Heaslop's a sahib," he tells her; "he's the type we want, he's one of us" (p. 25). Forster drops other pieces of conversation into the chapter which explain what "one of us" means. When Adela wants to see Indians one lady says, "Wanting to see Indians! How new that sounds!" Another adds, "Natives! why, fancy!" "A third, more serious, said, 'Let me explain. Natives don't respect one any the more after meeting one, you see'" (p. 27). Mrs. Callendar, the wife of the Civil Surgeon, goes even further. "Why, the kindest thing one can do to a native is to let him die." To Mrs. Moore's "How if he went to heaven?" she answers, "He can go where he likes as long as he doesn't come near me" (pp. 26-27). But Mr. Turton, as official head of Anglo-India and conscious of his obligation as host to his new City Magistrate's mother and betrothed, promises a "bridge" party to "bridge the gulf between East and West."

Such efforts at connection are superficial, as Mrs. Moore learns when Ronny, after they have returned to their quarters, tries to quiz her concerning her meeting with Aziz in the mosque. A chance remark Aziz made against the Callendars causes him to jump. "Oh. So he told you that, did he? The Major will be interested. I wonder what was the aim of the remark." "Ronny, Ronny! you're never going to pass it on to Major Callendar?" "Yes, rather. I must, in fact! . . . If the Major heard I was disliked by any native subordinate of mine, I should expect him to pass it on to me." To her alarm he silences her objections with "Nothing's private in India . . . He had some motive in what he said"

(p. 33). Flaunting "phrases and arguments that he had picked up from older officials," he leaves her to think that although everything he had said was true, his summary of Aziz had been false: "the essential life of him had been slain" (p. 34). At the end of this chapter Mrs. Moore notices a wasp on a coatrack. "There he clung asleep, while jackals in the plain bayed their desires and mingled with the percussion of drums. 'Pretty dear,' said Mrs. Moore to the wasp. He did not wake, but her voice floated out, to swell the night's uneasiness" (p. 35). The wasp links her philosophically to nature; like the Hindus, she values life in all its forms. Coming as it does after her thoughts of Aziz, her sympathy somehow includes him. But the jackals are outside baying at the moon, mingling their howls with man-made drums. Forster has just said of the wasp that, like most Indian animals, they have no "sense of an interior." Nature flows in, out; nature is larger than man; the jackals may enter, like the wasp. Nothing is certain: the night is uneasy. But there may be more here. The jackals mingle with drums. Are they the hostility of nature in league with Anglo-India? They bay at the moon. Are they somehow baying at Mrs. Moore? On the way to their quarters Forster relates Mrs. Moore to the moon; she seems surrendered to the image. She "watched the moon," which in England "had seemed dead and alien; here she was caught in the shawl of night together with the earth and all the other stars. A sudden sense of unity, a kinship with the heavenly bodies, passed into the old woman and out, like water through a tank, leaving a strange freshness behind" (pp. 29-30). The reader saw her first in moonlight, through Aziz's eyes, wavering like a column in

the mosque. As she watches the moon she sees the mosque again, "long and domeless," and one is reminded of that "vault beyond vault, arch beyond arch" of the sky. The inconstant moon, changing, reflecting the strength of the sun but not containing the strength of the sun, pale but knowing the source of strength--the moon becomes early in the book an image strongly associated with Mrs. Moore. It is after her walk in the moonlight to the mosque that she tells Adela in the club, "My memory grows deplorable" (p. 30). Has she begun a downward journey into the subconscious which will end as detached from reality as that quivering "column" Aziz saw in the mosque? As she watched the Ganges, Forster writes a description of the river under the moon. It could be transferred easily onto Mrs. Moore as he presents her in these first chapters: "The radiance was already altering, whether through shifting of the moon or of the sand; soon the bright sheaf would be gone, and a circlet, itself to alter, be burnished upon the streaming void" (p. 32).

Mrs. Moore's education into the ways of Anglo-India continues at the Bridge Party. Its invitations have been discussed by the Indian recipients, the cynic Mahmoud Ali, the opportunist Ram Chand, and the "show" Indian--equivalent to a wealthy Uncle Tom--the Nawab Bahadur, whose opinion commands the others. They speak near the law courts, and Forster's description of pleaders waiting for clients and clients who sit in the dust waiting for pleaders swirls out past them to circles of humanity beyond conception or understanding not unlike the vaults of the sky:

These had not received a card from Mr. Turton. And there were circles even beyond these--people who wore nothing but a loincloth, people who wore not even that, and spent their lives in knocking two sticks together before a scarlet doll--humanity grading and drifting beyond the educated vision, until no earthly invitation can embrace it. (p. 37)

As the sky drifts beyond vision until no color, no attribute can define it, until Chandrapore and the earth become unimportant by comparison, so these shadowy millions, who seem to go back not only into space but also into time, make the immediate squabble between English and Indian insignificant. At the party innocent remarks bristle with barbs, casual exchanges conceal scars of emotion. "What do you think of the Aryan Brother in a topi and spats?" Ronny asks Adela condescendingly. Neither she nor Mrs. Moore can answer. They gaze sadly at the Indians gathered in a clump at the other side of the tennis lawn. Ronny answers his own question: "The educated Indians will be no good to us if there's a row, it's simply not worth while conciliating them, that's why they don't matter. Most of the people you see are seditious at heart, and the rest'd run squealing" (p. 39). After he speaks there is a strange passage which connects the hatred latent in his remarks with cosmic indifference, which may be the most devastating form of hostility:

There was a silence when he had finished speaking, on both sides of the court; at least, more ladies joined the English group, but their words seemed to die as soon as uttered. Some kites hovered overhead, impartial, over the kites passed the mass of a vulture, and with an impartiality exceeding all, the sky, not deeply coloured but translucent, poured light from its whole circumference. It seemed unlikely that the series

stopped there. Beyond the sky must not there be something that overarches all the skies, more impartial even than they? Beyond which again . . . (pp. 39-40)

Forster deliberately leaves that last sentence unfinished. The limitless vastness of the arch image will return at the end to close the chapter when, after being disappointed in the English for their rudeness, the Indians for their timidity, but most of all in her son for his stupidity, Mrs. Moore finds her Christian moorings slipping. The arch, now linked to an echo, anticipates the Marabar:

Mrs. Moore felt that she had made a mistake in mentioning God, but she found him increasingly difficult to avoid as she grew older, and he had been constantly in her thoughts since she entered India, though oddly enough he satisfied her less. She must needs pronounce his name frequently, as the greatest she knew, yet she had never found it less efficacious. Outside the arch there seemed always an arch, beyond the remotest echo a silence. And she regretted afterwards that she had not kept to the real serious subject that had caused her to visit India--namely, the relationship between Ronny and Adela. Would they, or would they not, succeed in becoming engaged to be married? (p. 52)

Later she will not care. Later personal relations will sink into that lower and unimportant deposit under the toddy palms and neem trees of Chandrapore. Now she cares enough to be worried over her son's attitudes. Bonamy Dobrée's criticism that in A Passage to India the people Forster dislikes are flat is true of Ronny, but Forster tries to be fair.¹⁴ Ronny is Paul Wilcox trying to do a good job, an English empire-builder homogenized by the Public School and neutralized by the Foreign Service into a programmed behavior which passes for morality under the name of British fair play. When Mrs. Moore tries to explain Adela's opinion of Anglo-India to him--"She doesn't think

they behave pleasantly to Indians, you see."--he bursts out with "Oh, how like a woman to worry over a side-issue!" (p. 49). Ronny constitutes white supremacy in linen trousers and a topi, but Forster, even while exposing him, admits his sincerity. Ronny's frustration with his position is evident: "We're not out here for the purpose of behaving pleasantly! . . . We're out here to do justice and keep the peace. . . . India isn't a drawing-room. . . . I am out here to work, mind, to hold this wretched country by force. I'm not a missionary. . . . We're not pleasant in India, and we don't intend to be pleasant. We've something more important to do" (pp. 49-50). Forster comments: "He spoke sincerely. Every day he worked hard in the court trying to decide which of two untrue accounts was the less untrue, trying to dispense justice fearlessly, to protect the weak against the less weak, the incoherent against the plausible, surrounded by lies and flattery" (p. 50). But there is still something wrong in Ronny's argument, and although Forster allows some sympathy for the official dehydrated by his duties, Mrs. Moore tests his logic in the crucible of her own mind and finds his mixture of fear and force, however sincere, wanting: "His words without his voice might have impressed her, but when she heard the self-satisfied lilt of them, when she saw the mouth moving so complacently and competently beneath the little red nose, she felt, quite illogically, that this was not the last word on India. One touch of regret--not the canny substitute but the true regret from the heart--would have made him a different man, and the British Empire a different institution" (p. 51). "God . . . is . . . love," she tells him with a hesitation arising from fear of hurting him

rather than from a lack of conviction. Like the wasp, these words will return later at the festival of the Birth of Krishna, muddled into "God si love," amplifying like a gong the carelessness, the casualness, the inconsistency of India. By contrast its naiveté is preferable to the regimen of Anglo-India. Adela, visualizing her life with Ronny, with its endless rounds of social calls and other "Bridge Parties," knows "She would see India always as a frieze, never as a spirit." She would eat "the food of exiles, cooked by servants who did not understand it." She would learn to snub new-comers, as she had been snubbed, until they acquired acceptable attitudes; she would know only the imperative mood in Urdu, like Mrs. Turton. In Anglo-India she recognized "something that was both insidious and tough, and against which she needed allies" (pp. 47-48). The battle lines, by the end of the fifth chapter, have been drawn. The thesis of Forster's dialectic is clearly Anglo-India, Ronny, the Turtons, the Callendars. The antithesis, less clear at this point, is Aziz, Mrs. Moore, and those silent, childlike Indians on the other side of the tennis lawn. Between the two, trying to make a judgment, is Adela.

Just as the "Bridge Party" was an excursion into the thesis of Anglo-India, the invitation to meet some Indians which Mrs. Moore and Adela accept from Fielding, the Principal of Government College, is an excursion into the antithesis. The next five chapters will establish the antithesis more firmly, through Fielding's relationship with Aziz. Fielding's "party" provides a dialectical counterweight to Anglo-India's "Bridge Party." Forster allows the reader to arrive early, with Aziz,

and creates a behind-the-scene honesty which anticipates the sincerity that is the dominant note, refreshing after the polite hatreds of "the club." As restraint had dictated action there, a lack of restraint allows action to develop at Fielding's. Fielding is dressing in his bedroom after a bath; he and Aziz talk through the door, shouting back and forth at each other. The necessity for raised voices lifts Aziz's spirits, and when Fielding steps on his last collar stud Aziz offers his. Claiming it is an extra one, he wrenches off his collar and hands Fielding a gold stud his brother-in-law had brought him from Europe. There is something pathetic in Aziz's desperate need for acceptance. When Fielding tells him to "make yourself at home" Aziz accepts the invitation literally.

"May I really, Mr. Fielding? It's very good of you," he called back; "I like unconventional behaviour so extremely." His spirits flared up, he glanced round the living-room. Some luxury in it, but no order--nothing to intimidate poor Indians. (p. 63)

Forster dedicated A Passage to India to a Mohammedan friend, Syed Ross Masood, of whom he wrote: "He lived by his emotions and instincts. . . he was fantastically generous, incredibly hospitable, and always happiest when he was giving something away."¹⁵ That is Aziz. We have not met anyone quite like him before in Forster's work. We have met Fielding. Fielding is an older Ansell:

The world, he believed, 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--a creed ill suited to Chandrapore, but he had come out too late to lose it. (p. 62)

"I travel light. . . . That's part of my case against marriage. I'm a holy man minus the holiness. . . . I believe in teaching

people to be individuals, and to understand other individuals. It's the only thing I do believe in." (p. 121)

He is also Philip Herriton from Where Angels Fear to Tread:

"I shall not really be intimate with this fellow [Aziz]," Fielding thought, and then "nor with anyone." That was the corollary. And he had to confess that he really didn't mind, that he was content to help people, and like them as long as they didn't object, and if they objected pass on serenely. Experience can do much, and all that he had learnt in England and Europe was an assistance to him, and helped him towards clarity, but clarity prevented him from experiencing something else. (p. 118)

The "something else" is the complete abandonment of the Indians to impulsive feeling and a childlike reaction to environment. Opening onto a garden, Fielding's veranda, with its blue pillars and arches, makes Aziz happy; he immediately articulates his happiness by inviting Mrs. Moore and Adela to his own quarters.¹⁶ Then he thinks with horror of his bungalow, a shanty near a bazaar, its one room infested with flies. He returns to admiring Fielding's room, and its arches remind him of the mosque. He turns the conversation, hoping the ladies will forget the invitation, and asks Adela innocently, "Why not settle altogether in India?" Without thinking, she answers, "I'm afraid I can't do that," not realizing that in doing so she has announced that she will not marry Ronny. The remark is passed over, but not Aziz's invitation. The ladies remind him of it, and to avoid disaster, he grasps wildly at an alternative, an excursion to the Marabar Caves. Another guest, the Hindu Professor Godbole, tries to describe the caves, but cannot.¹⁷ Ronny interrupts the party to pull the women away to polo, but just before they leave, Godbole, who has promised a song, unexpectedly says he "may sing now."¹⁸ Afterwards he explains:

"It was a religious song. I placed myself in the position of a milkmaiden. I say to Shri Krishna, 'Come! come to me only! The god refuses to come. I grow humble and say: 'Do not come to me only. Multiply yourself into a hundred Krishnas, and let one go to each of my hundred companions, but one, O Lord of the Universe, come to me.' He refuses to come. This is repeated several times. The song is composed in a raga appropriate to the present hour, which is the evening."

"But He comes in some other song, I hope?" said Mrs. Moore gently.

"Oh, no, he refuses to come," repeated Godbole, perhaps not understanding her question. "I say to Him, Come, come, come, come, come, come. He neglects to come."

Ronny's steps had died away, and there was a moment of absolute silence. No ripple disturbed the water, no leaf stirred. (p. 80)

K. W. Gransden may have been right when he wrote that this is Mrs. Moore's last attempt at being Western. Her "gently" is almost a plea, and the absolute silence after her son's departure may be, in Gransden's words, "the beginning of India's conquest by negation, absence, vagueness; to which the old woman will herself finally surrender."¹⁹

Meanwhile Adela surrenders to Ronny's invitation to watch the polo match. But she is beginning to dislike him. "It was the qualified bray of the callow official, the 'I am not perfect, but--' that got on her nerves" (p. 81). She impulsively tells him that she cannot marry him, and since they have been "awfully British over it," they can calmly wonder about the name of a green bird overhead. They try to label nature, but nature in India refuses category. "It would somehow have solaced their hearts," Forster writes, if they could have identified it, but Adela, wiser than Ronny, says, "But nothing in India is identifiable, the mere asking of a question causes it to disappear or to merge in something else" (p. 86). Forster underscores the quality of vastness--of the

sky, the land, the people--dissolving into arches, vaults, out of sight, beyond recognition or definition, even in this trivial incident. The mystery of India, which Adela's mind touches here, anticipates the accident they experience in the Nawab Bahadur's car after the polo match. In the car nature in the form of darkness "seemed to well out of the meagre vegetation, entirely covering the fields each side of them before it brimmed over the road" (p. 88). The limitlessness of the dark makes them talk "feebly" and feel "unimportant" (p. 88). The sense of a looming presence in nature forces them to huddle together. There is a love scene played on no violet-covered Italian hillside or Cambridge dell; nature in India does not coddle the flesh so much as curdle the blood. Shrinking together, they touch hands. Then there is an accident. A vague, large animal has run into the car and disappeared, throwing it into a ditch. The Nawab Bahadur murmurs mysteriously, "Ah, now I begin to understand," and apologizes for the accident. Ronny, thinking pompously that apologies "were his due," does not consider them odd under the circumstances. They are rescued by Miss Derek, the recalcitrant secretary from a native state who has stolen "her" maharajah's car and brags about her cleverness. When Ronny and Adela return and tell Mrs. Moore of the accident, she shivers "A ghost!" and asks for her Patience cards. Adela plays with her. Mrs. Moore mumbles "Black knave on a red queen . . ." and Adela's "Mrs. Moore, if one isn't absolutely honest,

what is the use of existing?" seems an odd afterthought after her acceptance of Ronny. Adela persists in trying to unravel the mystery of herself, of India.

"What made you call it a ghost?"
 "Call what a ghost?"
 "The animal thing that hit us. Didn't you say, 'Oh, a ghost,' in passing."
 "I couldn't have been thinking of what I was saying."
 "Ah, very likely."
 And they went on with their Patience. (p. 98)

While they play, the Nawab Bahadur down in Chandrapore remembers that nine years ago, when he first had a car, he ran over a drunken man and killed him "and the man had been waiting for him ever since."²⁰ "None of the English people knew of this, nor did the chauffeur; it was a racial secret communicable more by blood than speech" (p. 99). Murmuring "Red ten on a black knave" Mrs. Moore, with her knowledge of the dead man, has connected occultly with India.²¹

The Aziz-Fielding friendship which began at Fielding's party is extended through Aziz's illness--a minor fever which keeps him in bed and brings friends to his room. The dominant note at Fielding's party had been impulse; here it becomes irrationality. The tone is set almost at once. Aziz calls his servant's attention to a swarm of flies on an electric cord--minus electricity--which dangles from the ceiling.

"Huzoor, those are flies."
 "Good, good, they are, excellent, but why have I called you?"
 "To drive them elsewhere," said Hassan, after painful thought.
 "Driven elsewhere, they always return."
 "Huzoor."

"You must make some arrangement against flies; that is why you are my servant," said Aziz gently.

Hassan would call the little boy to borrow the step-ladder from Mahmoud Ali's house; he would order the cook to light the Primus stove and heat water; he would personally ascend the steps with a bucket in his arms, and dip the end of the coil into it.

"Good, very good. Now what have you to do?"

"Kill flies."

"Good, Do it."

Hassan withdrew, the plan almost lodged in his head, and began to look for the little boy. Not finding him, his steps grew slower, and he stole back to his post on the verandah, but did not go on testing his rupees, in case his master heard them clink. On twittered the Sunday bells [of the missionaries' church]; the East had returned to the East via the suburbs of England, and had become ridiculous during the detour. (p. 102)

As ridiculous as the servant Hassan is, Aziz, the Cambridge-educated Hamidullah and the police inspector Mr. Haq are no better. When they learn that the Hindu Professor Godbole is ill with diarrhea and that the Hindu Dr. Panna Lal is his physician, they suspect cholera. Aziz is quick to cry out "Why have I not been informed?" and concludes that because Godbole and his doctor are Hindus they "keep everything dark" (p. 104). Mr. Haq pronounces "All illness proceeds from Hindus." Then as instantly as the prejudice flared up, it dies. Aziz recites a Moslem poem. Ironically, Forster's description of it explains the milkmaid's song that was sung by Godbole, and this similarity between the Moslem and Hindu need of God makes the religious prejudice even more irrational: "Less explicit than the call to Krishna, it voiced our loneliness never-

the less, our isolation, our need for the Friend who never comes yet is not entirely disproved" (p. 106). To reinforce the irrationality of the scene, the Hindu Dr. Panna Lal--whom they have just been maligning--and the Hindu Ram Chand arrive, then Fielding. The prejudice turns toward the English. They quiz Fielding about the morality of England and her right to rule India. He advises them to chuck the English out. Ironically Hamidullah had stopped by to see Aziz on his way to a committee which Forster describes as "nationalist in tendency," motivated by hatred of the English. Irrationality is complete as Hamidullah admits that the Indians cannot "co-ordinate." Forster comments: "and if the English were to leave India, the committee would vanish also" (p. 106).

All leave Aziz's bedside except Fielding, but before Forster continues the scene he inserts a brief two-paragraph chapter which places the squabbles of Englishmen and Indians in their proper, insignificant, cosmic place. "When the seven gentlemen who had held such various opinions inside the bungalow came out of it, they were aware of a common burden, a vague threat which they called 'the bad weather coming'" (p. 114). What they felt was the hot season of India. But there is more, the sinister indifference of nature:

It matters so little to the majority of living beings what the minority, that calls itself human, desires or decides. Most of the inhabitants of India do not mind how India is governed. . . . the inarticulate world is closer at hand and readier to resume control as soon as men are tired.
(p. 114)

The sun was "returning to his kingdom with power but without beauty-- that was the sinister feature" (p. 115). "His cruelty would have been tolerable" if there had been beauty. "Through excess of light, he failed to triumph. . . . He was not the unattainable friend . . . he was not the eternal promise, the never-withdrawn suggestion that haunts our consciousness; he was merely a creature like the rest, and so debarred from glory" (p. 115). No longer can man find the promise of life's meaning in nature, a suggestion of divinity. Not even in nature's strongest visible force, the sun, which now joins man in insignificance in a cosmic expanse, can Forster find stability or strength. The precariousness and hostility of the earth extend into the heavens.

The insertion of this chapter between the irrationality of the Moslem-Hindu visitors to Aziz's bedside and the "reasonableness" of Fielding's talk with Aziz afterwards illustrates by juxtaposition the equal pettiness of both irrationality and reason. "Through excess of light" the sun "failed to triumph" may anticipate Fielding's failure through his intellect to connect with humanity. It is in this scene with Aziz that Forster gives that Ansell-like description of Fielding: his inability to be intimate with anyone, the failure of his experience, education and culture to provide him with a capacity for love. "Experi-

ence . . . helped him towards clarity, but clarity prevented him from experiencing something else" (p. 118). The Indians in their muddle of irrationality and Fielding in his cocoon of reason are equally inept. Aziz turns Fielding's idea of "travelling light" over in his mind. "So this was why Mr. Fielding and a few others were so fearless! They had nothing to lose" (p. 121). Aziz thinks comfortably that, bound as he is to society and Islam through his children, "Though he lived so vaguely in this flimsy bungalow, nevertheless he was placed, placed" (p. 121). It is a part of Forster's irony that Aziz's assignment by race and religion to a certain "place" will ruin him soon. There is no certain peace, either in the earth or in personal relations.

