E. M. FORSTER'S DOUBLE VISION: THE SPLIT IN A PASSAGE TO INDIA

by

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The language I speak must be ambiguous, must have two meanings in order to do justice to the dual aspect of our psychic nature. I strive quite consciously and deliberately for ambiguity of expression, because it is superior to unequivocalness and reflects the nature of life.

--Carl Gustav Jung

... art is perhaps most effective when imperfectly understood.

--Richard Ellmann and Charles Feidelson, Jr.
To my husband and children—Tully, Ted, Chris, Dan, Edith, and Heidi

and not forgetting my canine friends, whose names are taken from some of the best efforts in our literature—Chaucer, Crisseyde, Gentillesse Gem, Darkness Visible, Olivia, and Nanda—
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The double perspective of E. M. Forster's A Passage to India creates a "split" both thematic and esthetic. Despite the novel's esthetically satisfying tripartite structure, its "open" ending produces an intellectual and artistic cleft because instead of rounding off events it encourages contemplation. And in the novel's "felt life" we sense a reality both mythic and ordinary. Plot, characterizations, settings—all have strong affinities with myth, but they are also realistic and often treated satirically so that their mythic power is diluted. In this amalgam of mythic and realistic, probably, we find the essentials of the novel's split effect.

Forster comes closest to primordial myth, perhaps, with his seemingly alive settings. India, with its indifference or hostility to man, its vastness and amorphousness, its Hot Weather (itself almost
a personality) attains animate status and powerfully influences the world of men. Yet India denies Western ideals and fails to accommodate the reader's expectations. Similarly, the Marabar's mysterious, ominous presence spreads throughout the book as presiding image. But the Caves' ominousness is touched with poetic loveliness and is partially mitigated by the healing spirit of "Temple." The Marabar incident does not break up a continent or even dislocate a district, and thus the Marabar Caves are only a barren, rocky region generating muddle rather than mystery.

The plot--basically the mythic journey, central motif of much Western literature--follows its mythic paradigm only part way. This quest attains no Grail and its mythic quality dissipates as earth and sky say, "No, not there," and "No, not now," to the uniting of East and West. Despite this journey's fundamental likeness to the mythic quest, it is also a picnic excursion that ends in contretemps.

The major characterizations are also "split," humanly realistic but also mythic. As Hindu goddess Esmiss Esmoor, Mrs. Moore plays a positive role, whereas as an actual person in an actual world she fails the humans who need her. Like Godbole, Mrs. Moore satisfies moral expectations only as mythic figure. Even the highly realistic Fielding, Aziz, and Adela are partially archetypal: Fielding as Hero with task to perform (of educating East and West to brotherhood), Aziz as Scapegoat who fails to arise as Savior, and Adela as momentary Savior-Goddess who by recanting "saves" Aziz but to a life of only petty accomplishment. Forster never fills in their mythic outlines.
This semi-mythic story peopled by semi-mythic characters is also narrated in a split style. In awed poetic tones the narrative voice describes the Marabar's incredible antiquity and surpassing beauty, or conveys "eternal" moments like Fielding's epiphany as the Marabar moves toward him like a beneficent queen or Mrs. Moore's vision of nightmare. But this poetic voice is interrupted frequently and decisively by the satiric voice pointing out mankind's weaknesses.

For every mythic creation, in fact, there is a corresponding waning into the everyday. Forster renders human life with seemingly casual verisimilitude as he hints at some mythic power beyond the sky's arches. He retreats, however, from any certain statement about the source, nature, or even existence of this mythic authority. Nor does he provide conclusions about human response to it, thus placing his work well into the twentieth century where ambiguity and irony prevail as literary goals. Although in the vanguard of modernism with his return to primitive myth, Forster alloys his mythic work of art with contemporary satire, creating the artistic best of two possible worlds and leaving those worlds for the reader to ponder.
THE SPILT IN A PASSAGE TO INDIA

E.M. FORSTER'S DOUBLE VISION

JO M. TURK
E. M. Forster once wrote of Joseph Conrad that "the secret cas-ket of his genius contains a vapour rather than a jewel."\(^1\) "Is there not," asks Forster about Conrad, "something noble, heroic, beautiful, inspiring half a dozen great books, but obscure, obscure?" Such ques-tions could be asked about Forster's own work and, in effect, often have been. The criticism on Forster frequently employs words like "ambiguity," "puzzle," and "inconclusiveness." Even his friends and literary confederates have confessed to finding Forster odd or obscure. Virginia Woolf, for one, wrote of "something baffling and evasive in the very nature of his gifts."\(^2\) After publication of Forster's last novel, A Passage to India, in 1924, I. A. Richards voiced the uncer-tainty many readers and critics alike feel about Forster's fiction, saying: "There is something odd about Mr. Forster's methods as a novel-ist, and this oddness, if we can track it down, may help us to seize those other peculiarities which make him on the whole the most puzz-ling figure in contemporary English letters."\(^3\)