Caves

The vastness of space in "Mosque" is extended into the vastness of time in "Caves." In "Mosque" limitlessness went up into the universe; in "Caves" expansion goes down and back into the earth, beyond time. Before such endless vistas man's perception becomes microscopic

and disappears. In the immensity of such heights and depths man's fragile hold on the earth and his feeble grasp of personal relations become more and more tentative and break away. Without boundaries space, by which man connects with the earth, disappears; without limitations time, in which man develops personal relations, dissolves. Confronted by the absolute indifference of such limitlessness, individual life becomes a vacuum sucked dry of significance. Without a foothold in space or a mooring in time man hangs paralyzed in a void, with no past, no future, no destiny, no human affection which can give his life meaning. Industrial England in Howards End had hinted at the danger; India confirms it. The first lines of "Caves" set the mood.

The Ganges, though flowing from the foot of Vishnu and through Siva's hair, is not an ancient stream. Geology, looking further than religion, knows of a time when neither the river nor the Himalayas that nourished it existed, and an ocean flowed over the holy places of Hindustan. (p. 123)

In this setting the Paleozoic is yesterday, India a Precambrian sand pile for the amusement of gods. But even before the gods took their seats on newly formed mountains and "contrived" the Ganges, the Marabar hills existed, "older than anything in the world . . . older than all spirit." Untouched by seas or gods, they are linked to nothing but the sun, their origin:

The mountains rose, their debris silted up the ocean, the gods took their seats on them and contrived the river, and the India we call immemorial came into being. But India is really far older. In the days of the prehistoric ocean the southern part of the peninsula already existed, and the high places of Dravidia have been land since land began, and have seen on the one side the sinking of a continent that joined them to Africa, and on the other the upheaval of the Himalayas from a sea. They are older than anything in the world. No

water has ever covered them, and the sun who has watched them for countless aeons may still discern in their outlines forms that were his before our globe was torn from his bosom. If flesh of the sun's flesh is to be touched anywhere, it is here, among the incredible antiquity of these hills. (p. 123)

In this incredible antiquity the Marabar Hills "stand knee-deep, throat-deep, in the advancing soil." Hollow with caves they rise "insanely."

There is something unspeakable in these outposts. They are like nothing else in the world. . . . they are older than all spirit. . . . Some saddhus did once settle in a cave, but they were smoked out, and even Buddha, who must have passed this way down to the Bo Tree of Gya, shunned a renunciation more complete than his own. . . . Nothing, nothing attaches to them, and their reputation . . . does not depend upon human speech. It is as if the surrounding plain or the passing birds have taken upon themselves to exclaim "extraordinary," and the word has taken root in the air, and been inhaled by mankind. (p. 124)

When one asks "What is older than spirit" one is faced with the answer such limitlessness impels: the void. Moreover, these hollow hills resist man's attempt to establish spirit. The saddhus were "smoked out, and even Buddha . . . shunned a renunciation more complete than his own." Is the void then which surrounds the earth and all things and which stretches limitlessly a nothingness? In "Mosque" the arch-beyond-arch, vault-beyond-vault of sky suggested as much. Here Forster's repetitive use of "nothing, nothing" is not accidental. He may be attempting a description of the void. "Nothing, nothing attaches" to the Marabar hills, and "nothing, nothing would be added to the sum of good or evil" if mankind were to grow curious and dig in these caves (p. 125). A nothingness which is absolute, a limitlessness which may be the universe in miniature is hinted at in Forster's description of the Kawa Dol: "One of them [the caves] is rumoured within the boulder that swings on the

summit of the highest of the hills; a bubble-shaped cave that has neither ceiling nor floor, and mirrors its own darkness in every direction infinitely" (p. 125). "They are dark caves," and if one strikes a match "Immediately another flame rises in the depths of the rock and moves towards the surface like an imprisoned spirit. . . . The two flames approach and strive to unite, but cannot, because one of them breathes air, the other stone" (pp. 124-125) The sense of place, the longing of man to relate to the universe through the earth is doomed from the very nature of man and the earth: one "breathes air, the other stone." Connection is impossible: in the Marabar Forster's theme of connecting with the earth goes out as surely as the match flame. He has one card left to play: personal relations. Can they survive timelessness?

Toward the Marabar--those images of nothingness--Aziz hurries with frantic preparations for the outing he promised Mrs. Moore and Adela. Compared with the total indifference of the Dravidian hills, his worry over pleasing his guests seems ridiculous. Religion in that setting dwindles into a squabble over diet. The Hindu Professor Godbole "would take tea . . . and rice if cooked by a Brahman; but not meat . . . a slice of beef upon a distant plate would wreck his happiness" (p. 127). And "over ham Aziz's own religion raised its voice: he did not fancy other people eating ham. Trouble after trouble encountered him. . ." (p. 127). Almost at once muddle enters personal relations and contributes to their destruction. Overzealous that his expedition shall have the right "tone," Aziz persuades Adela to send back Ronny's servant, so they can "all be Moslems together." He sincerely believes he is be-

ing jovial when he introduces his cousin, Mr. Mohammed Latif, as an old-fashioned Indian who prefers to salaam rather than shake hands. "See, he hasn't understood," Aziz tells them, "he knows no English." "'You spick lie,' said the old man gently" (p. 129). When Aziz laughingly threatens to play "one or two practical jokes" for Mrs. Moore and Adela at the caves they receive the news with something less than elation. Fielding misses the train because Godbole took too long over a prayer.²² The ladies travel in "purdah," a carriage to themselves, and their chatter over Anglo-Indian wives leads to a perception which undermines Mrs. Moore's belief in personal relationships. The progression is masterfully done. Adela gossips about wives who leave their husbands for the hills in the Hot Weather:

"I've no patience with these women here who leave their husbands grilling in the plains. Mrs. McBryde hasn't stopped down once since she married; she leaves her quite intelligent husband alone half the year, and then's surprised she's out of touch with him."

"She has children, you see."

"Oh yes, that's true," said Miss Quested, disconcerted.

"It is the children who are the first consideration.

Until they are grown up, and married off. When that happens one has again the right to live for oneself--in the plains or the hills, as suits."

"Oh, yes, you're perfectly right. I never thought it out."

"If one has not become too stupid and old." She handed her empty cup to the servant. (pp. 134-135)

Thoughts of maternal sacrifice direct Mrs. Moore's attention to her own mission in India, the marriage of Adela and Ronny. Once that is accomplished, she can live for herself--if. . . . But there is a sense of waste, of too much time spent over trivia. Even marriage, that closest human relation, offers no real connection:

She felt increasingly (vision or nightmare?) that, though people are important, the relations between them are not, and that in particular too much fuss has been made over marriage; centuries of carnal embracement, yet man is no nearer to understanding man. And to-day she felt this with such force that it seemed itself a relationship, itself a person who was trying to take hold of her hand. (p. 135)

Looking out at the Indian countryside with its limitless fields, she connects her detachment with the timelessness of India.

How can the mind take hold of such a country? Generations of invaders have tried, but they remain in exile. The important towns they build are only retreats, their quarrels the malaise of men who cannot find their way home. India knows of their trouble. She knows of the whole world's trouble, to its uttermost depth. She calls "Come" through her hundred mouths, through objects ridiculous and august. But come to what? She has never defined. She is not a promise, only an appeal. (p. 136)

Godbole too had cried "Come." But Godbole's Krishna, like M. Godot, refuses. Mrs. Moore's question, "But come to what?" anticipates not only the nothingness of the void but the annihilation of personal relations.

The insignificance of man is reinforced by their first sight of the Marabar hills, "gods to whom earth is a ghost" (p. 137). Confronted by such timelessness, humanity--smaller, younger than earth--can expect to be less than a ghost. The experience of nothingness at the caves seems anticipated when Adela and Mrs. Moore look eagerly for the dawn, "But at the supreme moment, when night should have died and day lived, nothing occurred. It was as if virtue had failed in the celestial fount" (p. 137). The "false dawn" of the East, explained so easily by the Superintendent of Police, Mr. McBryde, as dust in the upper layers of the atmosphere, becomes another unfulfilled expectation, another experience nullified. As they approach the caves emptiness amplifies:

As the elephant moved towards the hills . . . a new quality occurred, a spiritual silence which invaded more senses than the ear. Life went on as usual, but had no consequences, that is to say, sounds did not echo or thoughts develop. Everything seemed cut off at its root, and therefore infected with illusion. (p. 140)

"Life went on as usual, but had no consequences. . . ." Does Forster mean that if life went on, even for an instant, as unusual, life would have consequences, and echoes and thoughts would develop? The closer they get to the caves the more "infected with illusion" things seem. Adela thinks she sees a snake, then recognizes the twisted stump of a toddy-palm. But to be polite, Aziz courteously insists that it is a snake: his anxiety over personal relations has made truth relative to illusion. "The elephant walked straight at the Kawa Dol as if she would knock for admission with her forehead . . ." (p. 141). The elephant takes Adela and Mrs. Moore straight to that hollow abyss balancing precariously, which contains infinite darkness--a darkness which may break, if it falls, like an Easter egg--into nothing. The tensions of personal relations increase. At the "camp" which they set up as a base of operations, Aziz and Mrs. Moore argue stupidly over Mrs. Moore's goodness.

"You are absolutely unlike the others, I assure you. You will never be rude to my people."

"I am told we all get rude after a year."

"Then you are told a lie," he flashed, for she had spoken the truth and it touched him on the raw. . . . her error broke up their conversation . . . which scattered . . . and left them in the middle of the hills. (p. 146)

They "address themselves to sightseeing." In the cave, crowded with villagers, Mrs. Moore nearly faints. Here is humanity; here are personal relations en masse. Mrs. Moore "couldn't breathe, and some vile naked thing struck her face and settled on her mouth like a pad." It is

a baby's hand. She hits her head trying to escape; a terrible echo begins. The echo in a Marabar cave is unlike other echoes: "it is entirely devoid of distinction. Whatever is said, the same monotonous noise replies . . . 'Boum' is the sound as far as the human alphabet can express it, or 'bou-oum,' or 'ou-Boum,'--utterly dull" (p. 147). She escapes and insists that Aziz and Adela leave her at the "camp" while they go by themselves to see the caves. They leave her, and she tries to write her children in England, "but the echo began in some indescribable way to undermine her hold on life" (p. 149). It murmured "Pathos, piety, courage--they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value" (p. 149). She sets aside her letter. Personal relations--even those with a humanized Western God--are swallowed up in the emptiness of "Boum."

But suddenly, at the edge of her mind, Religion 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". . . . she realized that she didn't want to write to her children, didn't want to communicate with anyone, not even with God. . . . She lost 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. 150)

For an instant in the cave life had been unusual for Mrs. Moore and that instant has had consequences. Echoes and thoughts have developed. She has looked into the void and come out exhausted and detached. Personal relations have been annihilated, as hope in the efficacy of the earth has been annihilated.

But something more seems to have happened. In the lost hope of connection with the earth and in the annihilation of personal relations

Mrs. Moore seems to have learned something: there is a positive as well as a negative element in her detachment. She has not only heard but assimilated the echo in the cave: she carries it away with her. Just after she feels the baby's hand--"some vile naked thing"--and hears "ou-boum," Forster writes of the echo:

Even the striking of a match starts a little worm coiling, which is too small to complete a circle but is eternally watchful. 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. (pp. 147-148)

The words used to describe the baby's hand relate to the snake-worm image of the echoes. If the baby represents elemental life--consciousness--contact with it starts the echo just as the sound of voices or the striking of a match start smaller echoes. Whatever the echo is, it reacts to overt conscious effort, the striking of a match or the sounding of a voice. The worm does not start until the match strikes, until people talk: then the cave is stuffed with snakes. The subconscious mind is dependent for its active life on the conscious mind; but it may exist dormant and independent; it may watch "eternally" by itself. Forster's use of the match reminds the reader here of his earlier description of the match flame in the polished granite walls of the Marabar. The match flame on this side starts another match flame in the granite, as the sound of striking and talking starts echoes. The match flame on this side needs air, without which conscious life cannot exist. If consciousness is on this side--in the baby, in people who talk and strike matches--and the reflected flame and coiling echoes are results of this presence of consciousness, then the reflected flame and the echoes could

be the subconscious which exists in the granite, in the air, waiting to be made active. When the flames, the one on this side which breathed air and the one in the granite which breathed stone, tried to unite, the flame on this side went out. Who is to say that the flame which is capable of being reflected in the granite does not exist permanently there, like Ansell's cow, whether consciousness is present to "see" it or not? Forster's idea that the little worm, too feeble to complete a circle, can be "eternally watchful" indicates that a presence independent of man exists in the granite, in the air. The universe may be an abyss of nothingness, a Kawa Dol, but in that nothingness may be a subconscious awareness watching, waiting. Forster was influenced by McTaggart's ideas of a one-substance universe and also by Samuel Butler's revolt against Darwin's banishment of mind from the universe. In the Note-Books Butler wrote:

We should realise that all space is at all times full of a stuff endowed with a mind and that both stuff and mind are immaterial and imperceptible so long as they are undisturbed, but the moment they are disturbed the stuff becomes material and the mind perceptible.²³

For Butler, mind is a function of matter, matter a function of mind.²⁴ Both fuse in the moment of disturbance. The "stuff" in space which is "endowed with a mind . . . becomes material and the mind perceptible" when it is disturbed. In 1913 Forster visited caves near Aurangabad and wrote in "Indian Entries": "The Hindu caves . . . had no beauty either: the brute aroused instead of somnolent: that was all."²⁵ "The brute aroused instead of somnolent" seems close to Butler's idea of a dormant "stuff" which can become material and perceptible through disturbance.

It is significant that Mrs. Moore hits the wall of the cave with her head before the echo begins. She has recoiled from the touch of a baby's hand--an innocent human relation, surely, but also a contact with another consciousness--and her hitting the wall of the cave with her head disturbed the echo into life. It is even more significant that only after she succumbs to fatigue--after the protecting barriers of her own conscious mind are let down--does the echo murmur, "Pathos, piety, courage--they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value" (p. 149). Nothing matters because everything is one: in Hegel's terms, Pure Being and Nothingness are one.²⁶ Mrs. Moore's momentary collapse outside the cave may be her adjustment to this knowledge. After Adela has gone back to Chandrapore in Miss Derek's car, Fielding finds Mrs. Moore apathetic and withdrawn. She "sat swinging her foot, and appeared sulky and stupid." When Fielding says, "Aziz is a charming fellow," she agrees "with a yawn" (p. 157). Later she seems to understand her experience. When Adela asks her, "What is this echo?" in her own head, Mrs. Moore answers, "If you don't know, you don't know; I can't tell you" (p. 200). She cannot tell Adela because such knowledge can be gained only from direct psychic experience. Mrs. Moore has made contact with the subconscious of the universe and found it a Nothing which is Everything. Her boredom with life afterwards may be her knowledge that the conscious mind is not really life. Life--the combination of consciousness with subconsciousness--does not begin until the match flame starts a reflected match flame, until voices sound echoes. Subconscious life exists always, "eternally watchful."

If there is absence in the caves there is this eternally watchful presence also. Professor Godbole may be articulating Mrs. Moore's experience later in "Caves" when he tells Fielding, "Yet absence implies presence, absence is not non-existence, and we are therefore entitled to repeat, 'Come, come, come, come'" (p. 178). The reflected flame and the echo may be the Not-Self of the Hindus, that opposite Atman with which we must reconcile ourselves before we can find reality. Mrs. Moore found reality in the cave by momentarily living on the subconscious level. Her collapse outside may have been caused by her knowledge that to function longer on the subconscious level--to live, in other words, fully--one must die. "The bringing of the conscious and the unconscious into contact," writes Wilfred Stone, ". . . are psychic acts that may have enormous consequences."²⁷ They do. The flame on this side goes out: the flame on the other side may continue, unperceived but existent, like the Kawa Dol, mirroring "its own darkness in every direction infinitely." Confronted with that knowledge Mrs. Moore collapses into detachment. She "didn't want to communicate with anyone, not even with God" (p. 150). If everything and nothing are one, the earth loses its identity as a separate entity and relations with other conscious minds dwindle to absurdity.

Absurdity is the result of Adela's relationship with Aziz. They leave Mrs. Moore to rest and go with a guide into several caves. "Aziz was 'pretty sure they should come on some interesting old carvings soon,' but only meant he wished there were some carvings" (p. 151). On the way the air, "like a warm bath into which hotter water is trickling constantly,"

seems to steam from a hostile earth (p. 150). One remembers that this is the place where "everything seemed cut off at its root, and therefore infected with illusion" (p. 140). In the heat the stones seem to promise that a waiting presence will soon quicken to perception: "the boulders said, 'I am alive,' the small stones answered, 'I am almost alive'" (p. 151). One rock, nicked in a pattern which reminds Adela of the tracks in the dust made by the Nawab Bahadur's car--the scene of that accident which caused her reconciliation with Ronny--causes her to ask, "What about love?" Thinking about love, she asks Aziz the silly question about multiple wives which causes him to dash into another cave to escape her. The tragi-comedy begins with Miss Derek's arrival, Adela's disappearance, Adela at the car, Fielding with Mrs. Moore, Miss Derek and Adela returning to Chandrapore, and Aziz thinking that his guests are happy because he promised them that they could do as they pleased. When they return to town Aziz is arrested, Adela's field glasses with a broken strap in his pocket as evidence. The illusions of Anglo-India become its logic: Aziz must have persuaded Mrs. Moore not to accompany them; he must have bribed the Brahman cook of Professor Godbole to wait at the station; perhaps he bribed Godbole to linger at his prayers, to delay Fielding's arrival. The charge is attempted rape. Aziz's house is rifled, his bureau drawer is brought to the police station and a photograph of his wife is exhibited as evidence of his interest in "women." The Indians, on their side, gather forces and hire an anti-British lawyer from Calcutta. Only Professor Godbole remains detached. For him the evil was performed by Aziz, by the guide, by Fielding, by himself, by his students, by Adela:

"When evil occurs, it expresses the whole of the universe. Similarly when good occurs" (p. 178) But Godbole leaves, to take a job in an Indian state.

Adela becomes the Great White Goddess of Anglo-India. With cactus spines gathered in her tumbling dash downhill to Miss Derek's car and an echo in her head, she presents a pitiable sight. Those who had disliked her before use her misfortune to whip up their own hatreds. Fear of a native uprising becomes an excuse for the English to huddle together: even the silly, plump--but blond and therefore British--Mrs. Blakiston, clasping her bubbling baby, is promised protection by Mrs. Turton, who towers "by her side like Pallas Athene" (p. 181). The absurdity of Adela's accusation is extended between Anglo-India and India. "Any news from the town?" is answered with "Better act as if nothing's happened" in whispers. Personal relations become a comedy of reconciliations between habitual enemies in the common cause against Aziz. Only Fielding defends him. For this defection he is soundly condemned, especially when he refuses to stand when Ronny enters the room. Ronny, victim of outraged protocol, joins Adela on the pedestal of martyrdom. But her role as goddess is the harder of the two. As Frederick Crews says, she must "grapple with metaphysics" whether she wants to or not.²⁸ Certainly she has no choice. She cannot seem to rely on perception or memory and feels, in Crews' words, "blocked off from meaning." As she lies inert, allowing the spines to be picked out of her flesh by Miss Derek and Mrs. McBryde, she hates to be touched. Her "In space things touch, in time things part" may be just a comment on her experience in

India, as Alan Wilde thinks it is, or it may be the recital of a formula to which she can cling for security.²⁹ If she has encountered a mysterious presence in the cave which "watches eternally" she may well have been thrown outside reality as she had always known it, with its comfortable existence of space and time. Her remark may be a reminder to herself that time and space do exist; she may be attempting to reestablish a footing in a recognizable reality where absolute nothing and everything are not one, where the earth and time and space are identifiable. The pain of the cactus spines and her aversion to being touched only increase her irritation with the people who try to help her. Now that she has faced another kind of reality, she feels alienated. She wants to see only one person: Mrs. Moore, who had confronted that reality and with insight could cope with the void. Instinctively Adela realizes that her accusation of Aziz is really an attempt to rationalize her experience, to label it as she and Ronny had wanted to label the bird at the polo match.³⁰ It may also be fear seeking the outlet of a scapegoat and guilt at the finding of one. She feels that she is "up against something," "that she was leaving the world worse than she found it" (p. 194). Only Mrs. Moore could drive back the echo "and seal the broken reservoir. Evil was loose . . . she could even hear it entering the lives of others . . ." (p. 194). Personal relationships shatter and disappear like time and space in the cave. With Ronny "intimacy seemed to caricature itself, and the more they spoke the more wretched and self-conscious they became" (p. 194). "What is the use of personal relationships when everyone brings less and less to them?" she asks him. "I

feel we ought all to go back into the desert for centuries and try and get good" (p. 197). But immediately and absurdly she ignores the main problem of Aziz's guilt or innocence and pounces on the side issue of protocol: "he shouldn't have been rude to you when you had so much to bear. That's what matters . . ." (p. 197). The Great White Goddess is not divine after all.

When Mrs. Moore meets Adela Mrs. Moore withdraws her hand. "A sort of resentment emanated from her. She seemed to say: 'Am I to be bothered for ever?' Her Christian tenderness had gone . . ." (p. 199). Confronted with this completely detached old lady, Adela tells the truth, which is misunderstood by Ronny as geographical ignorance.

"I know it's all nothing; I must be sensible, I do try--" Adela continued, working again towards tears. "I shouldn't mind if it had happened anywhere else; at least I really don't know where it did happen."