Tracking down this oddness leads inevitably to what critics over the years have called the "split" in Forster's vision, for it is his dual way of conceiving reality that generates ambiguities and obscurities. Forster's split or double vision is both thematic and esthetic. His diverging artistic impulses—which we might label "poetic" and "satiric"—underline his dual intellectual concerns with both tangible and metaphysical worlds. His work is split in several ways—it seems both Victorian and modern, both satiric and poetic, both realistic and mythic. His stance with one foot in each century so that his literary and philosophic loyalties partake of both, the cutting satire set forth with one hand and taken back with the other in a surge of tolerance, his two narrative tones so distinct as to sound like two voices instead of one—all evidence his dual ways of dealing with experience. Whether critics speak of the two aspects of Forster's thought and art as poetic and ironic, idealistic and realistic, romantic and satiric, or socio-comic and symbolistic—to mention a few sets of terms used by various commentators—they are all speaking of his simultaneous concerns with both human and transcendent realms and of his dual ways of talking about them.

Forster attributes Conrad's obscurity to discrepancies between Conrad's nearer and further visions. Curiously, it is the discrepancies between Forster's own nearer and further visions that occasion the substance of what critics see as his obscurity. Malcolm Bradbury suggests that it is these disparities in Forster's artistic and intellectual impulses that make him difficult to clarify: "Forster's distinctive mixture of social comedy and 'poetic' writing—his concern on the one hand with domestic comedy and quirks of character and on the other with the unseen
and overarching—makes him a difficult writer to read and to define. 4

A quick survey of critical attitudes toward Forster's art shows that though he was at one time dismissed as old-fashioned and Victorian in both theme and technique, or as too easy alongside tantalizingly difficult writers like Joyce and Woolf, a few early critics did discern that Forster's novels of Jane Austenish comedy contained dissonant elements. Rose Macauley, for one, spoke in 1938 of a "split" or "divided" Forster, "highly committed to personal relationships, yet revealing a sense of a transcendent realm in which human relations are finally unimportant." 5 Virginia Woolf found this division a fault, saying that Forster fell short of attaining single vision, failed to reconcile his poetry and his realism. 6 Austin Warren, too, felt Forster's novels to be pulled in two directions, although Warren thought that instead of a split, a "balance between existence and essence" was created by the dual perspective. 7 Contemporary critical comment supports the judgment of these early critics who first noticed Forster's divided interests. Today it is a critical commonplace to speak of Forster's double vision and the "split" effect it causes, especially in A Passage to India, which is at once the best-received and most puzzling of his works.

A Passage to India has been categorized in genres from political documentary to spiritual tract. It is clear that critics no longer con-

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6 Woolf, pp. 106-07.

fine their analyses to the novel's political import; those few who did so were long ago dismissed from the canon of serious criticism as irrelevant or naive. Some critics ignore the book's political implications and treat it as a metaphysical statement. Others, heeding Bradbury's warning that we are in danger of forgetting that Forster writes comedies of manners, take renewed delight in his social satire, in his condemnation of British colonialism, and in his cynicism toward the doctrines and practices of organized Christianity. June Levine summarizes contemporary criticism by saying that most critics discuss both the philosophic message and the historical situation of the novel, but that the "bent of recent criticism is toward a symbolic analysis." Today's critics, whatever their methods, stress both the human and metaphysical dimensions of experience as revealed in Forster's fiction.

So pronounced is Forster's dual approach to reality that his good friend, the Cambridge don Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, assumed that the sine qua non of Forster's art was its double vision. Dickinson believed, however, that in A Passage to India Forster had fused the split. Upon reading the novel, Dickinson wrote to his younger friend: ... whereas in your other books your kind of double vision squints—this world, and a world or worlds behind—here it all comes together." That it does not all come together for many readers is evident, however, from the fact that so many mention the novel's ambiguities and puzzles. It is not clear, for example, even to what genre A Passage to India belongs, nor

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whether Forster is to be regarded as satirist or symbolist. Is he concerned primarily with political and social reform or with religious and metaphysical questions of broader import? Does he aim to create an atmosphere, an impression, a work of art-for-art's-sake, or to present ideas? That Forster did have ideas to present and causes to espouse is apparent, as Peter Burra says, from the fact that he did not progress from writing symbolic fantasy to pure abstraction as he could have done by composing music instead of novels. Yet *A Passage to India* has several hallmarks of symbolist literature, notably the penumbra of indefiniteness cast over the novel by its split effects. Still, the book is not quite a symbolist poem or a Poe story that seeks only after effect. It is at once Forster's most realistic and most symbolistic work, with enough credibility of plot and lifelike character growth to satisfy the most eager proponent of realism and enough urgency in its social and political dilemmas to have made it an influence in the actual world of men and political states. Yet it is far from the typical nineteenth-century English novel of sprawling form and mimetic detail. It shapes the life it depicts so that its artistic form is one of its paramount qualities. Neither slice-of-life realism nor symbolist abstraction, *A Passage to India* is a unique composite, conceived with more than single vision.

Nor does the novel "all come together" as intellectual message. Its "meaning" has never been determined to the satisfaction of all.

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10 Peter Burra, "The Novels of E. M. Forster," in Bradbury, Collection, p. 23.