Ronny supposed that he understood what she meant; she could not identify or describe the particular cave. . . . (p. 199)

Ronny in his obtuseness is like a younger Henry Wilcox. Mrs. Moore sits beside him completely uninterested until Adela speaks of the echo. But her interest soon turns to irritation.

"Oh, what of the echo?" asked Mrs. Moore, paying attention to her for the first time.

"I can't get rid of it."

"I don't suppose you ever will."

.

"Mrs. Moore, what is this echo?"

"Don't you know?"

"No--what is it? oh, do say! I felt you would be able to explain it . . . this will comfort me so . . ."

"If you don't know, you don't know; I can't tell you."

"I think you're rather unkind not to say."

"Say, say, say," said the old lady bitterly. "As if anything can be said! I have spent my life in saying or

in listening to sayings; I have listened too much. It is time I was left in peace. Not to die," she added sourly. ". . . when I have seen you and Ronny married . . . I'll retire then into a cave of my own. . . . I have nothing to do with your ludicrous law courts," she said, angry. "I will not be dragged in at all." (p. 200)

Mrs. Moore's refusal to say anything about the echo is reminiscent of Professor Godbole's inability to describe the Marabar: that knowledge may be too deep for language. Certainly Mrs. Moore's "Say, say, say" echoes Godbole's "Come, come, come." Like Godbole, who could see guilt and evil as well as good everywhere, she transcends immediate relationships:

"Why all this marriage, marriage? . . . The human race would have become a single person centuries ago if marriage was any use. And all this rubbish about love, love in a church, love in a cave, as if there is the least difference, and I held up from my business over such trifles! I want my pack of patience cards." (pp. 201-202)

But "Adela had stopped crying. An extraordinary expression was on her face, half relief, half horror. She repeated, 'Aziz, Aziz. . . . Aziz . . . have I made a mistake?'" (p. 202). Alarmed, Ronny tells her she is over-tired. But she persists: "Ronny, he's innocent: I made an awful mistake." She touches her ear: the echo is better. "Help me to do what I ought. Aziz is good. You heard your mother say so." But Ronny reminds her that Mrs. Moore had not mentioned Aziz's name. Then, Adela insists, it must have been "The idea more than the words" (p. 204). Mrs. Moore "flumps" down by the card table, begins to play patience and admits that she has not pronounced the name. But she adds indifferently, "Of course he is innocent." When they argue over opinion and evidence she bursts out again:

"Oh, how tedious . . . trivial . . ." and as when she had scoffed at love, love, love, her mind seemed to move towards them from a great distance and out of darkness. "Oh, why is everything still my duty? when shall I be free from your fuss? Was he in the cave and were you in the cave and on and on. . . and Unto us a Son is born, unto us a Child is given . . . and am I good and is he bad and are we saved? . . . and ending everything the echo." (p. 205)

"I don't hear it so much," said Adela, moving towards her. 'You send it away, you do nothing but good, you are so good'" (p. 205). But Mrs. Moore will not accept that idea. Once she was interested in personal relations; not now. "Good, happy, small people. They do not exist," she tells Adela, "they were a dream" (p. 205). In her detachment Mrs. Moore seems to have been absorbed into a larger world substance, indifferent, if not hostile to those around her. Ronny decides to send her home.

Mrs. Moore, as K. W. Gransden has said, "has with her a hint of Oedipus at Colonus," and when she goes she seems to take wisdom with her.³¹ She knows now that "the horror of the universe and its smallness are both visible at the same time . . ." (p. 207). This is her "double vision" which Glen O. Allen compares to the rending of Maya, the veil of illusion, when the Atman and Brahman, the Self and the Not-Self, are seen to be one.³² That veil has been rent at the cave when the echo murmured that "Pathos, piety, courage . . . are identical, and so is filth." Everything is one but everything by being one may be nothing:

What had spoken to her in that scoured-out cavity of the granite? What dwelt in the first of the caves? Something very old and very small. Before time, it was before space also. Something snub-nosed, incapable of generosity--the undying worm itself. (p. 208)

What difference does it make, she thinks, whether a girl is raped or loved: "--Boum, it amounts to the same." The idea that "the abyss also

may be petty, the serpent of eternity made of maggots" is not, after all, so overwhelming (p. 208). Like the young man going to "The Other Side of the Hedge," Mrs. Moore has dropped the things of life behind her, not reluctantly as he had but wearily and a little irritably, with relief. On the train going home she sees the mosque of Asirgarth re-appearing around the hill and the moon--her symbol--looking in the train window. The mosque says "I do not vanish." It may be, like the "undying worm," reminding her that a subconscious presence exists in all things, demanding recognition.

Immediately after Mrs. Moore's departure Forster sounds a Beethoven drum roll which initiates the irrationality of the trial: "In Europe life retreats out of the cold . . . but here the retreat is from the source of life, the treacherous sun [reason?]" (pp. 210-211). Adela regresses: "Adela, after years of intellectualism, had resumed her morning kneel to Christianity. There seemed no harm in it, it was the shortest and easiest cut to the unseen, and she could tack her troubles on to it. . . . so did she implore Jehovah for a favorable verdict. God who saves the King will surely support the police" (p. 211). But the echo, dispelled by Mrs. Moore and Adela's moment of honesty, has come back. It is an echo which may be subconscious thought: "She was afraid of reticence, in case something that she herself did not perceive took shape beneath it . . ." (p. 212). (The italics are mine.) Adela knows, vaguely, of a connection between whatever occurred in the cave and her admission on the climb up the hill that she does not love Ronny. "Did she love him? This question was somehow draggled up with the Marabar, it had been in

her mind as she entered the fatal cave. Was she capable of loving anyone?" (p. 212). The horror of living a life without love does not warrant, it seems to me, those critical analyses of Adela which plumb the Freudian possibilities of her guilt. Gransden claims that she had "A virgin's fancy in a hot country, imagining a rape she secretly desired."³³ Louise Dauner in "What Happened in the Cave? Reflections on A Passage to India" writes, reasonably enough, that "it is Adela's incapacity to love . . . which is her essential limitation." But Dauner follows this remark with: "It is not exaggerated perhaps to see some phallic symbolism in the penetration of the cactus-needles, a delicate irony. . . . the climb up the hill (which would be seen as a male symbol), the violence in the cave (somehow the strap of her field-glasses is broken, a significant detail suggesting her loss of "sight"), and her frenzied descent down the hill--all constitute a kind of parody on the sex act. . . ."³⁴ One is sometimes forced to admire the ingenious use to which some critics have put Freud. A character who realizes that she will spend the rest of her life with a man she does not love must also, it seems to me, have a profound sense of waste, and Norman Kelvin may be closer to the mark when he writes that "her hysteria is as much a fear of death and dissolution as it is the result of sexual repression."³⁵ As for the cactus spines, a medieval scholar might see them as a symbol of martyrdom: there is as much textual evidence to support St. Sebastian as St. Sigmund. Besides making her benefactresses hateful to Adela and thereby preparing her for an eventual rejection of Anglo-India, the extraction of the cactus spines causes pain, which prolongs her suffering and maintains her posi-

tion as a martyred virgin. That position whips to fury Mrs. Turton's hatred of the natives: "Why, they ought to crawl from here to the caves on their hands and knees whenever an Englishwoman's in sight, they oughtn't to be spoken to, they ought to be spat at, they ought to be ground into dust . . ." (p. 216). It is part of Forster's exquisite irony that Mrs. Turton, after Adela's recantation at the trial, strikes Ronny and screams insults at Adela.

At the trial the absurdity of human relationships on the conscious level of overt speech and action is contrasted with the deeper possibilities of meaningful relationships on the subconscious level. There is the comic opera of deciding where the English will sit: on the platform or in the audience. Their final descent is taken as an humiliation, but the episode has given Adela a view of the courtroom. She has seen "the renegade Fielding." Their eyes meet; his turn away. She watches the man who pulls the punkah. He had "caught her attention as she came in, and he seemed to control the proceedings" (p.217). He is one of those low, loin-cloth beings at the fringe of humanity, but physically he is a god which nature has thrown out "to prove to society how little its categories impress her . . . he seemed apart from human destinies, a male fate, a winnow of souls . . . he scarcely knew that he existed and did not understand why the Court was fuller than usual, indeed he did not know that it was fuller than usual, didn't even know he worked a fan, though he thought he pulled a rope" (pp. 217-218). What is his purpose? Forster obligingly gives his readers an answer immediately: "Something in his aloofness impressed the girl from middle-class England,

and rebuked the narrowness of her sufferings. In virtue of what had she collected this roomful of people together? Her particular brand of opinions, and the suburban Jehovah who sanctified them . . ." (p. 218). The punkah walla makes her think of Mrs. Moore: this is his purpose. His condition would have been just the kind she and Adela would have discussed when they first came to India. And it is while she thinks of Mrs. Moore that Adela "heard sounds, which gradually grew more distinct" --as if Adela had been drawn away and the present moment is coming in to her. Mr. McBryde, the Chief of Police, recounts the "bribes" of Aziz, but oversteps his evidence when he claims that Aziz caused Mrs. Moore to be crushed in the cave by his servants. Mahmoud Ali is on his feet at once, accusing the prosecution of smuggling their witness out of the country. "Give us back Mrs. Moore for five minutes only, and she will save my friend, she will save the name of his sons . . . oh, Mrs. Moore" (p. 224). The courtroom takes up the chant, "Esmis Esmoor," over and over, until like an echo it flows over into the street outside. Then as quickly as it began it ceases, as if Mahmoud Ali's five minutes had been granted. When it stops Forster writes: "It was as if the prayer had been heard . . ." (p. 226). Now Adela thinks again that her disaster at the cave was connected with her engagement to Ronny, and "A new and unknown sensation protected her, like magnificent armour" when she rises to speak. During her evidence, "something caused her to add: 'No one else was present to my knowledge. We appeared to be alone'" (p. 228). What was "something?" Then Adela pronounces her momentous "I'm afraid I have made a mistake" (p. 229). Again, there is "something": "Something that she did not understand took hold of the girl and pulled her

through. Though the vision was over . . . she remembered what she had learnt" (p. 230). Could this "something" be the presence of Mrs. Moore? Forster has said that the silence after the chant came "as if Mahmoud Ali's five minutes had been granted." It is within that five minutes that "something took hold of " Adela and she recants. The trial ends with a description of the punkah walla, who had first brought Mrs. Moore into Adela's mind in the courtroom. "Unaware that anything unusual had occurred, he continued to pull the cord of his punkah, to gaze at the empty dais and the overturned special chairs, and rhythmically to agitate the clouds of descending dust" (p. 231). When the elephant had approached the Kawa Dol "Life went on as usual, but had no consequences. . ." (p. 140). The punkah walla's being "unaware that anything unusual had occurred" communicates the idea that since something unusual has occurred life will now have consequences. A presence has been disturbed, a worm has begun to coil.

The remaining chapters of "Caves" belong to Fielding. In the street he meets Adela, lost, wandering. He deposits her in his carriage, which stands minus its horses because his servants thought the trial would last much longer and have unhitched them. But Fielding's students in jubilation recognize their champion, throw flowers around Adela's neck and pull the carriage to the college. There Fielding allows Adela to stay--she has become alienated from the Turtons and Anglo-India--until she can arrange passage home. In spite of his dislike for her Fielding admires Adela's honesty when she tries to explain herself to him. She admits that her relationship with Ronny had something to do

with the Marabar: before the caves she had been "living at half pressure." Fielding tries to label her experience as hallucination: "I was watching you carefully through your evidence this morning, and if I'm right, the hallucination (what you call half pressure--quite as good a word) disappeared suddenly" (p. 240). In their last talk before Adela leaves they try to label Mrs. Moore.

". . . Mrs. Moore--she did know."

"How could she have known what we don't?"

"Telepathy, possibly."

"The pert, meagre word fell to the ground. Telepathy? What an explanation! Better withdraw it, and Adela did so. She was at the end of her spiritual tether, and so was he. Were there worlds beyond which they could never touch, or did all that is possible enter their consciousness? They could not tell. They only realized that their outlook was more or less similar, and found in this a satisfaction. (p. 263)

Did "all that is possible enter their consciousness"--or is there something outside consciousness--the undying worm perhaps, the subconscious presence of the universe--which could, if they allowed it to enter (as Mrs. Moore had?), tell them the answer? Adela and Fielding are alike: they admit to one another that they no longer want love. Adela believes that her "experiences here have cured me. But I want others to want it" (p. 263). They are Caroline Abbott and Philip Herriton from Where Angels Fear to Tread with more resignation and perhaps more hopelessness. Mrs. Moore's death reminds them of their own mortality and seals the fate of personal relations:

"But it has made me remember that we must all die: all these personal relations we try to live by are temporary. I used to feel death selected people, it is a notion one gets from novels, because some of the characters are usually left talking at the end. Now 'death spares no one' begins to be real."

"Don't let it become too real, or you'll die yourself. That is the objection to meditating upon death. We are subdued to what we work in. I have felt the same temptation, and had to sheer off. I want to go on living a bit."

"So do I."

A friendliness, as of dwarfs shaking hands, was in the air.
(p. 264)

But Mrs. Moore's death does more: it makes them realize their own limitations. Because they are operating on the conscious level they cannot cope with those "worlds beyond," a void of instability, of "messages from another world":

Yet they were dissatisfied. When they agreed, "I want to go on living a bit," or, "I don't believe in God," the words were followed by a curious backwash as though the universe had displaced itself to fill up a tiny void, or as though they had seen their own gestures from an immense height--dwarfs talking, shaking hands and assuring each other that they stood on the same footing of insight. . . . wistfulness descended on them now, as on other occasions; the shadow of the shadow of a dream fell over their clear-cut interests, and objects never seen again seemed messages from another world. (pp. 264-265)

"Relationships often peter out in Forster's novels," Arnold Kettle writes, "as they do in life. . . ." ³⁶ When one looks back at Gino and Caroline, Philip and Cecil, the Basts and Schlegels, one does sense a sadness in Forster's social world. The reason may be, as Kettle suggests, in the limited capacity of human beings to change their consciousness. ³⁷ Certainly this is one of the main themes of A Passage to India and the basic reason behind the failure of the British Raj. ³⁸

The inability of people to change their consciousness also undermines the friendship between Fielding and Aziz. After the trial Aziz longs for his friend: "All that existed, in that terrible time, was

affection, and affection was all that he felt in the first painful moments of his freedom" (p. 234).³⁹ But they become separated and do not meet until later that night when they sleep on the roof of the Nawab Bahadur's--now the Indianized "Mr. Zulfiqar's"--house. Again Forster reminds the reader of the vaults behind vaults, of a limitless universe when he describes the constellation of the Lion: "the disc of Regulus so large and bright that it resembled a tunnel, and when this fancy was accepted all the other stars seemed tunnels too" (p. 250). Under those stars, which seem to lead off into a timeless, spaceless void, Fielding tries to tell Aziz of Mrs. Moore's death, but "thousands of stars . . . silenced him" (p. 253). Is Fielding receiving a psychic communication from the dead Mrs. Moore? Aziz determines to ask Mrs. Moore if he should accept Adela's apology or not. With deep feeling he murmurs to Fielding, "Is it not strange? I keep on forgetting she has left India. During the shouting of her name in court I fancied she was present" (p. 253). Fielding wonders if people are really dead until we feel them to be dead.⁴⁰ "He tried to kill Mrs. Moore this evening . . . but she still eluded him . . ." (p. 255). She still seems to elude him as he passes the mosque where she first met Aziz. Fielding is thinking about the condition of India and realizes that nothing about the "sahibs" will change:

"Everything echoes now; there's no stopping the echo. The original sound may be harmless, but the echo is always evil." This reflection about an echo lay at the verge of Fielding's mind. He could never develop it. It 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; it is only a game with words, really, a religious pun, not a religious truth. (p. 276)

He could hear the echo as only evil because he had "missed or rejected" the universe from which it came. Unlike Mrs. Moore he "could never develop" the echo, but like Mrs. Moore he had gone beyond the limitations of any earthly creed. He cannot follow her, however, beyond the "shallow arcades" of the mosque into those arches beyond arches and vaults beyond vaults which they suggest. Perhaps he had discovered momentarily on the roof of the Nawab Bahadur's house that the only honest personal relation could be spiritual. In the conscious world of cognition and will the ego stands as a barrier against complete communication. Before Aziz goes to a native state and Fielding returns to England on leave their conversation becomes strained. Aziz says in bitter retrospect "I was a child when you knew me first. Everyone was my friend then" (p. 277). Yet Fielding cannot accept the death of friendship. Perhaps the memory of his spiritual communication with Mrs. Moore--if such it was--on the roof under the stars colors his answer:

"There is something in religion that may not be true,
but has not yet been sung."

"Explain in detail."

"Something that the Hindus have perhaps found."

"Let them sing it."

"Hindus are unable to sing." (p. 277)

But Fielding the rationalist has not found his answer in India. Almost with relief he enters Italy, which offers him "the harmony between the works of man and the earth that upholds them, the civilization that has escaped muddle . . ." (p. 282). Already he feels drawn back--by Italy and Europe but also by marriage, although he does not know that yet--into a setting more congenial to the rational mind.

The Mediterranean is the human norm. When men leave that exquisite lake . . . they approach the monstrous and extraordinary; and the southern exit leads to the strangest experience of all. Turning his back on it yet again, he took the train northward, and tender romantic fancies that he thought were dead for ever, flowered when he saw the buttercups and daisies of June. (p. 282)

In the future he will travel less lightly--physically and spiritually. Fielding has approached "the monstrous and extraordinary . . . the strangest experience of all." The fact that his reason has allowed him only to approach and not to assimilate completely that experience--whatever it may have been--may give a clue to Forster's message at the end. If in "Caves" the earth lost identity in a one-substance spaceless Nothing-Everything universe and personal relations were impossible in a limited time-and-ego controlled consciousness, perhaps in "Temple" Forster will offer a resolution wherein both connection with the earth and humanity can be salvaged from the void.

Temple

Forster has given critics little help in interpreting "Temple." In his "Author's Notes" to the Everyman Edition of A Passage to India he equates "Mosque" with the cold season, "Caves" with the hot weather, and "Temple" with the rains, the monsoons which bring life again.⁴¹ V. A. Shahane interprets "Caves" as Forster's wasteland and "Temple" as a reconciliation in which "the Marabar will be wiped out."⁴² But if one understands that Forster's method has been throughout his work a process of constantly recurring annihilation and assimilation, a repeated destruction that is also a preservation, one sees in "Temple" the Marabar

experience lifted, like pathos, courage and filth, into a new dialectical dimension in which all things are one. There is not, as most critics think, a gulf between "Caves" and "Temple." "Temple" may be, as Forster told Alan Wilde, the cave "turned inside out."⁴³ An explanation of this puzzling statement might be found in Forster's review of The Art of India by Stella Kramrisch. There he describes the Hindu temple as the World Mountain:

Briefly she showed me the temple as the World Mountain on whose exterior is displayed life in all its forms, life human and superhuman and subhuman and animal, life tragic and cheerful, cruel and kind, seemly and obscene, all crowned at the mountain's summit by the sun. And in the interior of the mountain she revealed a tiny cavity, a central cell, where, in the heart of the world complexity, the individual could be alone with his god. Hinduism--unlike Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity--is not a congregational religion: it by-passes the community and despite its entanglement with caste it by-passes class. Its main concern is the individual and his relation to reality, and however much it wanders over the surface of the world mountain it returns at last to the mountain's heart.⁴⁴

The "World Mountain" with the conscious world of everyday--in all its forms, animate and inanimate, swarming over its exterior--is the structure of existence. But the Hindu temple's--and Forster's--"main concern is the individual and his relation to reality," in the dark heart of the mountain where the individual is "alone with his god." It is not incidental that "Caves" ends with Fielding exhibiting the self-consciousness of the West--that extreme form of outward consciousness--as he meditates upon a return to a civilization which was harmonious to him. "Caves" had proved the limitations of the conscious mind--the exterior of the "World Mountain"--and ends appropriately with Fielding, limited by rationality and self-consciousness, travelling West to a civilization harmonious with

consciousness. Nor is it incidental that "Temple" begins with the great inward-directed muddle of Gokul Ashtami, the festival of the birth of Krishna, who took upon himself the form of Infinite Love which will save the world. "Temple" proves that only in the dark heart of the "World Mountain"--in the subconscious mind--can man find reality. Forster's statement concerning his final section now becomes clear. "Temple" is the cave "turned inside out." Mrs. Moore's struggle with the Marabar had been a struggle with consciousness. Once that barrier had been annihilated and assimilated into the broader function of the subconscious, the pettiness of limited physical personal relations became insignificant, if not odious, to her. Not on the conscious level, with its bickerings and recriminations, but on the subconscious level, which knows innocence and guilt at a glance, can personal relations be lifted beyond consciousness into spirituality. Beyond consciousness a dead Mrs. Moore can communicate to the Indians in the courtroom outside the limits of time and space and cause them to chant until a "prayer had been answered" and Aziz is saved. The courtroom Indians, who did not know Mrs. Moore, can only articulate their part of the communication by mispronouncing her name in a chant. Theirs is the way of muddle, of formlessness, of limitlessness, of the subconscious: it is the way of India. As Fielding said, they are "unable to sing" what they may "have perhaps found." His statement is true and fair, made as it is on the conscious, cognitive level of "Caves." Except for that psychic five minutes in the courtroom, the whole middle section is devoted to the most insidious form of personal relations, a vicious charge of attempted rape. But in "Temple," through the festival

of the Birth of Krishna--Infinite Love--that five-minute respite from consciousness is extended and the Hindus do sing. Infinite Love, bhakti, which can accept all things, from filth and courage to the Marabar and the stones, annihilates all distinctions and unites all spirit. Bhakti is at the heart of the inner temple where Reality and God are One; it is the last stage of Forster's dialectic. It is an all-encompassing, outflowing, overflowing becoming all things.⁴⁵ Its dominance of "Temple" is not so much a surprise as a fulfillment of a presence already accounted for: from the beginning of A Passage to India Mrs. Moore has been receptive to bhakti. When she called the wasp "Pretty dear" she was already well on her way to that all-stops-out acceptance of the universe. Forster carefully emphasizes the depth of her receptivity by using the wasp image with the Christian missionaries at Chandrapore. Unlike Mrs. Moore, they become "uneasy" about wasps and are "apt to change the conversation":

In our Father's house are many mansions, they taught. . . . not one shall be kept standing who approaches with a loving heart. And why should the divine hospitality cease here? Consider, with all reverence, the monkeys. May there not be a mansion for the monkeys also? Old Mr. Graysford said No, but Young Mr. Sorley, who was advanced, said Yes; he saw no reason why monkeys should not have their collateral share of bliss, and he had sympathetic discussions about them with his Hindu friends. And the jackals? Jackals were indeed less to Mr. Sorley's mind, but he admitted that the mercy of God, being infinite, may well embrace all mammals. And the wasps? He became uneasy during the descent to wasps, and was apt to change the conversation. And oranges, cactuses, crystals and mud? and the bacteria inside Mr. Sorley? No, no, this is going too far. We must exclude someone from our gathering, or we shall be left with nothing. (p. 38)

The missionaries are operating on the conscious level, which cannot assimilate the wasps into universal love. They must exclude something, or their heaven will be nothing. Mrs. Moore, with more insight and less effort,

could extend spiritual brotherhood beyond mammals. Since she excluded nothing, her heaven was everything, her love was bhakti.