Critics reviewing it in 1924 fell into two major groups: those who saw the novel as a tract clearly denouncing British imperial policy and those who felt it to be a puzzling, mystifying, disturbing work of art. Middleton Murry's comment demonstrates the frustration A Passage to India created in many readers: "To be or not to be? was once the question. But now, Ou-boum or bou-oum? Of these one is as good as the other."¹²

Fifty years later there is still little consensus about the novel's message, or even its basic direction. It is clear from the considerable body of puzzled appraisal that this novel does not all come together intellectually. Witness Levine's devoting an entire chapter of Creation and Criticism to a summary of the widely varying critical interpretations of symbols and statements in A Passage to India. She concludes that the major issue is perhaps as simple as this: "whether A Passage to India reveals a pessimistic or optimistic view of the universe."¹³ It is not only possible but unavoidable to ask Bradbury's fundamental question--

¹² John Middleton Murry, "Ou-boum or Bou-oum?" in Philip Gardner, ed., E. M. Forster: The Critical Heritage (London & Boston: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1973), p. 237. Other comments typical of reviews contemporaneous with the book's publication include the following: Arnold Bennett: "The book left me with a sense of disappointment. I think the reason is that I don't know quite what it is about" (p. 288); Virginia Woolf: "Instead of getting that sense of instant certainty which we get in The Wild Duck or The Master Builder, we are puzzled, worried. What does this mean? we ask ourselves" (p. 324); Edward Shanks: Forster has been "carried away into an understanding beyond explanation" (p. 316); Ralph Wright: the book has a "suggestion of nameless horror that it is impossible to explain" (p. 224); E. C. Benson: the book is "a literary mystification" (p. 329); I. P. Fassett: Forster "has not been able to find a really satisfying answer to any of his queries" (p. 273); L. P. Hartley: "a disturbing, uncomfortable book," "at once vague and clear" (p. 227); and Arnold Bennett again: "All details are good: but the ensemble is fuzzy, or quizzy. Although I only finished the book three hours ago, I don't recall now what the purport of the end of the book is" (p. 220).

¹³ Levine, p. 119.
whether, even after having attained classic status, this novel asserts a positive vision of unity or asserts failure.\textsuperscript{14}

Yet if Forster had wished, he could, apparently, have made his meaning as lucid in this last novel as in his early short stories and preceding novels. (For Elizabeth Bowen the attraction of the early Forster novels was their lucidity.\textsuperscript{15}) Although complexity and ambiguity hover over the Italian novels, there he outlined clearly the contrast between repressed British suburbia and liberated Italy, or between hectic London and the joyous countryside, and he made it clear which side should emerge triumphant. Thus the split was well defined and the methods for healing it overtly declared. But \textit{A Passage to India} avoids any clear-cut contrast between repression and spontaneity as it does between East and West, and instead implies that such black-and-white declarations exclude too much. The "ultimate" in this novel, instead of conquering the forces of evil, may be only a passive something impossible to know, at least as many construe the novel's message. \textit{A Passage to India} is, at any rate, surely no novel of clear and definitive answers. Judging from critical commentary, its ambiguities are still there.

Then, too, its status as a designed object makes it more than a story with an indefinite ending. It is also a design that works on the reader's sensibility as a Hindu yantra works. A yantra is an oriental geometric design symbolizing the union-yet-discreteness of opposites, usually in squares or triangles within circles within squares within further circles; it leads the eye onward and inward to the forever empty


\textsuperscript{15} Elizabeth Bowen, "A Passage to E. M. Forster," in Stallybrass, p. 2.
center, inducing contemplation of that center. As we shall see, *A Passage to India*, yantralike, encourages contemplation by not providing conclusions. Its center is empty in that it is indefinitive. There is always more to consider, more to contemplate, in the book as literary structure and in the human situation it describes.

Its inconclusiveness, far from demonstrating vagueness of mind (a condition F. R. Leavis implies is Forster's), creates the empty center that draws the pondering intellect. Forster's lack of resolution we shall discover to be not a facile evasion of life's difficult questions but a toughminded attitude typical of contemporary artists. We shall see that the novel's realistic oppositions are never resolved, and that the very split critics decry in it provides its magnetic power. One finishes the novel not with the sigh of satisfaction with which one finishes a comedy, nor with the rush of expurgated emptiness that accompanies the concluding of a tragic drama, but with a cautious puzzlement, wondering with the author if man can or should arrange his own social relationships, decide his own actions, or define and make contact with his own God. The novel's last words, "No, not yet," and "No, not there," make us wonder, too, if man will ever reach a point where he can live the humanistic ideals he has long held, whether the final comment will ever become, "Yes, here and now." And we shall see that the split--both in matter and manner--far from being a flaw in the work, is the very point of it.

The purpose of this study, then, is to investigate the split created by the double vision of *A Passage to India*--its effects, the ways it is manifested, its ramifications. No matter by what means one

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may choose to examine the novel, he finds the double vision and the resulting split. Each fictional element, for example, has affinities with myth, but these mythic factors—plot, characterization, setting—are also realistic in a most mundane sense. For every mythic creation there is a corresponding waning into the ordinary, so that the double vision persists, and \textit{insists}, that reality is multiplex and undefinable. (This insistence places Forster well into the twentieth century where ambiguity and irony are the prevailing literary goals.) Only in his creation of presentially alive places having that power peculiar to sacred places in primitive thought does Forster commit himself wholly to the mythic. But even here we find a split: the mythic aliveness of these places has as its constituents both cognitive and emotive elements that are within themselves divided.

The quality of language, too, has two clearly distinguishable levels. Virginia Woolf said Forster failed to reconcile his poetry and his realism; I plan to show that the continued discreteness of the two styles is not a failure but a reflection of the essential split in Forster's perspective, the mythic and mundane parameters of his double vision.

To study how Forster accomplishes his disconcerting split effect, then, we shall examine the plot, the settings, the characterizations, the language itself. But first a definition of terms:

When Lowes Dickinson sensed "a world or worlds behind" the everyday one in Forster's art, he saw that Forster was expressing what Blake and other great symbolists have long said: that the world is contained in a grain of sand. In other words, the unseen exists in the seen, and this unseen world may be more "real" than what we usually call reality. Both
these worlds may merge in art, especially in symbolist art, and both
words, we are rapidly coming to realize, are present in every human
consciousness.

Current psychological data concerning the two hemispheres of the
human brain corroborate the ancient intuition that man's nature has the
attributes of both the dark, pessimistic, passionate Dionysus and the
sunlit, measured Apollo, whom we align with light, reason, seriousness,
boundaries and control. From ancient times these attributes have been
represented by the figures of these two mythic gods, and their names
make convenient "handles" for discussing two worlds of human existence:
the rational or scientifically disposed and the spontaneous, passionate,
creatively oriented.

In art as in life, the Dionysian impulse stresses unity; it is ab-
stract, flowing, nonpictorial, perhaps best expressed in the art of
music. The Apollonian impulse, on the other hand, gives rise to indivi-
duation and shaping, which lead to the plastic arts, to dualism of mind
and matter, and to satire. (The distance at which satire holds out its
object is the result of the individuating impulse.) It is the Apollonian
hand that gives form to the amorphous and meaning to the senseless. It
best does this, according to Nietzsche—who first used the terms "Apollo-
nian and Dionysian" to identify the dual impulses of creative activity--
in Attic tragedy. Never since the days of Aeschylus and Sophocles, says
Nietzsche, have we produced the sublime harmony in art that they reached.

With the coming of Socrates (who, according to Nietzsche, is the arch-

17 See, for example, "Two Pillars of Consciousness: The Apollonian
and Dionysian," by Dr. Sam Keen, Psychology Today, July, 1974, and Robert
E. Ornstein, The Nature of Human Consciousness (San Francisco: W. H. Free-
man & Co., 1973), passim.
enemy of true art) our "Alexandrian" culture developed, and logical thinking has held sway ever since in the endeavors of Western man.\footnote{18 Friedrich Nietzsche, \textit{The Birth of Tragedy from the Spirit of Music}, \textit{The Philosophy of Friedrich Nietzsche} (New York: Modern Library, 1927 & 1954), pp. 1004-1050 especially. Nietzsche of course is outlining the historical background for the development of what he calls our overly intellectualized "Alexandrian" culture. Ortega y Gasset also sees Socrates as the turning point of Western culture: "There was a moment, the chronology of which is perfectly well known, at which the objective pole of life, viz., reason, was discovered. It may be said that on that day Europe, as such, came into being. Till then, existence on this continent had been merged with that in Asia or Egypt. But one day, in the marketplace at Athens, Socrates discovered reason." \textit{The Modern Theme} (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1961), p. 54.}

That there is currently a swing back to an awareness of the importance of acknowledging the instinctual Dionysian energies in man is evident, especially in the literature of the naturalist school for influential since the 1890's, the formative period of Forster's young life. But that Forster may have been a harbinger of such an awareness is not so generally realized. If we had looked, we could have seen at any time in his career that Forster was aware of these two pillars of human consciousness, the Apollonian and the Dionysian. In the earliest stories we find him proclaiming the virtues of living spontaneously and rejecting the conventional response. And in the very first-conceived of his novels, \textit{A Room with a View}, the intuitively wise, old Mr. Emerson urges Lucy Honeychurch to "stand in the sun and live for all you are worth." But such an attitude was de rigueur in Edwardian Bloomsbury. In Forster's three other novels published before World War I (\textit{Where Angels Fear to Tread, The Longest Journey}, and \textit{Howards End}) and to some extent in the posthumously published \textit{Maurice}, written, we think, shortly after \textit{Howards End}, he urges the same fashionable arguments, often attributing awesome benevolence to the "Unseen." The resulting tension is sometimes only a
rather precious antithesis. But in his last novel Forster admits the power and terror of the Dionysian without dressing it up in acceptable mystery or figuring it forth in mythological outlines of Demeters or Pans. In *A Passage to India* he gazes into the abyss, finds there a nullity that paralyzes Mrs. Moore and disturbs the reader, but by means of his own Apollonian impulse toward beauty, manages to measure something immeasurable. With what Bradbury calls Forster's "reconciling and poetic vision," the author fashions a phenomenon similar to that of Aeschylean tragedy: he makes Dionysian intensity of feeling apprehendable by dialog and image that possesses an Apollonian clarity and visual beauty similar to what the Greeks used to render the otherwise inexpressible Dionysian tone of the chorus apprehendable to an audience.