Not by accident does Forster begin "Temple" by focusing on Professor Godbole singing "Tukaram, Tukaram, Thou art my father and mother and everybody. Tukaram, Tukaram . . ." (p. 283). Tukaram, the saint of Maharashtra, was the exponent of the Bhakti cult.⁴⁶ Godbole sings to him at one end of a strip of carpet. At the other end, God, in the form of a silver image "the size of a teaspoon," sits in a shrine. When the villagers get a glimpse of this image "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, and only when it was withdrawn did they revert to individual clods" (p. 284). Forster calls the subconscious in "Anonymity: An Enquiry," published a year after A Passage to India appeared, "The lower personality. . . . There is something general about it. . . . there are no names down there, no personality as we understand personality."⁴⁷ He speaks of a writer "dipping a bucket down into it occasionally" for creativity. The Hindus at the festival seem to have dipped into the bucket of the subconscious, that place of no names where everything is general, where personalities disappear. At first this experience would seem to be antithetical to Forster's belief in individualism. It is, in fact, the most profound argument for individualism, one which Hegel used at the end of the Phenomenology: man, when he realizes the enormous fact that he is all consciousness--all things--as well as all subconsciousnesses, becomes all reality also: he becomes God.⁴⁸ In "The Gods of India," published in 1914, Forster had

distinguished between the Western and the Eastern idea of divinity: "And the promise is not that man shall see God [as in the West], but that he shall be God. He is God already, but imperfectly grasps the mystery."⁴⁹ George Thomson, who discusses this article, adds: "God is the universe, he is all men united in love and informing all matter with life. But the goal of universal oneness is to be attained only through love, for love begins as individual participation but aspires to universal participation."⁵⁰ No better definition has been given of bhakti. But the experience of bhakti cannot be organized. It arises from spontaneity. Without spontaneity it cannot be sincere and without sincerity it is not bhakti. Thus the sign in English at the shrine of Krishna--to prove the universality of God--can be printed "God si Love" and the misspelling does not matter--or indeed it actually attests to the honesty of the writer. Forster can write of Godbole, caught up in an activity which operates mainly on the subconscious level: "It was long before the tiny fragment of Professor Godbole that attended to outside things decided that his pince-nez was in trouble . . ." (p. 285). In this trance-like state he thinks of Mrs. Moore. "His senses grew thinner, he remembered a wasp seen he forgot where, perhaps on a stone. He loved the wasp equally. . . . And the stone where the wasp clung--could he . . . no, he could not, he had been wrong to attempt the stone, logic and conscious effort had seduced, he came back to the strip of red carpet and discovered that he was dancing upon it" (p. 286). "Logic and conscious effort had seduced": consciousness prevents a complete unity with the universe because it prevents man from entering fully into the subconscious

area where complete love may operate. Only love, the Maharajah of Chhatarpur told Forster, "can keep thought out."⁵¹ Only complete love of the universe--bhakti--can function fully at the subconscious level without the interference of conscious thought, which would refuse the wasps, the oranges and the mud.

In this respect Professor Godbole is not too different from the Christian missionaries, Mr. Graysford and Mr. Sorley. Although he can "love the wasp equally" with Mrs. Moore, he stops at the stone. The missionaries could not admit the wasps, or the oranges, or bacteria, into their heaven. Hinduism, represented by Godbole, is almost as inadequate as Christianity. When one remembers Forster's refusal to commit himself to any creed, one cannot agree with V. A. Shahane when he writes that Hinduism was Forster's final answer.⁵² Hinduism may have a way which is closer than others to man's complete oneness with the universe because it encourages the employment of the subconscious. But much depends on the receptivity of the individual to universal spiritual love. For Professor Godbole almost all distinctions disappear--in this case, Mrs. Moore seems to become the wasp, for he thinks of her almost with psychic memory as he "remembered a wasp seen he forgot where"--but he cannot include the stone. He has not dipped deep enough into the subconscious; "logic and conscious effort had seduced." But Godbole, unlike the missionaries, knows his effort has been inadequate. All he can say to God is "Come, come, come, come":

This was all he could do. How inadequate! But each according to his own capacities, and he knew that his own were small. "One old Englishwoman and one little, little wasp," he thought, as he stepped out of the temple into the grey

of a pouring wet morning. "It does not seem much, still it is more than I am myself." (p. 291)

Even if we cannot say that Forster finds in Hinduism a total, final answer for man's quest for reality, still, as Wilfred Stone writes, "It is a Hindu view of life that gives the book its final thematic and esthetic focus."⁵³ Forster writes in A Passage to India that "religion is a living force to the Hindu, and can at certain moments fling down everything that is petty and temporary in their natures" (p. 304). Aziz, who lives in a native state at Mau--with a job procured through Godbole--"could not understand this, any more than an average Christian could. He was puzzled that Mau [during the festival] should suddenly be purged from suspicion and self-seeking" (p. 304). Islam, like Christianity, disappears in that feather pillow of Hindu anti-rationality: "'There is no God but God'; that symmetrical injunction melts in the mild airs of Mau..." (p. 296). For at the birth of Shri Krishna, at the moment when Infinite Love is born, frenzy begins:

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. Some jumped in the air, others flung themselves prone and embraced the bare feet of the universal lover; the women behind the purdah slapped and shrieked; the little girl slipped out and danced by herself, her black pigtails flying. Not an orgy of the body; the tradition of that shrine forbade it. But the human spirit had tried by a desperate contortion to ravish the unknown . . . (pp. 287-288)

But Infinite Love demands complete and total annihilation--even of God--before complete and total assimilation can begin. Space, time, and all attributes must be eliminated before this ultimate Hegelian aufheben can be accomplished. George Thomson explains the dilemma: "As soon as he

thinks he has been with God, the event becomes history, it falls under the rules of time, it congeals and petrifies. And along with the event, God too falls under the rules of time and becomes fossilized. Yet God transcends process and cannot be accommodated to the stultifying demands of the rational mind. That is why he is and must forever remain unattainable."⁵⁴ Even a god with attributes, as James McConkey reminds his readers, is "a token of his separation from ultimate reality," which must lie outside the limitations of space or time.⁵⁵ Forster knows this. He has prepared for this total annihilation—assimilation outside space and time by eliminating space in "Mosque" and time in "Caves." Now in "Temple" God is "thrown away." In the form of a little clay figurine God floats on a tray onto the waters of a tank to melt again into the unattainable.

Gusts of wind mixed darkness and light, sheets of rain cut from the north, stopped, cut from the south, began rising from below, and across them struggled the singers, sounding every note but terror, and preparing to throw God away, God Himself, (not that God can be thrown) into the storm. Thus was He thrown year after year, and were others thrown-- little images of Ganpati, baskets of ten-day corn, tiny tazias after Mohurram--scapegoats, husks, emblems of passage; a passage not easy, not now, not here, not to be apprehended except when it is unattainable: the God to be thrown was an emblem of that. (pp. 314-315)

The "not now, not here" will be echoed by the earth as it thrusts up between Aziz and Fielding riding horses at the end. The "passage is not easy"--and not for everyone.

Into this whirlwind of worship Aziz, Fielding, and Mrs. Moore's two children by her first husband, Stella--now Fielding's wife--and Ralph are drawn. The plotting is ingenious. Fielding is inspecting the schools of the Native States; Godbole has one at Mau; through Godbole's

influence Aziz is "court physician" to the maharajah, although Aziz has now allowed his "tools" to rust and spends his days with his three children. His laxity toward medicine is not, strangely enough, surprising. Although he is described at the beginning of the novel as efficient, he has always been more of a poet than a scientist; Western learning lay like a shadow on the arabesques of Islam. As Wilfred Stone says, Aziz is a scientist with his hands, not with his mind.⁵⁶ His meeting with Fielding occurs at The Shrine of the Head, where he has taken his children for a walk. A Mohammedan saint whose mother had said to him, "Free prisoners," did so, and had his head cut off by the police. But the young man, a dutiful son, returned to tell his mother that he had obeyed her, and fell dead at her feet. The Shrine of the Body lay in Aziz's garden, but here, on the hillside overlooking Mau, the Shrine of the Head attracts visitors. It is appropriate that Aziz meets Fielding here: Aziz, following "reason," has refused to read the letters Fielding wrote from England and thinks even yet that Fielding married Adela for the money he saved her by not prosecuting her for false accusations. Fielding is there with Stella and Ralph, who is stung by bees at the shrine. Reluctantly Aziz promises to bring some medication by the Guest House for him. Before he does so he meets Godbole, who confesses that he has known for over a year that it was not Adela but Mrs. Moore's daughter Stella whom Fielding married. But Aziz is still sulky: the English have asked to see the festival at the tank, have requested the Guest House boat. It was the same old "pose of 'seeing India' which had seduced him to Miss Quested at Chandrapore" but which was really, under-

neath, "a form of ruling . . ." (p. 306). He treats Ralph's hands roughly and the boy's "Your hands are unkind" stops him:

He started and glanced down at them. The extraordinary youth was right, and he put them behind his back before replying with outward anger: "What the devil have my hands to do with you? This is a most strange remark. I am a qualified doctor, who will not hurt you."

"I don't mind pain, there is no pain."

"No pain?"

"Not really."

"Excellent news," sneered Aziz.

"But there is cruelty." (p. 309)

Ralph's strange insight causes Aziz to ask, "Can you always tell whether a stranger is your friend?" When Ralph answers "Yes," Aziz says, "Then you are an Oriental"--the same words he had used with Mrs. Moore when they first met in the mosque. Simultaneously with their utterance a chant begins at the festival outside:

"Radhakrishna Radhakrishna,
Radhakrishna Radhakrishna,
Krishnaradha Radhakrishna,
Radhakrishna Radhakrishna. . . ." (p. 311)

The twist of "Radhakrishna" into "Krishnaradha" is reminiscent of the courtroom natives' mispronouncing Mrs. Moore's name as "Esmiss Esmoor." Aziz remembers now his scene with her at the mosque and wonders with a shudder if the cycle could be beginning again: he had tried to be friends with the English before and failed. "But you are Heaslop's brother," he complains to Ralph, "also and alas, the two nations cannot be friends." "I know," Ralph replies, "not yet." "Did your mother speak to you about me?" "Yes. . . . In her letters, in her letters. She loved you" (pp. 311-312). Aziz agrees to go with him in a boat to the tank where Fielding and Stella are, in spite of the fact that Aziz had hidden the oars

to prevent them. On the water an Indian is pushing out the Nativity tray onto the water--pushing God toward that annihilation which will be the rebirth of Infinite Love. He is reminiscent of the punkah walla of the courtroom: "naked, broad-shouldered, thin-waisted--the Indian body again triumphant . . ." (p. 315). Will this elemental loin-clothed figure "again" triumph? Will he strangely become the medium through which Mrs. Moore communicates? As he pushes the tray the two boats--one with Aziz and Ralph, the other with Fielding and Stella--collide. Stella throws herself against Aziz, they capsize and flounder in the shallow water and through this baptism of muddle Aziz and Fielding are again together. Fielding explains that his wife and Ralph "are after something" in India and that Stella "found something soothing, some solution to her queer troubles here" (p. 319). Mrs. Moore has come back in the form of her children. But Aziz and Fielding do not find a solution: on their final ride when Aziz shouts out defiance to the English and they lean toward one another with "Why can't we be friends now?" the horses swerve apart and the earth "sends up rocks" between them. Everything is against their "connecting": "The temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau beneath: they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, 'No, not yet,' and the sky said, 'No, not there'" (p. 322). Like Godbole's "Come, come," connecting is always a desire, never a reality. At least not in time or space, not in any "now" or "here."

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What does it all mean? Is A Passage to India, as K. W. Gransden suggests, Forster's "final corrective to liberal humanism, an ironical comment on the historically brief, egocentric Western Enlightenment"?⁵⁷ He finds Mrs. Moore's inarticulation, her withdrawal from protest or even assertion the last blow to Edwardian ethics. A glance at the two Western "humanists" of the book would seem to support Gransden's view. Certainly at the end Mrs. Moore's Western Christianity comes up short and Fielding's involvement with Western materialism via the responsibilities of marriage prevents that uninhibited flow of feeling necessary for rapport between East and West. Does the East have the answers? K. Bhaskara Rao, an Indian critic, sees the book as a corrective to Kipling, written in the new climate of English liberalism and influencing the British departure from India.⁵⁸ Are both critics claiming too much, the first seeing too much criticism of the West, the second too much political power in literature? Are both, perhaps, looking at the novel externally, seeing it from the outside instead of getting on the inside of an autonomous work of art? A Passage to India is, among other things, a political novel. One of the problems of a political novel when it is also a work of art is that it invites both external and internal views and the resultant conflicts both views generate. If one looks at the book externally Rao's comment that it is not a satisfactory portrait of India because its hero is a Mohammedan and the Mohammedans, like the British, were invaders and a minority group is valid--if Forster's intent was to reproduce Indian history with an Indian census as his guide. Aziz realizes that his people are late-comers; knowledge that he is a member of a minority group is

part of his problem in feeling "Indian." Rao is correct in stating that the historical conflict was between the Indian nationalists and the British, not between the British and those Indians who were cooperating-- however reluctantly, with them.⁵⁹ It was Gandhi with the goal of Indian independence and not the Nawab Bahadur or Mahmoud Ali with reactions to hurt pride who would expel the Turtons and the McBrydes. But Forster knew that his own experience in India as secretary to the Maharajah of Dewas State Senior had limited him to pro-British Indians. Even here, however, he felt that uneasy footing which presages a landslide. In The Hill of Devi, a collection of letters and Indian diary entries, his last page reads:

I have been with pro-Government and pro-English Indians all this time, so cannot realise the feeling of the other party: and am only sure of this--that we were paying for the insolence of Englishmen and Englishwomen out here in the past. I don't mean that good manners can avert a political upheaval. But they can minimise it, and come nearer to averting it in the East than elsewhere. English manners out here have improved wonderfully in the last eight years. Some people are frightened, others seem really to have undergone a change of heart.

But it's too late. Indians don't long for social intercourse with Englishmen any longer. They have made a life of their own.⁶⁰

The personal overcomes the political note in this passage, as it does ultimately in the novel. Aziz has been presented from the beginning as a personal rather than a political figure. In that first discussion about friendship with the English he had said, "Why talk about the English? . . . Let us shut them out and be jolly" (p. 12). On their last ride together, when Aziz shouts at Fielding, "Until England is in difficulties we keep silent, but in the next European war--aha, aha!" it

is hurt pride, the memory of past injustices rather than political conviction which motivates the vehemence in those words (p. 321).⁶¹

Yet it is not Forster's Indian "hero" who has caused the critics problems, but rather Professor Godbole, whom many critics have tried to make into his Indian villain. If one agrees with V. A. Shahane that the final message of the novel is Hinduism, Professor Godbole proves an embarrassing advocate of that message. The Indian critic Nirad C. Chaudhuri finds Godbole an anachronism left over from nineteenth-century Princely States: "Godbole is not an exponent of Hinduism, he is a clown. Even for us, friendly personal relations with these men became possible only if we assumed we were in an anthropological reserve."⁶² Chaudhuri is viewing Godbole historically and externally, but he is no less unattractive for a Western critic, David Shusterman, who views him aesthetically as an internal component of a work of art. Shusterman sees Godbole's chief trait as inconsiderateness. He causes Fielding to miss the train for the Marabar when Fielding's presence might have prevented Aziz's tragedy. He knew for a year that Fielding had married Stella Moore, not Adela Quested, and yet he did not tell Aziz. Forster describes Godbole as one "who had never been known to tell anyone anything," yet Godbole's silence with Fielding on the subject of Aziz's arrest seems callous rather than curious (p. 305). He talks with Fielding not about Aziz but about a Russell's Viper which had appeared in a classroom some weeks before. As he leaves he says, "Now I take my leave, I must tell you how glad I am to hear that after all you succeeded in reaching the Marabar. I feared my unpunctuality had prevented you . . . I hope the expedition was a successful one."

"The news has not reached you yet, I can see."

"Oh, yes."

"No; there has been a terrible catastrophe about Aziz."

"Oh yes. That is all round the College."

"Well, the expedition where that occurs can scarcely be called a successful one," said Fielding, with an amazed stare.

"I cannot say. I was not present."

He stared again--a most useless operation, for no eye could see what lay at the bottom of the Brahman's mind, and yet he had a mind and a heart too, and all his friends trusted him, without knowing why. "I am most frightfully cut up," he said.

"So I saw at once on entering your office. I must not detain you, but I have a small private difficulty on which I want your help. . . ." (pp. 175-176)

And Godbole turns the conversation again to his own affairs. David Shusterman claims that Forster inserted the statement about trust--by way of an inverse implication--to throw doubt upon Godbole's honesty.⁶³ "Furthermore," Shusterman writes, "Godbole "is neither an influence for good nor a man of genuine good will, as has been claimed; his influence, if not consciously so, turns in the direction of evil through the events that occur. . . . Godbole . . . has in turn planted his evil into the lives of other people."⁶⁴ For Shusterman Godbole "is truly, as his name implies (Greek, bolos, 'lump of earth'), a lump. . . . If the carpet is symbolic of the entire universe, of God's completeness, as it clearly seems to be, then truly Godbole and God stand at opposite ends."⁶⁵ Yet if Godbole is meant to be a villain, one is justified in asking Forster why he gives to Godbole the role of reuniting Aziz and Fielding--it is through Godbole that Aziz gets the job at Mau--or the role as medium through which the cult of bhakti becomes central in "Temple." Yes, Godbole and God stand at opposite ends of the carpet, but could not the carpet represent connection rather than separation? Yes, Godbole fails

to tell Aziz that Fielding has married Stella, not Adela; but it is Aziz, not Godbole, who has refused to read Fielding's letters from England, who has thrown them to Mahmaud Ali to read for him--we could as easily blame Mahmaud Ali for his silence. Yes, Godbole is reluctant to tell about the Marabar at Fielding's party and this reluctance could be interpreted as a deliberate withholding of information, but is not Forster's main point that the Marabar are beyond human speech? Yes, Godbole delayed Fielding by taking too long over a prayer, but Godbole is presented as a mystic. At Fielding's, when Godbole tries to describe the caves, Forster writes that Adela "did not know that the comparatively simple mind of the Mohammedan [Aziz] was encountering Ancient Night" (p. 76). When Aziz learns that Godbole knew it was Stella whom Fielding married, Forster writes "Aziz always felt like a baby in that strange presence . . ." (p. 305). Just as "Mosque" with spacelessness had annihilated the importance and identity of the earth and "Caves" with timelessness had exposed the pettiness of conscious personal relations, "Temple"--with Godbole as the central swirling character who introduces the Festival of Infinite Love, the Birth of Krishna--uses both spacelessness and timelessness to eliminate the need of consciousness. The critics are quite correct in feeling dissatisfied with Godbole as Forster's Hindu answer: Godbole is dissatisfied with himself. He knows he cannot assimilate the stones. He knows all he can say is "Come, come, come, come," that he has fallen short of complete bhakti, that "logic and conscious effort had seduced" because he has failed to rid himself completely of consciousness.⁶⁶ Godbole's Hinduism is almost an answer.