For both Forster and Nietzsche the Dionysian tone of life's primal force is amorphous and incomprehensible until structure is imposed upon it by the Apollonian impulse. Then it is "bounded" and made "apparent" (Nietzsche's terms). The pictorial and aural imagery of the Marabar Caves, for example, brings into the mind's eye and ear the undistinguished echo and writhing worms, making the dread Dionysian "tone" of the Marabar's atmosphere apprehendable by means of the senses. (Other visual and auditory images—the Marabar Hills moving toward Fielding like a beneficent queen; the orange, throbbing sky promising and then failing to keep its promise of a glorious sunrise; Mrs. Moore sitting sulkily swinging her foot after suffering disillusionment at the Cave; the pulsing, unstoppable echo; the irrational chanting of "Esmiss Emoor"—all function in a similar manner.) Thus we have in *A Passage to India* a modern-day interweaving of Dionysian atmosphere or tone with the clarity of Apollonian imagery.
Whether we use the terms "Apollonian" and "Dionysian" to discuss the poles of intellect and intuition, or the way emotional tone can be turned into apprehendable form, or the flowing, poetic mode of narration that alternates with the satiric, clipped measures of another narrative mode, or the mythic and realistic aspects of plot, character, and setting, we are still talking about the same phenomenon: the way every element in A Passage to India demonstrates Forster's double vision, his Dionysian and Apollonian or his mythic and satiric tendencies. Because Forster offers in this novel inconclusive verbal statement about something scarcely intelligible through logical, verbal means, but offers it packaged in esthetically fathomable artistry, A Passage to India, of all his works, makes the most productive vehicle for studying his dual impulses. It yields the clearest view, despite its mystery and muddle, of his complex thought and artistry.

Following Forster's fourteen years of fictional silence after publication of Howards End in 1910, his last and best novel, A Passage to India, appeared in 1924. Here his split consciousness offers a dual vision of his world. Forster is still partially devoted to an Enlightenment-like rationalism and to traditional literary technique; but he has recognized more fully his affinities for symbolist technique and his need to express a meaning too profound and complex for expression by conventional means. Now his prose is basically symbolist, his structure consummately classic, but his meaning no more completed than a yantra is ever completed. Because of this double perspective, not despite it, Forster has created in A Passage to India the artistic best of two possible worlds.
CHAPTER I
THE SPLIT IN MYTHIC SETTINGS: EMOTIVE AND COGNITIVE

A Passage to India is not a tract . . . it is an experience . . .
--Harold Oliver

The word "myth has a number of conflicting meanings in current usage. It is often taken to mean a fiction or half-truth based more on opinion or tradition than on fact. Or to students of Jungian psychology it means the symbolic expression of universal truths that stem from the archetypal tendencies in the human psyche. To cultural anthropologists like Bronislaw Malinowski, however, myths are not symbolic at all but the primitive reality resurrected in all its power, the living thing itself, not merely a commemoration or celebration of those primordial events.¹ But to discuss the mythic element in Forster's novel it will be useful to adopt a definition of myth by Gordon E. Bigelow. "A myth is a numinous image or story. 'Numinous' here means having the power to seize men and compel them to some kind of total response."² This definition of myth, embracing image as well as the stories more commonly thought of as myths, is especially suited for a discussion of A Passage to India because in this novel the narrative ends in perplexity, leaving conclusions open, while the numinous images--the Marabar


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Caves and the Indian subcontinent—stand still for us, seize our minds and compel us to response, and provide the foundation for and aura about the novel that are distinctly mythic.

To a writer like Forster who is trying to depict something beyond everyday reality, myth is an especially valuable technical means because mythic symbols stem from the archetypal tendencies of the unconscious and thus come close to representing their unanalyzable sources, which "lie forever beyond the grasp of conscious reason with its demand for logical consistency." Thus mythic symbols are not limited to the bounds of logic; they hold up the mirror to nature in a special way. A Passage to India is at least partially a symbolist novel, and in symbolist literature, as Bigelow tells us, we should not be surprised to find mythical elements because myth "feeds the whole panoply of technique dearest to the heart of the symbolist writer, the use of tensive, multiple levels of meanings, the use of suggestive indirection, ambiguity, paradox and irony, and interpenetration of past and present time. A symbolist era in literature is almost inevitably a myth-haunted era."

That Forster is haunted by myth can easily be sensed. In his fiction before A Passage to India he alludes to pagan mythology and thus imposes on his materials the patterns of ancient myth. This process sorts life's experiences—his raw material—into a coherent order, from which he can draw conclusions that are consistent and thus consoling to one disturbed by the disorder of contemporary life. But in A Passage

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3 Bigelow, pp. 63-64.