Most critics have looked to the Marabar for a solution to the novel. More questions have been asked about Mrs. Moore's experience in the cave than any other. The caves have been seen as Western nihilism, Eastern spiritual sterility, sexual symbols, wombs and tombs. Frederick Crews' observation that their function is one of "echoing only what is brought to them" could be applied to visits there by Forster's critics.⁶⁷ Yet each analysis ends in "Boum." It does so because most critics ignore the textual evidence which Forster has carefully planted: the fact that the caves contain a latent awareness which can be stirred to life by contact with conscious minds and the fact that Mrs. Moore is a spiritual medium who can understand that awareness occultly. The match flame in the polished granite "moves towards the surface like an imprisoned spirit" (p. 125). The "little worm" which is too weak to complete a circle but which responds to the striking of a match or a human voice is "eternally watchful" (p. 147). If it is consciousness which awakens the worm, Forster strongly suggests that what is "eternally watchful" is a subconsciousness in the universe not greatly different, perhaps, from Hardy's Unconscious Will of the Universe.⁶⁸ I cannot agree with Glen O. Allen that the worm signifies that "Even the smallest glimmer of intelligence implies a total conception of the universe."⁶⁹ Worms for Forster have never been happy images--one remembers the white worms of the Mending Apparatus in "The Machine Stops"--and certainly watching cannot automatically be equated with intelligence in its rational sense. There is something sinister about this universal subconsciousness which lies in wait in the caves. Forster has prepared his reader for it from

the first page of the novel: all the attention to spacelessness and timelessness, to vaults and arches and hills older than spirit leads here to an echo, itself a hollow sound, a void within a void. Such messages are not for everyone. Certainly the echo is never understood by Adela, and almost drives her mad. How can Mrs. Moore so easily "know"? Again, Forster has given his readers ample clues. Mrs. Moore is a medium who uses patience as a method of divination. She had been playing patience just before she tells Adela that Aziz is innocent. Just after and during a game of patience she makes the pronouncement "A ghost!" concerning the "animal" which caused the accident with the Nawab Bahadur's car. Paul Fussell makes a good case for more than a coincidental resemblance between Mrs. Moore and Mme. Blavatsky, the Russian medium who influenced Yeats and became well-known in England through her foundation of the Theosophical Society.⁷⁰ She visited India twice, once during the years 1879-1884, and again from 1884-1885. She had gained quite a reputation in India and, as Fussell claims, it is unlikely that Forster could have escaped hearing of her. Many of her ideas, experiences and eccentricities belong also to Mrs. Moore. She believed in the brotherhood of men; she was opposed to analysis but championed intuition; she visited the Karli caves near Bombay and heard "ghostly voices"; at the Elephanta caves she experienced "nothing extraordinary"; she shared Mrs. Moore's-- and Forster's--critical attitude toward the British in India; she left India ill to avoid testifying in court; hopefully she tried a union of East and West and failed; she was regarded by the natives as a demi-goddess after her departure. Furthermore she used patience as a method of

divination and became irritable if interrupted. Besides Fussell's strong case that Mrs. Moore is based on Mme. Blavatsky, there is evidence much earlier in Forster's work that he had Mme. Blavatsky--or a spiritual medium--in mind. As far back as A Room with a View there is a strange little incident never made anything of--by either Forster or the critics--which is left dangling. Forster never refers to it again and it may have been the microscopic nucleus of Mrs. Moore's experience in the Marabar. Miss Lavish, the novelist of the Pension Bertolini, tries to get someone to go with her into the smoking room to talk with the Emersons. Mr. Beebe speaks:

"Miss Lavish tried Miss Pole, myself, every one, and finally said: I shall go alone.' She went. At the end of five minutes she returned unobtrusively with a green baize board, and began playing patience."

"Whatever happened?" cried Lucy.

"No one knows. No one will ever know. Miss Lavish will never dare to tell, and Mr. Emerson does not think it worth telling."

"Mr. Beebe--old Mr. Emerson, is he nice or not nice? I do so want to know."

"Mr. Beebe laughed and suggested that she should settle the question for herself. (A Room with a View, pp. 42-43)

The smoking room is, of course, a male domain; in the cave Adela thinks she is threatened with rape--the relationship between the two scenes is clear enough. But what of its relationship with Mrs. Moore? Miss Lavish's returning to play patience and "never daring to tell" remains a curious little interlude. The Italian part of A Room with a View was written in 1903, when Mme. Blavatsky was still much discussed. It is not unlikely that she was still being discussed in India in 1912-1913, during Forster's first visit there. He wrote the first version of A Passage to India after his return to England in 1913.⁷¹ Mme. Blavatsky's occult belief that men

share an equal brotherhood with all other animals, as well as vegetables and minerals, is close to the experience of bhakti, in which all things become one.⁷² On the way to the caves "the boulders said, 'I am alive,' the small stones answered, 'I am almost alive'" (p. 151). Mme. Blavatsky could not have said it better.

If one can establish--and I think there is no other way to interpret the textual evidence which Forster gives us--that the caves contain a universal subconsciousness which an occult Mrs. Moore understands, then one is better prepared to answer the question: what happened? Again, Forster gives us clues. Mrs. Moore's irritation with fleshly mating as a ritual, her weariness with the responsibility of parenthood, her impatience to be left alone to meditate, her exclusion of conscious personal relations as meaningless all point to a shifting in her mind's center of gravity from consciousness to subconsciousness--i.e., to a connection with the subconsciousness of the universe which she encountered in the cave. If that "undying worm," the flame in the stone is such subconsciousness and the flame on this side--the outside--is conscious life, we must remember again that it was this outside flame which went out when the two met: the inside flame is perhaps always there, ready to be reflected whenever consciousness appears. When they touch, consciousness goes. Mrs. Moore may have gone out, as it were, in the Marabar, because her consciousness began to go out, i.e., to die: hence her detachment, her fatigue, her desire to be alone afterwards. But dying may be only the sinking of the consciousness into the subconscious, a crossing over onto the other side of the hedge. Life before and after

death may still be the same substance; dying may be perceiving in another way. Richard Alewyn, in an analysis of Hugo van Hofmannsthal, explains my point:

What terrified him before death is his consciousness, what controlled him is his consciousness, and what died here--the only thing after all able to die--is his consciousness. . . . What we call "dying" is nothing but a sinking into the unconscious . . . the inundation (overflowing) of the consciousness by the unconscious which emerges out of the deep, plunges out of the past, springs the bolt and releases the prisoner. This is death: the character and shape of unconscious life. And this is dying: an image of metamorphosis and new birth.⁷³

If dying is a sinking into the unconscious "which emerges out of the deep, plunges out of the past . . ." such an unconsciousness must be a continuous presence waiting, as it were, to "spring the bolt and release the prisoner," waiting "eternally watchful" as the presence in Forster's cave. Conscious life becomes incidental; spiritual reality lies in the unconscious. Although Alewyn's is a Western analysis, it is close to the Doctrine of Bondage and Liberation described by Satischandra Chatterjee in The Fundamentals of Hinduism:

According to the Sankhya-Yoga, the individual self is not a substance with the quality of consciousness, but is pure consciousness itself which is quite distinct from the body and the mind, the intellect and the ego. The self is the transcendent subject whose very essence is pure consciousness, freedom, eternity and immortality. What makes it liable to bondage and consequent miseries is the wrong identification of the self with the mind-body, more especially, with the ego. When the self clearly realises its distinction from all these objects, it stands liberated and becomes free from all afflictions of the mind, ailments of the body, and desires and passions of the ego. What then remains is the self as it is in its essence (svarupa), i.e., as pure consciousness (caitanya) which is the witness (drasta) of all changes but is not itself involved in any change. This is a state of the individual self's existence in which there is none of the miseries to which the soul in

bondage is subject. Here the self ceases to be affected by the vicissitudes of the body and the mind, and rests in itself as the mere witness of physical and psychical changes. It is possible for the individual self to attain this perfect state of liberation in this life and in this world. This kind of liberation is called jivanmukti or emancipation of the soul while living in this body. After the death of its body, the liberated self attains what is called videhamukti or emancipation of the spirit from all bodies, gross or subtle.⁷⁴

If we substitute "subconsciousness" for "pure consciousness" in the above passage, several items become clear with regard to Mrs. Moore. First, the subconscious is apart from the mind or the intellect. When Fielding finds Mrs. Moore after her experience, she "sat swinging her foot, and appeared sulky and stupid" (p. 157).⁷⁵ Second, the subconscious frees the self from the bondage of ego and desire. When Fielding, annoyed at the turn of circumstance, "wanted someone to share the blame, and frowned at Mrs. Moore rather magisterially," she would not cooperate. To his "Aziz is a charming fellow" she yawned, "I know" (p. 157). She seems to be, in Chatterjee's words, beyond "the vicissitudes of the body and the mind," where her self "rests in itself as the mere witness of physical and psychical changes." After the cave she is more of a witness than a participant in life. Forster writes that "since her faintness in the cave she was sunk in apathy and cynicism" (p. 158). Emancipated from the desires of this world by a complete surrender to a subconsciousness, Mrs. Moore rejects cynically those conscious personal relations built on praise or blame, the shadowy unsubstantial ego. Even before she arrived at the caves, she had felt on the train that, "though people are important, the relations between them are not. . . . And to-day she felt this with such force that it seemed itself a relationship, itself a person who was

trying to take hold of her hand" (p. 135). The italics are mine and I suggest strongly that the "person" Adela thought she met in the cave, who also tried to take hold of her might have been the subconscious waiting presence which would expose conscious human relationships as meaningless--the same presence which seems to impose itself on Mrs. Moore. Forster's main point--which leads to his ultimate message in the novel--is that Mrs. Moore, unlike Adela, learns how to assimilate and preserve personal relationships onto another plane: the spiritual. After her death she communicates more strongly than before. If the subconscious--the Hindu "pure consciousness"--is the unchanging spiritual home of the self, it can only be through the subconscious that Mrs. Moore will accomplish her communication. If a check of textual evidence proves that such is the case, Mrs. Moore will have transformed personal relationships via aufheben into the last stage of the dialectic: spiritual reality.

A review of textual incidents seems to reveal that no other interpretation can be given to Forster's meaning for Mrs. Moore. In the courtroom it is through the punkah walla--the most subconscious person there--that Adela thinks of Mrs. Moore and begins that chain of reactions which ends in Aziz's acquittal. The punkah walla, one remembers, "seemed to control the proceedings. . . . he seemed apart from human destinies. . . . he scarcely knew that he existed . . . indeed he . . . didn't even know he worked a fan, though he thought he pulled a rope" (pp. 217-218). While she looks at him Adela not only thinks of Mrs. Moore but feels her presence: "Mrs. Moore--she looked round, but Mrs. Moore was far away

on the sea . . ." (p. 218). Mrs. Moore was, in fact, already dead. Mahmoud Ali's "Give us back Mrs. Moore for five minutes only" is followed by the courtroom chant. "Suddenly it stopped. It was as if the prayer had been heard . . ." (p. 226). In 1919, in an essay on Forrest Reid, Forster wrote that "the world of spirits is invoked not by magic arts, but through conduct. . . ." ⁷⁶ The conduct of Adela, thinking of Mrs. Moore, the conduct of Mahmoud Ali, calling for her, the conduct of the courtroom, chanting for her, seem to have summoned Mrs. Moore's presence: Forster writes of Adela, "And something caused her to add: 'No one else was present to my knowledge. We appeared to be alone'" (p. 228). A little later we are told that "Something that she did not understand took hold of the girl and pulled her through" (p. 230). Our last glance of the courtroom is the subconscious punkah walla: "Unaware that anything unusual had occurred, he continued to pull the cord of his punkah, to gaze at the empty dais and the overturned special chairs, and rhythmically to agitate the clouds of descending dust" (p. 231). When Fielding tries to analyze Adela's actions in the courtroom she assumes that he means she has "seen a ghost"--although they do not know at the time that Mrs. Moore is dead:

"Let us get back to hallucinations. I was watching you carefully through your evidence this morning, and if I'm right, the hallucination . . . disappeared suddenly. . . . My belief--and of course I was listening carefully, in hope you would make some slip--my belief is that poor McBryde exercised you. As soon as he asked you a straightforward question, you gave a straightforward answer, and broke down."

"Exorcise in that sense. I thought you meant I'd seen a ghost."

"I don't go to that length!"

"People whom I respect very much believe in ghosts," she said rather sharply. "My friend Mrs. Moore does." (p. 240)

Even before the trial we are given incidents which reveal Mrs. Moore's telepathic powers. Those powers help to explain the argument Adela and Ronny have over Mrs. Moore's pronouncing Aziz's name when the old woman visits Adela, ill with cactus spines. Adela insists to Ronny that his mother has spoken of Aziz.

" . . . Help me to do what I ought. Aziz is good, You heard your mother say so."
 "Heard what?"
 "He's good; I've been so wrong to accuse him."
 "Mother never said so."
 "Didn't she?" she asked, quite reasonable, open to every suggestion anyway.
 "She never mentioned that name once."
 "But Ronny, I heard her."
 "Pure illusion. You can't be quite well, can you, to make up a thing like that."
 "I suppose I can't. How amazing of me!"
 "I was listening to all she said, as far as it could be listened to; she gets very incoherent."
 "When her voice dropped she said it--towards the end, when she talked above love--love--I couldn't follow, but just then she said: 'Dr. Aziz never did it.'"
 "Those words?"
 "The idea more than the words." (pp. 203-204)

Mrs. Moore "sat down with a flump by the card-table . . . She replied: 'I never said his name,' and began to play patience" (p. 204). Then, indifferently, she tells them that "Of course he is innocent" and Adela's echo goes away.

Once one admits the possible presence of occult powers in Mrs. Moore, seemingly insignificant incidents acquire new meaning. Mrs. Moore's shivering "A ghost!" after Ronny and Adela's automobile accident with the "large animal" makes the Nawab Bahadur's explanation--that he had killed a man there nine years before "and the man had been waiting for him ever since"--more than a coincidence. Forster explicitly leads

his reader to an occult connection between Mrs. Moore's remark and a dead man when he has the Nawab Bahadur think that his secret is safe because "none of the English people knew . . . it was a racial secret communicable more by blood than speech" (p. 99). But Mrs. Moore knew. Furthermore, she plays patience just after communicating her knowledge. Incidents after her death indicate similar possibilities of occult power still present and affecting people she cared for. When Aziz, sleeping with Fielding on the roof of the Nawab Bahadur's house, speaks of her as if she were alive, Fielding cannot tell him otherwise because "thousands of stars . . . silenced him" (p. 253). Aziz admitted his strange feeling that she had seemed present at the trial: he "fancied she was present." Later, she "happened to occur" to Godbole through the memory of a wasp as Godbole danced at the festival of Krishna. It is through bees which sting her son, Ralph, that Aziz is made to say again, as he had said to her in the mosque, "Then you are an Oriental." It is almost as if he is speaking to Mrs. Moore again. Could she--free now from all bodily forms--have become the bees for the purpose of this reconciliation? If death is the overflowing of consciousness by the subconscious, a sinking into a subconsciousness which is present in all things--"eternally watchful"--and everything is God, is spirit, then the subconscious (i.e., spiritual reality) should be able to flow through material forms, should know no material barriers. If Mrs. Moore's experience in the cave was, in Hindu terms, Maya, the rending of the veil of illusion, in which all things melt into the fundamental unity of God, becoming a bee would be as easy as communicating through a punkah walla.⁷⁷

If at this point the practical reader rebels and suspects Forster of "trembling continually on the brink of nonsense" one can only answer that the textual evidence offers no other conclusion but the occult.⁷⁸

It was not a hasty or a short-lived conclusion. As late as 1939 Forster wrote in Two Cheers for Democracy: "Man's physical evolution is at an end; his evolution through the psyche can, if he chooses, continue."⁷⁹ He ended The Hill of Devi with words which he could have used for Mrs. Moore. He was serious when he described the deceased Maharajah of Dewas Senior: "He has the rare quality of evoking himself, and I do not believe that he is here doing it for the last time."⁸⁰

It becomes clear now why Forster's answer lay not with Dr. Godbole and the Hindus--nor with any creed. At the trial the information "All the Marabar caves are Jain" is dropped into the proceedings and not pursued. The Jain doctrine is called Syad-vada, which means "Yes-and-No."⁸¹ This is the final answer of the caves: Being which is Nothingness, Good which is Evil, complete indifference which is total love.⁸² It is an answer beyond creeds, an occult answer demanding perceptions beyond the conscious mind. It is not surprising that critics have misunderstood Forster's most occult characters, Godbole and Mrs. Moore. Gertrude White complains that "Mrs. Moore and Godbole are never really satisfactory as human beings, never vitally related to the people and events around them. Their human features are veiled by the larger-than-life masks they wear, like the actors in Greek tragedy playing at being gods."⁸³ But there is something behind Mrs. Moore and Godbole, as White's use of the mask image implies. Forster in "The Gods of India" calls the Hindu

deities "this trayful of naughty dolls." But "outside the 'trayful of dolls' are the hands that hold the tray. . . ."84 Something larger than any manifestation of "gods" holds Mrs. Moore: the occult is all spirit, outflowing and inflowing, to which birth, death and bodily form are incidental. The dead are never spiritually dead; they have merely experienced aufheben.

Most of us, unfortunately, are not Mrs. Moores: we are Fieldings and Azizes, arguing down there with the horses swerving apart, the earth throwing up obstacles between us to remind us of our smallness, our unimportance, of the even more terrifying possibility of our meaninglessness. Forster comes here at the end close to a Blakean interpretation of nature as impassive, but if we look again at that earth which can "send up rocks" we realize that this is a nature not quite neutral, not quite indifferent to man. The fact that it acts, that it interrupts, implies a will. Its last words, however, may imply at least the possibility of evolution in that "No, not yet. . . . No, not there." The spirit of Pan and the dryads still exists, but undergoes metamorphosis now in the last step of the dialectic, an assimilation of the earth with an ultimate Nothingness qua Everything. Godbole's "absence implies presence" should silence those critics who see the Marabar's message as nihilism. Mrs. Moore may have reached that point where "Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold" in the cave. But Forster's whole premise is that it does hold: Mrs. Moore does communicate, she does reach, through the subconscious, a mystic connection with those she left behind on this side of the hedge. Conscious human relationships may be petty, but

spiritual ones are not: they are the most important thing in a MacTaggartean, Mme. Blavatskyean universe, in which even the stones speak. In order to operate fully in such a universe we must learn to accept all things, animate and inanimate; we must learn to love fully. In order to love fully we must learn to live not only on the conscious level but on the subconscious level as well. For most of us, is that possible? "No, not yet. . . ." At the end Aziz and Fielding wrangle over politics, over friendship, but somehow, because they have reached out for each other, a new balance has been achieved over the abyss. It may be incomplete, but it must be attempted. Only through the reconciliation of connection, within the caves of ourselves and the vaults behind vaults outside, can we fully live.

NOTES
Chapter VI

- ¹Alan Wilde, Art and Order: A Study of E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 23.
- ²Harry T. Moore, E. M. Forster (New York, 1965), p. 40.
- ³Rex Warner, E. M. Forster (London, 1960), p. 26.
- ⁴E. M. Forster, A Passage to India (New York, 1952), pp. 152-153. (First published London, 1924.) All quotations in the present study are from this Harcourt, Brace and World "Harvest Book" Edition.
- ⁵V. A. Shahane, E. M. Forster: A Reassessment (Calcutta, 1962), p. 97.
- ⁶Lionel Trilling, E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), pp. 147, 152. (First published New York, 1943.)
- ⁷Rose Macaulay, The Writings of E. M. Forster (New York, 1938), p. 49.
- ⁸Elizabeth Bowen, Collected Impressions (New York, 1950), p. 123.
- ⁹Martin Buber, Pointing the Way: Collected Essays (New York, 1957), p. 86.
- ¹⁰K. W. Gransden, E. M. Forster (New York, 1962), pp. 81-82.
- ¹¹E. M. Forster, Alexandria: A History and a Guide (New York, 1961), p. 9. (First published London, 1922.)
- ¹²E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1954), p. 169. (First published London, 1927).
- ¹³E. M. Forster, The Collected Tales of E. M. Forster (New York, 1947), p. 6.
- ¹⁴Bonamy Dobrée, The Lamp and the Lute: Studies in Six Modern Authors (New York, 1963), p. 82.
- ¹⁵E. M. Forster, "Syed Ross Masood," Two Cheers for Democracy (New York, 1951), p. 292. (First published London, 1938.)
- ¹⁶This room is described in Forster's "Indian Entries," Encounter, XVII (1962), 25.

¹⁷Or will not, as David Shusterman claims. See David Shusterman, The Quest for Certitude in E. M. Forster's Fiction (Bloomington, Indiana, 1965), p. 185. See also the discussion of Shusterman's criticism of Godbole later in this chapter, the present study.

¹⁸V. A. Shahane in a note on page 108 of his E. M. Forster: A Reassessment writes: "The original of Godbole's song is in the Marathi language, which is the mother-tongue of Godbole and the Maharajah of Dewas." Forster was secretary to the Maharajah of Dewas Senior in 1921.

¹⁹Gransden, p. 91.

²⁰In The Hill of Devi, Forster records a similar accident. There the ghost of a drunken man who had been killed by the Maharajah's car appears and tries to kill him in turn. See E. M. Forster, The Hill of Devi (New York, 1953), p. 134.

²¹I use the word "occultly" here with Mme. Blavatsky in mind, who used patience as a method of divination. See Paul Fussell, Jr., "E. M. Forster's Mrs. Moore: Some Suggestions," Philological Quarterly, XXXII (October, 1953), 388-395, for a comparison of Mrs. Moore with Mme. Blavatsky. See also the discussion of Fussell's article later in this chapter, the present study.

²²Godbole is similar to the Maharajah of Dewas Senior, who could not be disturbed during his two-hour prayers. Childlike he would say "I am so very sorry I am holy just now." See Harry T. Moore, p. 39.

²³Samuel Butler, The Note-Books of Samuel Butler, ed. by Henry F. Jones (London, 1930), p. 68.

²⁴Ibid., p. 67. For an excellent discussion of Butler's influence on Forster, see Forster's "The Legacy of Samuel Butler," The Listener, XLVII (June 12, 1952), 955-956.

²⁵E. M. Forster, "Indian Entries," Encounter, XVII (1962), 27. See also "Marabar Caves" in the Appendix of the present study.

²⁶J. M. E. McTaggart, A Commentary on Hegel's Logic (Cambridge, 1931), p. 20. First published Cambridge, 1910.

²⁷Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain (Stanford, California, 1966), p. 346.