4 Ibid., p. 87.

5 Forster himself finds the only order in modern life to be that in the internal harmony of a work of art. See "Art for Art's Sake," Two Cheers for Democracy (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1951), pp. 91-92.
to India Forster uses myth in a different way. Instead of alluding to myth so that it suggests meaning for contemporary life, that is, using myth in a symbolic way, he reaches back beyond literary tradition in a less learned and intellectual way than Joyce or Eliot does, and seems to create primordial myth anew. Most vivid as primordial reality resurrected is Forster's evocation of places with true numinosity. The whole land of India and the Marabar Caves in particular have that power to compel the human's total response. They emanate what Polynesians call Mana," the "groundstuff of the entire creation, corresponding to the modern idea of energy if we understand the term to include physical, psychological, and psychic." This kind of myth appears in this novel as the numinous, archetypal, living reality--it is not simply patterned after past fact. We shall see that in A Passage to India it is crucial to plot, to character, and especially to setting--not embellishment only.

Yet there is another current cutting through the mythic stream that underlies A Passage to India. Forster presents a plot that follows the mythic paradigm of the quest, but this plot follows its mythical model only part way, and there is considerable doubt whether this questing journey attains any Grail. In addition, the characters who undertake this incompletely mythic adventure fall short of becoming mythic heroes or heroines. Often their behavior and attributes can be explained only by seeing them in their archetypal roles, and they do fit into the archetypal patterns of mythic figures, but never completely. Their photographic realism, for which Forster is often praised, modifies their

stature as archetypal symbols. Mythic character and story, then, are so limited by their author's ironic perspective that their energy is low; they lack the compelling charisma of truly mythic or archetypal heroes. Thus as Forster almost follows mythic story model and creates semi-mythic characters, he undercuts the primeval reality he has resurrected and treats much of his material ironically.

In other words, he sees the mythic world he has created in *A Passage to India* from the perspective of a skeptical modern. Those who, like Dickinson, sense a "world behind" Forster's surface fictional world are talking about the mythic, symbolic existence of his characters and events. It is, of course, the symbolic dimension of his characterizations and plots that brings down on Forster's head the criticism that he fails to reconcile his poetry and his realism, that his plots are based on incredible events, that his characters are "veiled by the larger-than-life masks they wear." But the amalgam of archetypal quality with the lifelike detail given to so many characters and happenings in this novel is a major reason it has had both critical and popular success. The gulf between symbol and reality is sharply narrowed in *A Passage to India*. But in his use of myth as in everything else, Forster's impulses are split. He evokes places with true "presidential reality," which is Dionysian and mythic; on the other hand, he undercuts the numinosity of character and plot by treating them ironically, which is Apollonian and satiric.

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Much of the achieved content of *A Passage to India* rests in the inextinguishable presence of India. This presence embodies all the intellectually-arrived-at interpretations of analysts, and includes concepts like multiplicity and teeming fertility, romantic exoticism, all-inclusiveness and indiscriminateness, and, above all--vastness. It is intellectually conceived ideas or concepts that build cognitively the image of India in the reader's mind. But concepts alone do not constitute the total presence of India, a compelling presence that provides the "overmastering perspective of the novel." They merely augment it. India's living self arises partly by technical means that call forth the reader's emotions as well as engaging his intellect. It arises from the pages affectively and mysteriously even as we probe rationally for its meaning. Its total presence is probably unanalyzable but its image has undeniable numinosity.

Part of Forster's Dionysian mythic consciousness consists of his sense of presential reality or the haunting aliveness of the natural world. Forster has never been willing to sever his affinities for concrete reality, for the earth and the rural, for what he calls "life."  

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10 Cassirer, *Essay on Man*, p. 135, for definition of "presential."

11 In his own *Aspects of the Novel* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, Inc., 1927 & 1955) Forster takes the Wellsian side in the Wells/James controversy over whether "life" should be fitted into a preconceived
Furthermore, his sense of the living presence in certain almost sacred places is not a feeling of sympathy or identification with those places, but a feeling of identity with them, a relationship in which there is little sense of a bond between the two because they are so thoroughly merged into each other. This sense of presential reality in natural places is as sure a token of Forster's Dionysian affinities as is his widely recognized espousal of free feeling. This sense of the universe as presentially alive is a mythic idea. One version of it, found in the

pattern for a novel. This stance is a strange one for an author whose own work is highly symbolist; but, theoretically at least, Forster is pro-life and anti-pattern-following: "It is this question of the rigid pattern: hour-glass or grand chain or converging lines of the cathedral or diverging lines of the Catherine wheel, or bed of Procrustes—whatever image you like as long as it implies unity. Can it be combined with the immense richness of material which life provides? Wells and James would agree it cannot, Wells would go on to say that life should be given the preference, and must not be whittled or distended for a pattern's sake. My own prejudices are with Wells" (p. 163).