²⁸Frederick C. Crews, E. M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism (Princeton, N. J., 1962), p. 162.

²⁹Wilde, p. 142.

³⁰In her use of accusation as a rationalization of her own fears, Adela is like Mildred of "Albergo Empedocle," Forster's first published story. Again, a similarity with previous work is notable when we remember that Rickie, in The Longest Journey, says "I wish we were labelled" when he tries to preserve his relationship with Ansell on leaving Cambridge (The Longest Journey, p. 69).

³¹Gransden, p. 97.

³²Glen O. Allen, "Structure, Symbol and Theme in E. M. Forster's A Passage to India," PMLA, LXX (December, 1955), 941.

³³Gransden, p. 97.

³⁴Louise Dauner, "What Happened in the Cave? Reflections on A Passage to India," Modern Fiction Studies, VII, No. 3 (Autumn, 1961), 264, 266.

³⁵Norman Kelvin, E. M. Forster (Carbondale, Illinois, 1967), p. 130.

³⁶Arnold C. Kettle, An Introduction to the English Novel, II (London, 1953), 159.

³⁷Ibid., p. 160.

³⁸As E. K. Brown has observed, when Adela dropped her charge and the Anglo-Indian world at Chandrapore collapsed, the new crop of officials were no better than the last. Fielding echoes his opinion when he thinks "But the more the club changed, the more it promised to be the same thing" (p. 276). Brown is one of the few critics to remember that Fielding also entered a Marabar cave, but unlike the others, "kept his head, and was the only Englishman to do so." But, Brown continues, Fielding was also enclosed in a kind of cocoon afterwards: his loyalty to Aziz was, to his contemporaries, irrational, illogical, an illusion. See E. K. Brown, Rhythm in the Novel (Toronto, 1963), pp. 101, 102. (First published Toronto, 1950.)

³⁹Aziz is remarkably like the Maharajah of Dewas Senior, of whom Forster writes: "Affection, all through his chequered life, was the only force to which Bapu Sahib responded. It did not always work, but without it nothing worked. Affection and its attendants of human warmth and instinctive courtesy--when they were present his heart awoke and dictated his actions. In their absence he could be shifty and cunning although he was never cruel." See The Hill of Devi, p. 65.

⁴⁰Samuel Butler has an interesting thought similar to Fielding's on page 355 of the Note-Books: "To die completely, a person must not only forget but be forgotten, and he who is not forgotten is not dead."

⁴¹E. M. Forster, "Author's Notes," A Passage to India, Everyman Edition (London, 1942), p. xxix.

⁴²Shahane, p. 98.

⁴³Wilde, p. 151, note 8.

⁴⁴E. M. Forster, "The World Mountain," The Listener, XXXLII (December 2, 1954), 978.

⁴⁵Satischandra Chatterjee, The Fundamentals of Hinduism: A Philosophical Study (Calcutta, 1960), p. 152. An interesting explanation of bhakti is given by Forster in The Hill of Devi. The scene is a meeting of the Dewas Literary Society:

I remember a paper of my own where I quoted that story out of Dostoevsky about the wicked woman and the onion. She had been so wicked that in all her life she had only done one good deed--given an onion to a beggar. So she went to hell. As she lay in torment she saw the onion, lowered down from Heaven by an angel. She caught hold of it. He began to pull her up. The other damned saw what was happening and caught hold of it too. She was indignant and cried, "Let go--it's my onion," and as soon as she said "my onion" the stalk broke and she fell back into the flames.

I had always thought this story touching, but I had no idea of the effect it would produce on the Dewas Literary Society. Hitherto they had been polite, bored, straining to follow. Now their faces softened, and they murmured, "Ah that is good, good. That is bhakti."

See The Hill of Devi, pp. 111-112.

⁴⁶Shahane, p. 108.

⁴⁷E. M. Forster, "Anonymity: An Enquiry," Two Cheers for Democracy, pp. 83-84, 88.

⁴⁸G. W. F. Hegel, "Absolute Knowledge," The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J. B. Baillie (New York, 1967), pp. 789-808. (First published London, 1910.)

⁴⁹E. M. Forster, "The Gods of India," The New Weekly (May 30, 1914), p. 338.

⁵⁰George H. Thomson, The Fiction of E. M. Forster (Detroit, 1967), p. 246.

⁵¹E. M. Forster, The Hill of Devi, p. 47.

⁵²See V. A. Shahane, "A Passage to India," Chapter V of E. M. Forster: A Reassessment, pp. 95-117. For other arguments against Hinduism as Forster's answer see Wilde, p. 151 and Crews, pp. 151-155.

⁵³Stone, p. 301.

⁵⁴Thomson, p. 245.

⁵⁵James McConkey, The Novels of E. M. Forster (Ithaca, N. Y., 1957), p. 142.

⁵⁶Stone, p. 320.

⁵⁷Gransden, p. 81.

⁵⁸K. Bhaskara Rao, Rudyard Kipling's India (Norman, Okla., 1967), p. 10.

⁵⁹Ibid., pp. 157-159.

⁶⁰E. M. Forster, The Hill of Devi, p. 237.

⁶¹Aziz's most uncharitable Indian critic is not Rao but Nirad C. Chaudhuri, who writes that "If we can at all speak of having driven the 'blasted Englishman into the sea,' as Aziz puts it, it was not men of his type who accomplished the feat. Those who fought British rule in India did not do so with the object of eventually gaining the Englishman's personal friendship . . . personal friendship did not lure them as a goal." Mr. Chaudhuri warms to his subject: "Aziz would not have been allowed to cross my threshold, not to speak of being taken as an equal. Men of his type are a pest even in free India." See Nirad C. Chaudhuri, "A Passage to India: Re-evaluation," Encounter, III (June, 1954), 20, 21.

⁶²Ibid., p. 21.

⁶³Shusterman, p. 189.

⁶⁴Ibid., pp. 183, 200.

⁶⁵Ibid., pp. 192, 191.

⁶⁶F. R. Leavis completely misreads Godbole's relationship with the stones and blames Forster for being "so little certain just how serious he is." See F. R. Leavis, "E. M. Forster," Scrutiny, VII (September, 1938), 198.

⁶⁶Crews, p. 159. A sampling of critical interpretations concerning Mrs. Moore's experience in the caves is interesting. It has been called the horror of narcissism or an initiation to rebirth (George Thomson, pp. 231, 234-235), a negativity which is evil (Shahane, p. 101), a negativity which is merely an absence of evil (Stone, p. 340), a vacuum implying fullness (E.K. Brown, p. 107), the result of simple sunstroke (Rose Macaulay, p. 182), the cost of trying to be one with

the universe (Glen O. Allen, p. 949), and a dilettantish yearning for such a unity that is echoed, but not answered (Crews, p. 159). Glen O. Allen thinks the "ou-boum" of the Marabar may be the "OM" of Hinduism, indicating the "peace that passeth understanding." See Allen, p. 949.

⁶⁸For a discussion of Hardy's ideas concerning the Unconscious see J. O. Bailey, Thomas Hardy and the Cosmic Mind: A New Reading of "The Dynasts" (Chapel Hill, N. C., 1956). Forster knew Hardy. Forster's father had been a fellow architecture student with Hardy under Arthur Blomfield. See Stone, p. 30.

⁶⁹Allen, p. 943.

⁷⁰See footnote 21, this chapter, and "Mme. Blavatsky" in the Appendix of the present study.

⁷¹Harry T. Moore, p. 38. Mme. Blavatsky was credited with 100,000 followers. See "Mme. Blavatsky" in the appendix of the present study.

⁷²See "Theosophy, Cult of the Occult," Time (July 19, 1968), p. 61.

⁷³Richard Alewyn, Über Hugo van Hofmannsthal (Göttingen, 1963), p. 61. The German reads: "Und was sich vor dem Tode so entsetzt, ist sein Bewusstsein, was sich gegen ihn wehrt, ist sein Bewusstsein, und was hier stirbt--das einzige, was überhaupt zu sterben vermag--ist sein Bewusstsein. . . . Was wir "Sterben" nennen, ist nichts als im Unbewussten untersinken . . . die Überflutung des Bewusstseins durch das Unbewusste, das aus der Tiefe heraufsteigt, aus der Vergangenheit hereinstürzt, die Riegel sprengt und den Gefängenen erlöst. Dies also ist hier der Tod: Name und Gestalt des unbewussten Lebens. Und dies ist das Sterben: ein Gleichnis der Verwandlung und neuen Geburt."

⁷⁴Chatterjee, p. 95.

⁷⁵Forster's "eternal moments"--outside space and time--in which connection with eternal truth occurs would seem to be not greatly different from Spinoza's "intellectual love of God," those moments in which things are perceived sub specie aeternitatis, under the aspect of eternity. But Spinoza insists that the union with Nature can come only through reason and the understanding, whereas Forster's distrust of reason leads him to believe that only through intuition and a mystic use of the subconscious can such a union be consummated. Intelligence in Forster's world is no match for insight. James McConkey writes of Forster's visionaries: "their greatest moments are moments, curiously, of simultaneous failure and achievement; their intelligence leads them inevitably to its vanishing point, where intelligence merges with the stars and no longer suffices." Such a description could explain Mrs. Moore's stupidity after her experience in the caves. For a discussion of Spinoza's belief in "The possible eternity of the human mind" see Stuart Hampshire, Spinoza (Baltimore, Maryland, 1962), pp. 171-176. (First pub-

lished London, 1951). For a discussion of Forster's attitude toward reason see James McConkey, The Novels of E. M Forster (Ithaca, N. Y., 1957), p. 26.

In his refutation of reason, Forster is closer to the attitude of his contemporaries. Henri Bergson believed that the intellect was limited to a purely practical role, one dealing with matter and the analysis of matter and facts, and that it could not comprehend life; intuition, which is instinct plus a "disinterested sympathy," has as its province the inner reality of the personality and the ability to "be given" absolutes. Furthermore, Bergson could not speak of "reason" as pure. For him the intellect can never be free of instinct, and vice versa. See Henry Bergson, Introduction to Metaphysics, trans. T. E. Hulme (New York, 1912), pp. 1-21, 39-43, and Creative Evolution, trans. A. Mitchell (New York, 1911), pp. 1-5, 136, 176-178. For a brief but thorough discussion of Bergson see W. T. Jones, A History of Western Philosophy, II (New York, 1952), 939-949. Even Ludwig Wittgenstein, who studied under Bertrand Russell and G. E. Moore at Cambridge (1911-1912) and who carried Moore's analysis of language to the outermost limits, "the dethronement of the language of science from the position of a uniquely privileged language," experimented in 1913 with hypnosis as a method of breaking through the limitation of surface consciousness to see if he could discover "special mental efforts" while under a-trance. See Frederick Copleston, S. J., A History of Philosophy, VIII (London, 1966), 495-504, for Wittgenstein's theory of language. I am indebted to F. A. Hayek for the information concerning Wittgenstein's experiments with hypnosis. See F. A. Hayek, Unfinished Draft of A Sketch of a Biography of Ludwig Wittgenstein (published for private circulation by the author, 1953), p. 9.

⁷⁶E. M. Forster, "Forrest Reid," Abinger Harvest (New York, 1955), p. 77. (First published London, 1936.)

⁷⁷Maya is defined by Wilfred Stone as "the identity of opposites, the fundamental unity of everything in God" and by Heinrich Zimmer as "a simultaneous-and-successive manifestation of energies that are at variance with each other, processes contradicting and annihilating each other; creation and destruction. . . . the dream-idyll of the inward vision of the god and the desolate nought, the terror of the void, the dread infinite." The language is Hegelian: "identity of opposites . . . contradicting and annihilating . . . inward vision and the desolate nought." Maya may be the last annihilation into assimilation, the last dialectical step into a Hindu-Hegelian Absolute. See Stone, p. 304 and Heinrich Zimmer, Myths and Symbols in Indian Art and Civilization, ed. Joseph Campbell (New York, 1962), p. 46.

⁷⁸The phrase is one P. N. Furbank used to describe Samuel Butler's ideas on evolution. See P. N. Furbank, Samuel Butler (Cambridge, 1948), p. 51.

⁷⁹E. M. Forster, "Gerald Heard," Two Cheers for Democracy, pp. 25-26. When one remembers that Harold in "Albergo Empedocle" (1903) withdrew into apathy after his psychic sleep in Sicily and that Giuseppe in "The Story of the Siren" (1920) was "unhappy because he knew everything," one realizes that Forster had been examining occult experience for a long time. See "Albergo Empedocle," Temple Bar, CXXVIII (December, 1903), 684 and "The Story of the Siren," The Collected Tales of E. M. Forster (New York, 1947), p. 252.

⁸⁰E. M. Forster, The Hill of Devi, p. 267. It is interesting that Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson wrote to a Mrs. Moor (spelled without the "E") from India. See E. M. Forster, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (London, 1962), p. 140. (First published London, 1934.)

⁸¹Macaulay, p. 167.

⁸²Pure Being which is Nothing and Good which is Evil seem at first contradictory, but as Frank Kermode points out, J. M.E. McTaggart "allows the possibility of one's experiencing a mystic unity which is not benevolent, not indeed anything but 'perfectly simple Being'--without attributes--'difficult, if not impossible, to distinguish from Nothing.'" See Frank Kermode, "Mr. E. M. Forster as a Symbolist" in Forster: A Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Malcolm Bradbury (Englewood Cliffs, N. J., 1966), pp. 94-95. (From Puzzles and Epiphanies: Essays and Reviews, 1958-1961 by Frank Kermode, where it appeared under the title of "The One Orderly Product"[E. M. Forster]). Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, after reading A Passage to India, wrote Forster: ". . . you have lifted a new corner of the veil. What you see behind it is indeed disquieting enough; but we cannot shirk it for that reason." See E. M. Forster, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, p. 215. When Mrs. Wilcox died in Howards End, Forster wrote that "she stood for a while at the verge of the sea that tells so little, but tells a little. . . . She had told a little of her grim secret to her friends, but not too much. . . ." See Howards End (New York, 1960), p. 102. (First published London, 1910).

⁸³Gertrude M. White, "A Passage to India: Analysis and Revaluation," PMLA, LXVIII (September, 1953), 654.

⁸⁴E. M. Forster, "The Gods of India," p. 338. See note 48, this chapter.

CHAPTER VII

BHAKTI IN BLOOMSBURY: THE LEGACY

No generous spirit stays within itself. . . . Its pursuits have no bounds or rules; its food is wonder, search, and ambiguity.

Montaigne, "On Experience"

The emphasis of this study has been Forster's method of aufheben, the annihilation and assimilation into a new metamorphosis of each step of his dialectic, from a myth-oriented "connection" with the earth in the short stories to impulsive human relationships in A Room with a View, from sensuality in Where Angels Fear to Tread to the emotionalism of The Longest Journey, from the intuitive personal relations of Howards End to the discovery of cosmic subconsciousness in A Passage to India and the lifting of human relationships beyond time and space into spirit. Love--for all things--is Forster's answer for man's dilemma. It was not a temporary answer. As late as 1947 he could write that only through love can mysticism be entered, and in 1949 he restated the essential theme of his last novel in "Art for Art's Sake": "No longer can we find a reassuring contrast to chaos in the night sky and look up . . . to the stars, the army of unalterable law, or listen for the music of the spheres. Order is not there. In the entire universe there seem to be only two possibilities for it. The first of them . . . is the divine order, the mystic harmony." The second is "the order which an artist can create in his own work."¹ Forster found both in A Passage to India, and this is

perhaps the secret behind his fictional silence since. Acceptance through the fusion of bhakti, not a negative resignation but an active opening out of the soul to welcome all--even evil--is Mrs. Moore's lesson of the cave. It is a traumatic lesson and one which sends her retreating to her patience cards. But she emerges again, after death, to "connect" with Fielding, Aziz, Adela, the punkah walla pulling the fan at the trial. She emerges, but Forster knows that most of us cannot follow her. With Aziz and Fielding we struggle on the conscious, temporal level, controlled by physical limitations. The earth, although precarious and perhaps chaotic, is still to be reckoned with: when it rises between Aziz and Fielding with its cry of "Not yet" it has, after all, the last word for the "here" and "now". When we realize that it was with the earth that Forster began in his first "Greek" stories, the culminating meaning of aufheben becomes apparent. The earth, like personal relations, has been transferred into another reality. Forster's themes of place and people have at last, in A Passage to India, merged mystically and inevitably into the need of universal love.

Seen as a whole Forster's work becomes a philosophical system in miniature, an imaginative attempt to provide man with a spiritual vision larger than himself, in which he can find meaning and significance for his life, in which he can discover "the dark secret place where he may find reality."² The struggle toward that place became the inner war which had been the motivating factor behind Forster's creative efforts. Judgment of his success depends on fitting him into his milieu and discovering those divergences which have caused his work to live past

their time and influence the present generation of writers. The questions which were bothering Forster, the puzzling relationship between the outer world of res externa and the inner receptivity of sense perception, the meaning of value, the value of art, the importance of states of mind, were exactly those problems being investigated by the Neo-Hegelians at Cambridge when he went there in 1897 and by the "Bloomsbury Group"--largely Cambridge graduates transplanted into London--who translated G. E. Moore's aesthetic theories into "Art for Art's Sake" before World War I. They were questions which had been asked for a generation by affluent sons of the English peerage and comfortable dons not quite satisfied with the compromises between religion and evolution offered by In Memoriam, but a little embarrassed by their own enthusiasm for nature, which at times bubbled up into something close to Neo-Romanticism. At the same time, while they deplored the exploitation which had built an empire, they remained Victorian. The earnestness, integrity and dedication to truth which they had inherited from a century dominated to a great extent by Evangelical Protestantism found a new crusade: the search for a unity in the universe which could be explained apart from Scripture or established religion. For a generation Baudelaire's "Correspondences" had been reaffirming man's mysterious link with nature; in 1868, the year after Baudelaire's death, the Metaphysical Society was founded in Forster's ancestors' old neighborhood of Clapham. It was replaced by The Society for Psychical Research--a more scientific title--to which Forster's friend Lowes Dickinson belonged and which, in 1885, denounced Mme. Blavatsky as a fake. The

1890's saw the founding of Cabalistic, Hermetic, Alchemist and Astrological societies, and Yeats joining the Order of the Golden Dawn. New titles and translations indicate a renewed interest in mythology, occultism, and the more mystic philosophers. The Golden Bough appeared in 1890, Arthur Machen's novel The Great God Pan in 1894, G. L. Dickinson's The Greek View of Life in 1896. In 1893, the year Yeats brought out the three-volume edition of Blake, F. H. Bradley proclaimed that the world was spirit in Appearance and Reality and McTaggart began his investigations of the Absolute. Thomas Taylor's translation of Plotinus was re-edited in Bohn's Philosophical Library in 1895 with an introduction by G. R. S. Mead, whose Hermes Trismegistus appeared in 1906. McTaggart brought out three books about Hegel, in 1896, 1901 and 1910, the year Baillie's translation of Hegel's The Phenomenology of Mind appeared.³ For many, Hegel seemed the answer to the anti-theistic mysticism of the West which would merge God and man in its final stages. In order to avoid the loss of individuality in this merger, McTaggart accepted "Hegel's principle that the greater closeness of the unity involves the greater individuality of the parts. In this case, in proportion as the mystic unity is conceived as more intense, the more real will the beings be who are united by it."⁴ The more intense Mrs. Moore's unity with the universe, the more real and individual--and capable of "connecting" mystically--she will be. In his search for a universal unity and in his answers, which were essentially occult, Forster agreed more than disagreed with the philosophical investigations of his time.

Even while late Victorian scepticism in the 1890's led to an

optimistic agnosticism on the one hand and into imaginative mysticism on the other, the Romantic commitment to emotion and a sense of place never quite disappeared. Forster's genius-loci owes much to Wordsworth, and phrases from the song in "The Point of It" more than suggest the Ode: "Childhood is a dream about me, experience a slow forgetting. . . . Death comes, and death is not a dream or a forgetting."⁵ J. B. Beer believes that Forster is the spiritual heir of Blake, Coleridge and Shelley, and Wilfred Stone sees all Forster's characters in a dialectical tug-of-war between the Benthamite and Coleridgean positions, "opposing the mind to the heart, the letter to the spirit, efficiency to love."⁶ A sentence of Keats recurs in Forster's writing. Keats wrote "I am certain of nothing but of the holiness of the heart's affections, and the truth of imagination."⁷ In Forster's "What I Believe" it appears as "the Holiness of the Heart's Affection," in Chapter XXVI of The Longest Journey it becomes "the holiness of the heart's imagination," and in Chapter XIX of Howards End Frieda Mosebach, the Schlegel cousin, pronounces, "One is certain of nothing but the truth of one's own emotions."⁸ Less particular but more pervasive than any example, however, is Forster's dedication to love as both a principle which can rescue humanity and as a universal, all-encompassing synonym for spiritual life. A lack of love would hold back Forster's third cheer from democracy; choosing a line from Swinburne's "Hertha," he claims that "only Love, the Beloved Republic, deserves that."⁹ But Forster's universal concept of love--occult, mysteriously able to include the stones--goes beyond the heart's affection of the Romantics and becomes bhakti, the final

mystical connection with the universe. Bhakti is his deviation from his times, his contribution to the question of man's search for reality in cosmic chaos.

Bhakti sets Forster apart from Bloomsbury, whose interpretation of G. E. Moore's aesthetic principles led its members to an exclusiveness arrogantly sure of its superiority and lacking at times that human "connection" which Forster always insisted upon. Bloomsbury grew out of the "Apostles," the discussion group at Cambridge to which Forster, McTaggart, Bertrand Russell, Alfred North Whitehead, G. L. Dickinson, Lytton Strachey, Maynard Keynes and Roger Fry belonged. Of the ten men in "Bloomsbury," nine were from Cambridge, eight more or less contemporary at Kings and Trinity. Of the nine Cambridge men seven had been Apostles.¹⁰ They wrote about each other. Forster produced a biography of Lowes Dickinson, Dickinson one of McTaggart; Virginia Woolf wrote about Roger Fry and Forster, Forster of Virginia Woolf and Roger Fry.¹¹ Moore's Principia Ethica was a major link between the "Apostles" and Bloomsbury. They discussed his ideas, became his disciples, translated his analysis of the perception of beauty, with its distinction between judgment and taste, into "Art for Art's Sake." "By far the most valuable things, which we know or can imagine," Moore wrote, "are certain states of consciousness, which may be roughly described as the pleasures of human intercourse and the enjoyment of beautiful objects."¹²

. . . the presence of some emotion is necessary to give any very high value to a state of aesthetic appreciation.
 . . . Admirable mental qualities do, if our previous conclusions are correct, consist very largely in an emotional contemplation of beautiful objects; and hence the

appreciation of them will consist essentially in the contemplation of such contemplation.¹³

Moore's Principia became the basis for Roger Fry's "All art gives us an experience freed from the disturbing conditions of actual life."¹⁴ "Contemplation of such contemplation" led Bloomsbury--via misinterpretation--into an exclusiveness which Bertrand Russell condemns with his usual wit. These Edwardians, he writes in his Autobiography, held themselves aloof from politics and the multitude:

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 admirations of a clique of the élite. This doctrine, quite unfairly, they fathered upon G. E. Moore, whose disciples they professed to be. Keynes, in his My Early Beliefs, has told of their admiration of Moore's doctrine. Moore gave due weight to morals and by his doctrine of organic unities avoided the view that the good consists of a series of isolated passionate moments, but those who considered themselves his disciples ignored this aspect of his teaching and degraded his ethics into advocacy of a stuffy girls'-school sentimentalizing.¹⁵

Russell may be a little hard on Keynes here. In "My Early Beliefs," the essay to which Russell refers, Keynes admitted that "We accepted Moore's religion, so to speak, and discarded his morals." He realized they were selfish: "Nothing mattered except states of mind, our own and other people's of course, but chiefly our own. These states of mind were not associated with action or achievement or with consequences. They consisted in timeless, passionate states of contemplation and communion."¹⁶ Forster, Keynes insisted, was "the elusive colt of a dark horse" and not really a permanent member of Bloomsbury.¹⁷ Much of Forster's work can be seen as an exposé of Bloomsbury's attitudes. The culture which made Cecil Vyse inhuman, the detachment which prevented Philip Herriton and

Fielding from "connecting" have their counterparts in Bloomsbury. The philosophical discussion which opens The Longest Journey is comically close to Keynes' "example" of a Bloomsbury argument:

If A was in love with B and believed that B reciprocated his feelings, whereas in fact B did not, but was in love with C, the state of affairs was certainly not so good as it would have been if A had been right, but was it worse or better than it would become if A discovered his mistake? If A was in love with B under a misapprehension as to B's qualities, was this better or worse than A's not being in love at all? If A was in love with B because A's spectacles were not strong enough to see B's complexion, did this altogether, or partly, destroy the value of A's state of mind? Suppose we were to live our lives backwards, having our experiences in the reverse order, would this affect the value of our successive states of mind? If the states of mind enjoyed by each of us were pooled and then redistributed, would this affect their value? How did one compare the value of a good state of mind which had had consequences with a bad state of mind which had good consequences? In valuing the consequences did one assess them at their actual value as it turned out eventually to be, or their probable value at the time? If at their probable value, how much evidence as to possible consequences was it one's duty to collect before applying the calculus? Was there a separate objective standard of beauty? Was a beautiful thing, that is to say, by definition that which it was good to contemplate? Or was there an actual objective quality 'beauty,' just like 'green' and 'good'? And knowledge, too, presented a problem. Were all truths equally good to pursue and contemplate?-- as for example the number of grains in a given tract of sea-sand. We were disposed to repudiate very strongly the idea that useful knowledge could be preferable to useless knowledge.¹⁸

The padding of sensitivity which Bloomsbury erected and preserved as a buffer against the active life caused Roger Fry, ex-Apostle and chief spokesman for the aesthetic theory of Bloomsbury, to see art as a mirror into which we can retreat: as a reflection of life, it demands no adjustment, no involvement, and allows us to enter an "aesthetic state of mind," Fry's metamorphosis of Moore's "judgment of taste."¹⁹ Forster's

answer came in "A Note on the Way" in Abinger Harvest, when he wrote that "Literature as a retreat is rightly discredited; it is both selfish and foolish to bury one's head in the flowers. But herbs grow in the garden, too, and share in its magics, and from them is distilled the stoicism which we badly need today."²⁰ Forster again confronted the question in a discussion of C. P. Cavafy in Pharos and Pharillon. There he asks "Which is better--the world or seclusion? Cavafy, who has tried both, can't say. But so much is certain--either life entails courage, or it ceases to be life."²¹ Maynard Keynes wrote the obituary for Bloomsbury, to which one suspects Forster could agree:

. . . we completely misunderstood human nature, including our own. The rationality which we attributed to it led to a superficiality, not only of judgment, but also of feeling. . . . I can see us as water-spiders, gracefully skimming, as light and reasonable as air, the surface of the stream without any contact at all with the eddies and currents underneath. . . ignoring both the reality and the value of the vulgar passions . . . there may have been just a grain of truth when Lawrence said in 1914 that we were 'done for.'²²

Yet one cannot call Forster the gadfly of Bloomsbury. He saw much that was valuable in sensitivity, in a detachment which, if used properly, might give some perspective in a Europe harassed and reeling toward two world wars. With Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, he was drawn into the cult of post-Victorian subjective mythology--influenced by Swinburne--which saw in the Greeks a happy synthesis of intellectualism with permissive sensuality. Ignoring the fact that the Greeks were anything but "mollycoddles," Dickinson had labeled himself such and saw himself as a nineteenth-century Greek sensitive to beauty in, as Wilfred Stone describes it, "a defensive alliance against those healthy, worldly

conformists for whom the world had apparently been made."²³ Forster to a great extent joined Dickinson in that alliance. He deliberately stacks his cards against the Charles Wilcoxes and Gerald Dawes. Whenever muscular prowess confronted aesthetic intellectualism, Forster chose the latter.²⁴ In spite of the fact that sensitivity was often superficial and ineffectual in human relationships, it was less dangerous than physical domination. It was physical domination, the control of one human being by another, which caused Forster to reject homosexuality in his characters, and eventually sex itself, as he does at the end of Howards End. Perhaps much of Dickinson's defense of homosexuality as a higher form of love which could lead to spiritual transcendence beyond the body--an idea shared by McTaggart--entered into Forster's ultimate spiritualizing of personal relationships with Mrs. Moore.²⁵ Certainly Ansell and Mr. Beebe are likeable characters--until they want domination. Homosexuality per se, sensitivity per se, the contemplative life vs. the active life per se are not bad per se until they threaten the human spirit. The human spirit, its need for solitude through nature, its need to connect with its fellows through love, is Forster's main concern. His highest praise for Samuel Butler was that he "upheld the human spirit." This, he writes in "The Legacy of Samuel Butler," was Butler's legacy to humanity.²⁶ It was also his own. Whenever the human spirit is threatened--either externally by London's industrialism or inwardly by fear of experience--Forster's themes give no quarter.

But he refuses to bluster. He has, as V. S. Pritchett wrote recently in "E. M. Forster at Ninety," a way of "saying grave things

lightly."²⁷ Perhaps Forster's championing of contemplation in an industrialized, commercial civilization could not have escaped the charge of spinsterish timidity which has so often been the judgment of his critics. His way of "saying grave things lightly" is not timidity so much as a defense of sensitivity confronted by the dehumanization of man qua mass. In "The Ivory Tower" Forster vehemently reiterates that man "needs the Ivory Tower just as much as he needs the human chicken-run, the city."²⁸ Man contains tendencies toward both solitude and multitude, but it is the latter, for Forster, which threatens sanity. The individual has a right to escape from the community because the community is selfish. "The idea that escape is, per se, wrong, is a bureaucratic idea," he writes in the same essay. Escape is, after all, the purpose of books, and necessary for that private universe where we can see where we stand:

We are troubled today, each of us, because we can lead neither the private nor the public life with any decency. I cannot shut myself up in a Palace of Art or a Philosophic Tower and ignore the madness and the misery of the world. Yet I cannot throw myself into movements just because they are uncompromising, or merge myself in my own class, my own country, or in anyone else's class or country, as if that were the unique good.²⁹

As Pritchett writes, "we see at once that the stress on the private has never been cozy. It has always meant attack and war."³⁰ Forster was an observer who suffered involvement in spite of himself, who needed solitude to produce literature, but who saw literature, in its best sense, as involvement. In "Art for Art's Sake" he claims that art can give an order which is "evolved from within . . . an internal stability,

a vital harmony."³¹ Moreover, as he writes in Aspects of the Novel, it can make personal relationships meaningful:

For human intercourse, as soon as we look at it for its own sake and not as a social adjunct, is seen to be haunted by a spectre. We cannot understand each other, except in a rough and ready way; we cannot reveal ourselves, even when we want to; what we call intimacy is only a makeshift; perfect knowledge is an illusion. But in the novel we can know people perfectly, and apart from the general pleasure of reading, we can find here a compensation for their dimness in life.³²

This is Bloomsbury modified. We should retreat for guidance rather than escape, for spiritual refueling. Forster defends sensitivity in "What I Believe":

I believe in aristocracy, though . . . but an aristocracy of the sensitive, the considerate and the plucky. Its members are to be found in all nations and classes, and all through the ages, and there is a secret understanding between them when they meet. They represent the true human tradition, the one permanent victory of our queer race over cruelty and chaos. Thousands of them perish in obscurity, a few are great names. They are sensitive for others as well as for themselves, they are considerate without being fussy, their pluck is not swankiness but the power to endure, and they can take a joke.³³

"Their pluck is not swankiness but the power to endure"--the same could be said of Forster. Detachment may, after all, provide the clarity necessary for perception. "Milton wobbled," Forster wrote in "The Ivory Tower," and "it is in wobbling that the chief duty of man consists. We are here on earth not to save ourselves and not to save the community, but to try to save both."³⁴

But can "wobbling" be involvement? Is Forster, as C.B. Cox thinks, like his character George Emerson, whose "policy is to withdraw into areas of life where he can do no harm"? "As a result," Cox writes,

"his policy of acceptance ends not in richness, but in exclusion."³⁵ One has only to look at Forster's essays and articles written during World War II to dispel the idea that his "wobbling" was merely uncertain movement. Inwardly there is a steady center, a fulcrum on which the wobbler, like a top-heavy doll, comes back to rest. That center, as Forster's own actions indicate, must be courage, a faith in the integrity of one's own convictions. He defended Lawrence in the Lady Chatterly trials and refused to give more than two cheers for democracy in 1939, a year dangerous for such sentiments in England. He could accept, that same year, violence as "the ultimate reality on this earth." That acceptance, from "What I Believe," is worth reviewing at length, for it should remove from Forster the charge of escapism:

It [violence] is, alas! the ultimate reality on this earth, but it does not always get to the front. Some people call its absences "decadence"; I call them "civilisation" and find in such interludes the chief justification for the human experiment. I look the other way until fate strikes me. Whether this is due to courage or to cowardice in my own case I can not be sure. But I know that if men had not looked the other way in the past, nothing of any value would survive. The people I respect most behave as if they were immortal and as if society was eternal. Both assumptions are false: both of them must be accepted as true if we are to go on eating and working and loving, and are to keep open a few breathing holes for the human spirit.³⁶

In a world which too often mistakes activity for involvement and slogans for spirit, "To act as if we were immortal" may be the only way to "keep open a few breathing holes for the human spirit." Forster does so in the fiction by emphasizing man's struggle toward reality. His "holes" are those visionary moments of ecstatic perception--with a literary kinship, perhaps, with Joyce's "epiphanies"--which his characters enter by

"connecting" with another reality and which form the steps of his dialectic.

If we see Forster's situation at the beginning of the century, in Matthew Arnold's words, as one of "Wandering between two worlds, one dead, / The other powerless to be born," his "wobbling" might make political sense and promise personal survival.³⁷ A combination of sympathy and satire such as Forster used was bound to emerge as a muffled gentility, a style which Trilling has called "unbuttoned."³⁸ Forster was presenting a Romantic vision in a new "hard-boiled" era, and he would naturally use diffidence as a defense; but, as Trilling suspected, under the softness he was hard as nails. World War II convinced Forster that he had taken the right tone, however. Watching the Germans overrun Europe under a social machine powered by cruelty, he could say, with some justification, that "hardness doesn't pay."³⁹ His own mild approach, his own "incomplete" heroes will persist, I believe, beyond the bluster of more dogmatic writers. How many times Forster's characters enjoy avatars in the writings of others no one can say. I have found them in Graham Greene, in the Quiet American muddled by reason and following a creed of Do Goodism which brings disaster, in the Whiskey Priest who is destroyed by the state because he dared to see people as spiritual, in Fowler, the English journalist from The Quiet American who, like Forster's Fielding in A Passage to India, "travels light" among human relationships, but who ends, like Fielding, equally undirected, equally incomplete. Cyril Connolly claimed of Forster's books that "their pollen fertilized a new generation," but H. J. Oliver may have been more correct when he sug-

gested that Forster's influence skipped a generation, for Forster seems to have influenced the Auden-Isherwood group more than the one immediately following his own.⁴⁰ Isherwood has a character say, in Down There on a Visit: "Well, my 'England' is E. M.: the antiheroic hero. . . . While the others tell their followers to be ready to die, he advises us to live as if we were immortal. And he really does this himself, although he is as anxious and afraid as any of us, and never for an instant pretends not to be. He and his books and what they stand for are all that is truly worth saving from Hitler."⁴¹ Wobbling and incomplete, Forster is his antihero. Politically he could belong to a liberal gentry; socially he is a member of the middle class who cries out against conformity; artistically he is a traditionalist pulled toward political involvement. He is an urbane world traveller longing for the stability of place and home, an Art-for-art's-sake advocate tempted--and giving in too often to the temptation--to preach; a humanist hating people as plural, a Romantic Victorian, a materialist needing ideals and a spiritualist deprecating but at the same time appreciating money. He wobbles, but manages to balance, as his dialectic does, between chaos and reality, a not unadmirable trick for the twentieth century. His legacy is love of the earth, the stars, all animate and inanimate things, ourselves, each other. His legacy is an appeal for compassion close to the Hindu admonition to give (Datta), to have compassion (Dayadhvam), to practice self-control (Damyata) with which Eliot ended The Wasteland. It is bhakti, a plea for connection between people, between ourselves and nature, between ourselves and our selves. It is one, I believe, worth preserving.

NOTES
Chapter VII

¹E. M. Forster, "The Raison d'Étre of Criticism in the Arts," Two Cheers for Democracy (New York, 1951), pp.117-118. (First published London, 1938): "Art for Art's Sake," Two Cheers for Democracy, pp. 91-92.

²E. M. Forster, "The Individual and His God," The Listener, XXIII (December 5, 1940), 202.

³J. M. E. McTaggart, Studies in the Hegelian Dialectic (Cambridge, 1896); Studies in Hegelian Cosmology (Cambridge, 1901); A Commentary on Hegel's Logic (Cambridge, 1910). It is interesting that Yeats was influenced by McTaggart. In one of his last poems, "A Bronze Head," Yeats refers to McTaggart's theory of a one-substance spiritual universe. Yeats is writing about Maud Gonne, and speculates whether the reality of self lay in her spirit or in her body:

. . . who can tell
Which of her forms has shown her substance right?
Or maybe substance can be composite,
Profound McTaggart thought so, and in a breath
A mouthful held the extreme of life and death.

See W. B. Yeats, "A Bronze Head," The Collected Poems of W. B. Yeats (New York, 1967), pp. 328-329. For McTaggart's influence on Yeats see T. R. Henn, The Lonely Tower (London, 1950), pp. xvi, xxxvi.

⁴J. M. E. McTaggart, Philosophical Studies (London, 1934), p. 57.

⁵E. M. Forster, "The Point of It," The Collected Tales of E. M. Forster (New York, 1966), pp. 221, 222.

⁶John B. Beer, The Achievement of E. M. Forster (London, 1963), p. 15; Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain (Stanford, California, 1966), p. 5.

⁷I am indebted to H. A. Smith for this reference to Keats. See H. A. Smith, "Forster's Humanism and the Nineteenth Century" in Forster: a Collection of Critical Essays, ed. Malcolm Bradbury (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966), p. 114.

⁸E. M. Forster, "What I Believe," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 74; The Longest Journey (New York, 1962), p. 226. (First Published London, 1907); Howards End (New York, 1960), p. 170. (First published London, 1910).

⁹E. M. Forster, "What I Believe," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 70.

¹⁰George H. Thomson, The Fiction of E. M. Forster (Detroit, 1967), p. 24.

¹¹E. M. Forster, Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson (London, 1934); Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, John McTaggart Ellis McTaggart (Cambridge, 1931); Virginia Woolf, Roger Fry: A Biography (London, 1940), and "The Novels of E. M. Forster" in The Death of the Moth (New York, 1942), pp. 162-175; E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf (New York, 1942), reprinted in Two Cheers for Democracy, pp. 242-258. For Forster's comments on Roger Fry see "Not Looking at Pictures," Two Cheers for Democracy, pp. 130-134 and "Roger Fry: An Obituary Notice," Abinger Harvest (New York, 1955), pp. 36-38. (First published London, 1936)

¹²G. E. Moore, Principia Ethica (Cambridge, 1965), Section 113, p. 188. (First published Cambridge, 1903.)

¹³Ibid., Section 115, p. 190; Section 122, p. 204.

¹⁴Roger Fry, "Three Pictures in Tempera by William Blake," Vision and Design (London, 1957), p. 200.

¹⁵Bertrand Russell, The Autobiography of Bertrand Russell: 1872-1914 (Boston, 1967), p. 95.

¹⁶John Maynard Keynes, "My Early Beliefs," Two Memoirs: Dr. Melchior, a Defeated Enemy, and My Early Beliefs (London, 1949), pp. 82, 83.

¹⁷Ibid., p. 82.

¹⁸Ibid., pp. 86-87.

¹⁹Fry, Vision and Design, pp. 19-20.

²⁰E. M. Forster, "A Note on the Way," Abinger Harvest, p. 72.

²¹E. M. Forster, Pharos and Pharillon (New York, 1961), p. 97. (First published London, 1923.)

²²Keynes, pp. 100, 103.

²³Stone, p. 78.

²⁴This choice of sensitivity over a will to power and control of others nullifies a comparison of Forster with Nietzsche, which in other respects might seem justified. Nietzsche's admiration for Dionysian, pre-Socratic Greece and his denunciation of the ascetic priest ("the ascetic ideal is a dodge for the preservation of life. . . .") and the pseudo-artist ("an epicurean . . . who ogles life as he does the ascetic ideal, who wears the word 'artist' like a kid glove. . . .") is close to Forster's own admiration of sensuous Pans and his denunciation of those ascetic creations, Mr. Beebe, Cecil Vyse and Stewart Ansell. But two

items argue against Nietzsche's influence on Forster: (1) Forster's vehement championing of democracy and sensitivity opposes Nietzsche's worship of strength and will and (2) Nietzsche's acid description of truth unreachable by reason refutes Forster's faith in intuition and "another reality": "The height of sadistic pleasure is reached when reason in its self-contempt and self-mockery decrees that the realm of truth does indeed exist but that reason is debarred from it." See Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy and The Genealogy of Morals, trans. Francis Golffing (New York, 1956), pp. 256, 293, 254-255. Nietzsche's complete work was not translated into English until 1909, after Forster's pagan themes in the early short stories had been established and after the Italian novels and The Longest Journey were published. See Friedrich Nietzsche, The Authorized English Translation of Nietzsche's Works, ed. Oscar Levy, 18 vols. (London, 1909-1913). The Birth of Tragedy appeared as Vol. I of this edition, translated by William A. Haussmann and published in 1909; The Genealogy of Morals appeared as Vol. XIII of this edition, translated by Horace B. Samuel and published in 1910. An earlier edition of Thus Spake Zarathustra, trans. A. Tille and The Case of Wagner, The Twilight of the Idols and The Antichrist, trans. T. Common appeared in 1896. Even if Forster had read this edition, his distrust in the will as control would minimize if not cancel Nietzsche's influence on him.

²⁵See note 35, Chapter IV, present study.

²⁶E. M. Forster, "The Legacy of Samuel Butler," The Listener, XLVII (June 12, 1952), p. 956.

²⁷V. S. Pritchett, "E. M. Forster at Ninety," The New York Times Book Review (December 29, 1968), p. 19.

²⁸E. M. Forster, "The Ivory Tower," Atlantic Monthly, CLXIII (January, 1939), 51-52.

²⁹Ibid., p. 53.

³⁰Pritchett, p. 2.

³¹E. M. Forster, "Art for Art's Sake," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 90.

³²E. M. Forster, Aspects of the Novel (New York, 1954), p. 63. (First published London, 1927.)

³³E. M. Forster, "What I Believe," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 73.

³⁴E. M. Forster, "Ivory Tower," p. 58.

³⁵ C. B. Cox, The Free Spirit: A Study of Liberal Humanism in the Novels of George Eliot, Henry James, E. M. Forster, Virginia Woolf and Angus Wilson (London, 1963), p. 77.

³⁶ E. M. Forster, "What I Believe," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 71.

³⁷ Matthew Arnold, "Stanzas from the Grande Chartreuse," Poetry of the Victorian Period, ed. George B. Woods and Jerome H. Buckley (New York, 1955), p. 476.

³⁸ Lionel Trilling, E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 9. (First published New York, 1943.)