12 I am indebted to George Thomson not only for his definitions of "identity" and "identification" as they define varying relations between man and nature, but also for a related idea: that Forster's feeling of identity with nature is quite different from a Wordsworthian identification with it (pp. 42-43). Such a strong bond with the natural world "would be unknown to Sartrian man, who does indeed stand alone and knows no bond with nature and no kinship with her animate beings outside the animate world," says William Barrett. In returning to "the crucible of life," primitive, mythic sources of human inspiration, man may draw on vital forces to solve the existential dilemma. "In the end," says Barrett, "the answer to nihilism is not intellectual, but vital, as Nietzsche told us a century ago." Time of Need: Forms of Imagination in the Twentieth Century (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 381-82. In his feeling for places and inanimate objects in nature, Forster pulls short of Sartre's existential alienation except perhaps in A Passage to India where the immense indifference of nature seems to negate his former conviction that the natural world can help man find his bearings in the human world, and, by reverting to an ancient mythopoetic attitude, moves in a sense ahead of existential modernism. Forster's answer to man's sense of loss is not intellectual but vital. Here he is in accord with Nietzsche as he is in accord with him on the importance of the Dionysian.

Thus although Forster is poles apart from Nietzsche on the question of the will to power and the concept of certain individuals as Supermen superior to others, he is closer to Nietzsche than one would suppose on several paramount points.
Philosophia perennis, is that the natural world can take human form.\textsuperscript{13} Behind mundane phenomena, runs this belief, lies a single reality, a Oneness of which all the universe is formed. This Nietzschean, Dionysian Oneness is the substance of everything, animate or inanimate, and is believed to lend animation to the inorganic. Sometimes the earth takes the form of a living man, as in Forster's first short story, "The Story of a Panic." The valley that breathed life into Forster's fictional aspirations (in real life the Vallone Fontano Caroso near Ravello, Italy, where Forster visited in 1902) appears in the story as a "many-fingered hand, palm upwards, which was clutching convulsively" to keep the characters in its grasp.\textsuperscript{14} Forster himself points out, too, how his second-published novel, The Longest Journey, "depends from an encounter with the genius loci."\textsuperscript{15} Always Forster has felt the genius loci in special places, and his taste for the occult has gradually strengthened his ability to evoke their presential reality, a development that can be traced in all his novels—possibly excepting Maurice—


\textsuperscript{14} "The Story of a Panic," The Collected Tales of E. M. Forster (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1959), pp. 10-11. This story is a proper forerunner for A Passage to India because it depicts living force in a natural place in a mythic, occult way; because it suggests the Dionysian theme of allowing oneself to feel freely, a theme of high rank in all Forster's work; and because it is open-ended so that its design induces, as Passage does, further contemplation. The story ends with Eustace, the youthful rebel against convention, running over the landscape, where we do not know. Most of Forster's intervening works offer conclusive endings either because the plots imply conclusion or because the narrator declares it. It is clear from this early story, however, that the budding author has already conceived of fiction as posing problems without always solving them.

\textsuperscript{15} Forster, "Introduction," Collected Tales, p. vii.
culminating in *A Passage to India*.\(^\text{16}\)

Probably no writer uses setting as mere backdrop; even settings so realistic as Dickens' London or Trollope's Barchester Towers have some symbolic significance. But to a certain extent it is fair to say that settings in Forster's early novels represent abstract qualities more definitely than do the settings of *A Passage to India*. It is clear, in what Alan Freidman calls Forster's "symbolic geography,"\(^\text{17}\) what values attach to which places. Italy and Greece, for example, stand for spontaneity and intuition, London and suburbia for repression of feeling and general stuffiness, rural England for the sturdy yeoman spirit. But during the fourteen-year gap between the writing of *Howards End* and *A Passage to India*, he evolved from using symbolic geography so definitively. In *A Passage to India* earth seems hostile or indifferent ("It was as if irritation exuded from the very soil"; "There is something hostile in that soil"; earth and sky say "No" to the friendship of Aziz and Fielding at the end of the book), yet India hovers magnificently if not benevolently over the whole novel. One country no

\(^{16}\) Forster says that for "The Road to Colonnus," another very early story which, like "The Story of a Panic," was inspired by a place, he sat "down on the theme as if it were an anthill" (Ibid., p. vi). In this story a hollow tree near Olympia, Greece, serves as inspirational germ. Mr. Lucas steps into the tree to hang a votive offering and receives such spiritual balm that it changes the tone of his life. And in his second-published novel, *The Longest Journey*, the Cadbury Rings seem to be a sacred center or "altar" almost as "holy" as the house, "Howards End," symbol of the rural spirit and the Unseen in *Howards End*.


\(^{18}\) E. M. Forster, *A Passage to India* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and World, 1952), p. 78, p. 18, and p. 322. Subsequent references to this book will be included in the text and are all to this edition.
longer acts in a clear-cut way as the symbol of readily definable abstract qualities as do Italy and Greece. We may expect, after reading Forster's early work, to assign such qualities as freedom from British convention and spontaneity of feeling and even romantic exoticism to a land like India. But India does not fit into any of the expected categories. "The contrast of England and India is not the end of the issue," says Bradbury, since "India is schismatic within itself; India's challenge is the challenge of the multiverse..." One reason India seems incomprehensible to the Western reader is that as Forster attaches to it concepts like romanticism and fertility, he simultaneously negates them. These conventional, understandable attributes are comprehensible to a mind that functions primarily logically as Western minds do, and they constitute the cognitive element in Forster's fashioning of India's image. From them we begin to define India for ourselves; but as we find these cognitive elements baffled or negated, we feel uncertainty about that definition, which is one reason the novel affects us as it does. Most readers find A Passage to India unsettling in its capacity to baffle our understanding. Considering, then, only the cognitive constituents in India's composition, we are already baffled because of the way they are set forth and then contradicted or qualified.