³⁹ E. M. Forster, "The Challenge of Our Time," Two Cheers for Democracy, p. 56.

⁴⁰ Cyril Connolly, Enemies of Promise (New York, 1948), p. 6. (First published London, 1938); Harold James Oliver, The Art of E. M. Forster (Melbourne, Australia, 1960), p. 84.

⁴¹ Christopher Isherwood, Down There on a Visit (New York, 1962), p. 162. Forster's influence on the Auden-Isherwood group is discussed by Alan Wilde, Art and Order: A Study of E. M. Forster (New York, 1964), p. 2.

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APPENDICES

1. The Dialectic
2. The Glossary

APPENDIX I. The Dialectic

The Absolute
Pure Being-Nothingness Pure Beauty-Ugliness
Good-Evil Reality Truth
complete indifference-total love
A Passage to India: Mrs. Moore

mysticism-method
(mystical subconscious
universe through love. Per-
sonal relations now spiritual)

visionary reality
the idea of the earth
the idea of humanity
Howards End: Ruth Wilcox,
Margaret Schlegel; A Passage
to India: Godbole

Intuition-method
instinct connection
with the earth and human-
person
through another

emotional reality. May result in death
or stagnation if not consummated in love
The Longest Journey: Rickie Elliot
A Room with a View: George Emerson and
Lucy Honeychurch

emotion-method
ego
(connecting with
specific people.
"Momentary" =
momentary annihila-
tion of ego)

imaginative reality, aesthetic perception, resignation (limited by reason, education)

"The Eternal Moment": Miss Raby.

Cecil Vyse (Cecil momentarily).

Where Angels Fear to Tread: Philip Her-riton, Caroline Abbott, Lilia.

The Longest Journey: Ansell.

Howards End: Helen Schlegel, Leonard Bast.

A Passage to India: Fielding, Adela, Aziz.

impulse method
 (via vicarious or momentary
 reaction with another person)

sensuous reality, "seeing"
 (limited: uses earth but not humanity)

"Albergo Empedocle": Harold.

"The Story of a Panic": Eustace, Gennaro.

"Celestial Omnibus": the boy Other Kingdom": Miss Beaumont

"The Story of the Siren": Giuseppe after death:

"the Point of It": Micky

"Mr. Andrews": Mr. Andrews

"The Other Side of the Hedge": the narrator

Where Angels Fear to Tread: Gino

The Longest Journey: Stephen

fantasy method
 the earth

society, "cultivated" imagination, reason, intellect, "machinery," analysis, conven- tion, "morality," "culture"

"Albergo Empedocle": Mildred Peaslake

"Story of a Panic": the narrator, Leyland, Mr. Sandbach

"Celestial Omnibus": Mr. Bons, the parents

"Other Kingdom": Worters, the narrator

"The Machine Stops": Vashti

"The Story of the Siren": narrator, the tourists

"The Eternal Moment": Col. Leyland, Feo

A Room with a View: Cecil Vyse, Mr. Beebe

Where Angels Fear to Tread: Mrs. Herriton, Harriet

The Longest Journey: Mrs. Failing, the Pembrokes

Howards End: the Wilcoxes, Jacky Bast

A Passage to India: Ronny Heaslop, the Turtouns, McBryde, Miss Derek

lifted momentarily

"The Curate's Friend": curate

"Road from Colonus": Mr. Lucas

"Machine Stops": Kuno, Vashti

"Co-ordination": head- mistress and music teacher

Appendix 2. The Glossary

Absolute Good (Summum Bonum). This is G. E. Moore's term for the ultimately undefinable, non-natural quality, "good." That it should be, by his admission in the Principia Ethica, an "ideal" refutes those who claim for Moore the title of the great iconoclast who toppled Neo-Hegelian idealism. Paradoxically Moore was led in a circle back to idealism by his refusal to accept any natural quality as "good." He labeled as a "naturalistic fallacy" any definition of "good" in natural terms: pleasure, "the greatest good for the greatest number," the physical laws of the universe, or that which is desirable. All these are ultimately tautologies--if the "good" can be defined as "pleasurable," then to do a pleasurable act is pleasurable. Kant, Mill, Bentham, Spencer--each had his idea of "good," but each definition was subjective. In order to arrive at an objective definition of "good" one must discover that definition apart from both natural terms and subjective desire. The question should be phrased, "What is wholly good?" But Moore's answer that "a whole is equal to more than the sum of its parts" is a statement implying intuitive if not mystical overtones. Equally vague is his description of Absolute Good: "It is just possible that the Absolute Good may be entirely composed of qualities which we cannot even imagine." See his Chapter VI, "The Ideal," Principia Ethica (Cambridge, 1965), pp. 183-225. (First published Cambridge, 1903.)

Apostles. The "Apostles," a secret discussion society, was organized at St. Johns College, Cambridge, around 1820 by George Tomlinson.

In 1824 the Society moved to Trinity and has been there or at King's ever since. Among its members have been Henry Sidgwick, the philosopher, Alfred Tennyson and Arthur Hallam. At the end of the nineteenth century it enjoyed a resurgence of intellectual brilliance. The dons and fellows who were Forster's contemporary members were G. Lowes Dickinson, Roger Fry, J. M. E. McTaggart, G. E. Moore, Bertrand Russell, Nathaniel Wedd and Alfred North Whitehead. Forster's fellow undergraduates were John Maynard Keynes, Desmond MacCarthy, Thoby Stephen, Lytton Strachey and Leonard Woolf. For a complete history of the Society see Frances M. Brookfield, The Cambridge "Apostles" (New York, 1907), and also Wilfred Stone's chapter, "The Apostolic Ring" in The Cave and the Mountain (Stanford, California, 1966), pp. 40-71.

Aufheben. Literally, to lift, to seize, to capture, to cancel, to preserve. Central to Hegel's dialectic, aufheben is the process by which a consciousness transfers itself into the Not-Self, which can be either a thing or another consciousness. In order to do so, the consciousness must annihilate the other and itself--now transferred into the other--before it can achieve unity with the other via assimilation and return to itself. The new being thus formed by this experience steps up one more rung onto the development of consciousness into Absolute Knowledge. The last stage annihilates and assimilates everything in the universe until the individual consciousness becomes the universe, i.e., God. Once begun, the process is self-motivating through necessity and cannot end, logically, until all steps are taken. The meaning of aufheben permeates The Phenomenology of Mind, but nowhere

does Hegel come closer to a more detailed explanation than in his section "Lordship and Bondage," from which the following quotation is taken:

Self-consciousness has before it another self-consciousness; it has come outside itself. This has a double significance. First it has lost its own self, since it finds itself as an other being; secondly, it has thereby sublated that other, for it does not regard the other as essentially real, but sees its own self in the other.

It must cancel this its other. To do so is the sublation of that first double meaning, and is therefore a second meaning. First, it must set itself to sublimate the other independent being, in order thereby to become certain of itself as true being, secondly, it thereupon proceeds to sublimate its own self, for this other is itself.

This sublation in a double sense of its otherness in a double sense is at the same time a return in a double sense into its self. For, firstly, through sublation, it gets back itself, because it becomes one with itself again through the cancelling of its otherness; but secondly, it likewise gives otherness back again to the other self-consciousness, for it was aware of being in the other, it cancels this its own being in the other and thus lets the other again go free.

(The Phenomenology of Mind, pp. 229-230)

The result of this experience is that "self-consciousness consists in showing itself as a pure negation of its objective form, or in showing that it is fettered to no determinate existence, that it is not bound at all by the particularity everywhere characteristic of existence as such, and is not tied up with life" (p. 232). In this new state of consciousness, which is now self-consciousness, the individual knows himself in a new form, unfettered to particularities. In Hegel's words, "it is a consciousness existing on its own account which is mediated with itself through an other consciousness. . ." (p. 234). Out there, in other words, in the Not-Self, the individual has discovered that he can exist. In order to get himself back, as it were, he must undergo metamorphosis through the annihilation of his old self and the Not-Self

and through the assimilation of a new unity between the Self (now larger and fuller via the assimilation) and the Not-Self. He has discovered not only a vita activa, but himself as homo faber--and what he made was himself. As he meets each new Not-Self--whether a thing or another self-consciousness--the process must be repeated. Thus Hegel introduces the concept of necessity into the dialectic. See Hegel, The Phenomenology of Mind, trans. J. B. Baillie (New York, 1967. First published London, 1910).

Bhakti. There are three paths recommended in Hinduism for the attainment of liberation: pravrtti or progression, nivrtti or renunciation, and bhakti, or devotion to God. According to Satischandra Chatterjee, the first is "a movement of the soul in the direction of desired objects, or its tendency towards objects of enjoyment. It is a sort of outgoing activity of the soul, or an outwardizing of its subjective being, and is a necessary preliminary stage in its evolution and liberation. The second is apparently a tendency of the soul away from objects, and towards its own subjective being. It is an inward-directed activity of the self and an inwardization of its subjective being. It does not, however, require one to renounce the world, to renounce worldliness or attachment to the world. . . . The third path . . . is bhakti or devotion to God. Bhakti as yoga or a spiritual path is naturally easier than any other path, for it rests on man's natural emotion of love as that is turned towards God." See Satischandra Chatterjee, The Fundamentals of Hinduism, A Philosophical Study (Calcutta, 1960), pp. 107, 152. Bhakti, in its acceptance and assimilation of the universe--

all things animate and inanimate in the love of God--is essentially the last stage of Hegel's aufheben, which, when it reaches Absolute Knowledge, attains "the knowledge that the action of the self within itself is all that is essential and all existence . . ." (The Phenomenology of Mind, p. 197).

Madame Blavatsky. Helena Petrovna Blavatsky (1831-1891), daughter of a German nobleman and bride at seventeen of a Russian official from whom she separated after a few months, traveled to Tibet in 1856 and to the United States in 1873. She met in Vermont Col. H. S. Olcott, a New York lawyer who urged her to found the Theosophical Society in 1875. In 1878, under the influence of Swami Dayananda, the title of the group was changed to The Theosophical Society of Arya Samaj. In 1879 Mme. Blavatsky and Col. Olcott went to India where they sought to (1) form a nucleus of the brotherhood of humanity, (2) promote the study of religion, philosophy and science, and (3) investigate the unexplained laws of nature and the powers latent in man. The headquarters of the society were now at Adyar, a suburb of Madras. By 1891, the year of her death, Mme. Blavatsky is said to have had nearly 100,000 followers. She believed she had been chosen to reveal forgotten wisdom and published in 1877 Isis Unveiled, in 1888 The Secret Doctrine, in 1889 The Key to Theosophy and The Voice of the Silence. A chatty, disorganized but detailed account of her life can be found in John Symond's Madame Blavatsky, Medium and Magician (London, 1959). Paul Fussell has found many similarities between Mme. Blavatsky and Forster's Mrs. Moore in A Passage to India. See his "E. M. Forster's Mrs. Moore: Some Sugges-

tions," Philological Quarterly, XXXII (October, 1953, 388-395.

Bloomsbury. The "Bloomsbury Group" began meeting about 1906 in the London district of Bloomsbury in the home of Virginia and Vanessa Stephen--later Virginia Woolf and Vanessa Bell--for the purpose of literary and artistic stimulation and exchange of ideas. The best most recent study is J. K. Johnstone's The Bloomsbury Group (New York, 1963). In his introduction Johnstone writes:

"Bloomsbury" meant a number of things--snobbish, "high-brow," "arty," "Bohemian"--all rolled into one word. It was intended to smack, all at once, of the British Museum, of untidy art studios, of an exclusive, "unconventional" life, of pale aesthetes who met to read esoteric papers in some ivory tower.

The group consisted of John Maynard Keynes, Lytton Strachey, Virginia and Leonard Woolf, Vanessa and Clive Bell, Duncan Grant, Roger Fry and E. M. Forster. By World War I the group per se had broken up, but kept in touch through friendship and mutual criticism. For Forster's influence on Virginia Woolf see Virginia Woolf, A Writer's Diary (London, 1953). This influence lasted until her death in 1941.

The Clapham Sect. The Clapham Sect was a group of Evangelical reformers who flourished between 1790 and 1835. Wilfred Stone, in The Cave and the Mountain, enumerates their accomplishments: "the abolition of the slave trade (1807); the emancipation of the slaves in the colonies (1833); the founding of the Missionary Society to sponsor Christian teaching in Australia, Africa, and the East (1799); the writing and distributing of edifying tracts for the lower classes; the establishment of The Christian Observer (1802) . . . the founding of the

British and Foreign Bible Society (1804), the Sunday School Society (1785), the Society for Giving Effect to His Majesty's Proclamation against Vice and Immorality (1799) . . ." (p. 24). The group met at Battersea Rise, the home of Henry Thornton, M. P., Forster's great-grandfather. Forster's memory of them comes to him through his great-aunt, Marianne Thornton, whose biography he wrote. In "Battersea Rise" (Abinger Harvest, pp. 236-240) Forster records Marianne's description: "Their manners were perfect, so that they would often appear to give in, but to those people who knew them well it was evident that the acquiescence was only seeming and a concession to good manners which they rightly held in high esteem." They were intelligent, wealthy, narrow, complacent, censorious and clannish, but Forster was proud of his connection with them. Much of the stubbornness in their Evangelical piety can be seen in Forster's fierce dedication to individualism. Much of the stabilizing anchorage they found in Battersea Rise--lost to London's encroaching industrialism--Forster, like Marianne, longed for and translated into his themes of place, especially in Howards End. See: Wilfred Stone, "Clapham: The Father's House," in The Cave and the Mountain (Stanford, California, 1966), pp. 21-39; E. M. Forster, Marianne Thornton, A Domestic Biography, 1797-1887 (New York, 1956); "Battersea Rise" in Abinger Harvest (New York, 1955.. First published London, 1936), pp. 236-240; "Henry Thornton" in Two Cheers for Democracy (New York, 1951. First published London, 1938), pp. 192-196.

Determining correspondence. J. M. E. McTaggart's theory of interlocking relationships which form the spiritual universe was influenced by

F. H. Bradley's idea that no relationship can occur without change. A plus B equals AB, but A, by having had a relation with B, becomes Ab. Not only externally, but internally, there is a change: A now has an internal relationship with Ab, which constitutes an inner source of change. Thus, although the universe is one substance, spirit, it contains the pluralities of divisible particulars. In order to avoid the problem of endless divisibility McTaggart set up his theory of Determining Correspondence (Chapters Twenty-Four, Twenty-Six of The Nature of Existence) in which divisible particulars are related to each other by shared qualities. Thus A (with w and x) is related to B (with w and y) through "w." But there will also be some x in B, some y in A through the link of "w." With this concept McTaggart postulates a telepathic relation between one self and another, maintaining that the relation between a mind and a perceived object is a state of that mind as it perceives the object in relation to the object. "Our conclusion is, then," he writes, "that all that exists, both substances and characteristics, are bound together in one system of extrinsic determinations" (Volume I, Section 138, p. 151). It is this interacting of the qualities of substances and their relations that forms the basis of Determining Correspondence, the causal clue to the organic unity of the universe (Vol. I, Section 207, p. 219). See F. H. Bradley, Appearance and Reality (New York, 1908. First published London, 1893), p. 98; J. M. E. McTaggart, The Nature of Existence, 2 vols. (Cambridge, 1921, 1927), Chapters 24 and 26. Thus Forster's Mrs. Moore, with a subconsciousness, could assimilate the subconsciousness of the cave. The new unity between Mrs.

Moore and the universe is caused by the relationship of their shared quality. See Chapter VI of the present study for a discussion of Mrs. Moore's psychic experience.

Dialectic. The term "dialectic" originates from a Greek expression for the art of conversation. Although Plato's description of the dialectic as a journey toward the Good is poetic, it is as vague and general as the Greek origin of the word. Plato's dialectic in The Republic was a dramatic presentation of Socrates' elenchus, or cross-examination, with emphasis on hypotheses: his later work emphasized division as a method. Aristotle's use of the dialectic has been called a "logic of probability": he believed it was useful for intellectual training but distrusted it as a method of acquiring knowledge--for the acquisition of knowledge Aristotle thought one could rely only on demonstration. By "dialectic" the Stoics meant formal logic, but they extended its use to grammatical theory and semantics. Kant called dialectic "the logic of illusion," which could expose the illusions of judgments beyond the limits of experience. Hegel brought dialectic back to earth, as it were, by applying it to an examination of consciousness. For Hegel the dialectic involved "the passing over of thoughts or concepts into their opposites and the achievement of a higher unity. . . . a higher truth through contradictions." What was new in Hegel's dialectic was the concept of necessary movement. "The 'passing over into the opposite' was seen as a natural consequence of the limited or finite nature" of man. In other words, finite, limited, mortal man, if he is to learn anything about the universe, himself and

others, must risk connection with the Not-Self--nature, other people. Once begun, this transfer of the Self into the Not-Self--this annihilation of the old self as well as the destruction of the Not-Self, followed by the assimilation of both into a new unity--becomes the driving force toward further development. This is the process of aufheben. But whatever method or definition philosophers from Plato to Hegel have given the dialectic, one unswerving statement can be made about its subject matter: the dialectic has always sought the unchanging essence of the universe. My quotations are from "Dialectic," Encyclopaedia of Philosophy, ed. Paul Edwards, II (New York, 1967), 385-389. See also "aufheben" in the Appendix of the present study.

Judgment of taste. G. E. Moore's distinction between the "error of judgment" (based on fact) and the "error of taste" (based on value) became the basis for Bloomsbury's "Art for Art's Sake" aesthetics. In an error of judgment we give attributes to qualities which an object does not have and make an error of the fact of the case; in an error of taste we have a feeling toward qualities which the object actually has, but which are not beautiful. Which is worse? Because Moore insists that knowledge has "little or no value by itself," his verdict goes to belief, i.e., to "taste" (Principia Ethica, Section 116, pp. 192-194 and Section 120, p. 199). Furthermore, Moore makes a distinction between "as a whole" and "on the whole," the latter being "as a whole" plus "the intrinsic values which belong to any of its parts" (Section 129, p. 214). In other words, a thing "on the whole" may be more than the sum of its parts. How do we know? By intuition. It is

easy to see how such analyses led to subjective aesthetic attitudes and Roger Fry's "the aesthetic state of mind." See G. E. Moore, "The Ideal," Chapter VI, Principia Ethica (Cambridge, 1965. First published Cambridge, 1903), pp. 183-225, and Roger Fry, Vision and Design (London, 1957).

The Marabar Caves. In "Indian Entries" Forster wrote on March 29, 1913: "The Hindu caves . . . had no beauty either: the brute aroused instead of somnolent: that was all." And on March 30: "I revisited Caves alone . . . their impression is already fading, I think because there is no beauty and I do not believe in the devil, whose palace they are" (pp. 26, 27). These caves are near Aurangabad. Sujit Mukherjee thinks Chandrapur is modern Patna and the Marabar Caves are the Barabar Caves: "The Barabar Caves are nearer to Gaya than to Patna, and Forster is aware of this; because he refers to the Bo Tree of Bodh Gaya and the mail train rushing with a shriek along the Grand Chord line. Then, as now, a slow train on the branch line takes one out to the flag station where one gets off to visit Barabar; but one does have to buy tickets . . . on the so-called "Marabar branch line," which must mean the actual Patna-Gaya line. The Kawa Dol rock is still perched atop the hills as it was when Forster saw it." See Sijit Mukherjee, "The Marabar Mystery: An Addition to the Case-book on the Caves," College English, XXVII (1966), 501-503 and E. M. Forster, "Indian Entries," Encounter, XVII (1962), 20-27.

Neutral monism. Although Bertrand Russell considered himself, with G. E. Moore, a rebel against Neo-Hegelian idealism, his theory of

subjective perception ("Any statement as to what it is that our immediate experiences make us know is very likely to be wrong." Problems of Philosophy, p. 10) led him in 1921 to write, in The Analysis of Mind, that mind and matter are made of a neutral stuff more primitive than either, "like a common ancestor" (p. 10). Thus Russell not only projects a bio-psychical view of mind-matter but sees in Mysticism and Logic "the ethical outlook of mysticism" which admits "a higher, mystical kind of good, which belongs to reality and is not opposed by any correlative kind of evil" (p. 27). Russell's search for unity in the universe relates him to McTaggart and the Neo-Hegelians and to a monistic view of the world. For McTaggart there was only one substance, spirit: for Russell, "a common ancestor." The only difference between the great iconoclast and his Cambridge don would seem to be one of language. See Bertrand Russell, Problems of Philosophy (New York, 1912); Analysis of Mind (New York, 1924. First published New York, 1921), and Mysticism and Logic (London, 1959. First published London, 1929).

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Clara Rising was born October 30, 1923 in Ocean Springs, Mississippi. Valedictorian of her high school class, she attended Sophie Newcomb in New Orleans from 1941-1943. Her academic career, postponed by four children and fifteen years of travel with her Army husband, resumed at the University of Louisville in 1958, where she graduated magna cum laude in 1959 with a major in creative writing and received the degree of Master of Arts in 1960. In her travels she has attended Tulane University, the University of Colorado, the University of Texas, and lectures on philosophy and art at Oxford, England. She taught Honors English and American Literature at Kansas State University from 1960-1962, English and humanities at St. John River Junior College in Palatka, Florida from 1962-1965. Since 1965 she has been with the Humanities Department, University of Florida, alternating graduate study with her teaching schedule. She has written two novels and numerous short stories, one of which won a national award in 1957. She is a Phi Kappa Phi and a member of the South Atlantic Modern Language Association.

This dissertation was prepared under the direction of the chairman of the candidate's supervisory committee and has been approved by all members of that committee. It was submitted to the Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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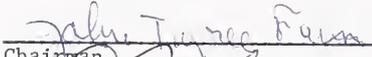


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