With its "hundred voices," the "hundred fissures" in its hostile soil, its contradictory moods and messages, its inclusion of all nature without barriers between human and nonhuman, India surely suggests a complex, divided world of multiplicity and disunity. It is a conglomeration of persons, messages, religions, tongues. Although this "melt-pot" idea is congenial at least to Americans and probably comprehensible to

19 Bradbury, in Stallybrass, p. 133.
all Westerners, India's blending of elements differs signally from our Western ideals. Its individual elements retain no distinction; everything seems "modelled out of the same brown paste" (p. 265). In trying to overcome barriers between individuals, Westerners aim for brotherhood. But in India, all matter, even nonliving objects, is considered viable and important in itself. There are no bonds of brotherhood between entities—all is one. To include all matter in the Christian promise of salvation, for example, proves meaningless to Mr. Sorley, one of the two missionaries in Chandrapore. When questioned whether God will make room in his many mansions for all beings, Mr. Graysford, the elder and more rigid of the two, says "No," but Mr. Sorley, who is "advanced," sees "no reason why monkeys should not have their collateral share of bliss," but "oranges, cactuses, crystals, and mud? and the bacteria inside Mr. Sorley? No, no, this is going too far" (p. 38). Such all inclusiveness simply will not hold with the Christian concept of the father's mansion, nor with the Western concept of individualism. Separation is overcome in Hinduism, but not with brotherhood and thus is no victory in Western eyes, for separation is overcome only "at the cost of indistinction, only by the loss of communication."20 Hinduism, prevailing religion of India, fails to "connect," though its failure is of a different sort from the West's and Christianity's: it fails not to reach a goal but to set one, and is thus at odds with our expectations of purpose and discrimination.

Still another ideal deeply valued by the West—that of privacy—carries little weight in India. "Accustomed to the privacy of London,"

Mrs. Moore, for example, cannot "realize that India, seemingly so mysterious, contains none" [privacy] (p. 49). Wasps make themselves at home in houses; servants eavesdrop outside windows; neither human nor nonhuman world keeps the conventions of privacy or sets the value on individual distinction common to the Western world. Thus Forster proceeds to underline the vast discrepancies between the reader's and the East's perspectives. India fails to accommodate itself to the audience's assumptions and thus seems "split" even in that part of its makeup for which the Western reader has most affinity: the cognitive.

Nor does India meet our concept of romantic. Its "melancholy plains" where "everything was placed wrong" are not beautiful to those who expect form and proportion. As Fielding returns to Europe via the Mediterranean, he is astounded to find again beauty of proportion: "He had forgotten the beauty of form among idol temples and lumpy hills; indeed, without form, how can there be beauty?" (p. 282). In these hints that India is not only "placed wrong" on the "underside" of our globe but also that it will never accommodate itself to Western expectations of beauty, Forster stresses the split between East and West, between Dionysian, intuitive oneness, and Apollonian, logical individualism.

Readers familiar with Forster's symbolic geography might expect indiscriminate, free-flowing India to represent freedom from British stuffiness as Italy and Greece do in his earlier fiction, but here we have no simple contrast between British reserve and tropical warmth, or between pagan spontaneity and Christian civilization, although there is a tension between these values. India's exoticism is so strange that it is not romantic but unsettling. So foreign does it seem even to Mrs. Moore, who has an affinity with the spirit of India, that she expects a different moon in the southern sky. "'Let me think,'" says she, "'We
don't see the other side of the moon out there, no.' 'Come, India's not
as bad as all that,' said a pleasant voice [from the anonymous depths
of the English Club]. 'Other side of the earth if you like, but we stick
to the same old moon'" (p. 24). To secure herself in familiar beliefs,
apparently, she declares that God is omnipresent even in India, "to see
how we are succeeding in demonstrating that God is love" (p. 51). Her
anchor of faith is loosened by the uneasy silence beyond the sky's arch
and by her sudden understanding of the dualism accepted by India but
denied by Christianity: that everything is composed of good and evil.
Viewing the moonlit, crocodile-infested Ganges, she sighs, "What a ter¬
rible river! what a wonderful river!" (p. 32).

India's romanticism is in fact denied at every turn, a denial illus¬
trated explicitly by Adela's attitude. She senses that she is perceiv¬
ing India as a frieze rather than as a spirit, and being Western and
Apollonian to the core, she strives to understand India, to "know" it
by analyzing it. Thoroughly honest, Adela catches glimpses--at moments
when her romantic defenses fail--of the reality India will mean to her.
She wants to see the "real India," to allow its message into her "well¬
equipped mind." Yet she senses the futility of her attempt, given the
hard reality that she will marry into Anglo-India, not her "real India."
Contemplating at sunset the Marabar Hills, which "look romantic in cer¬
tain lights and at suitable distances," she realizes: "How lovely they
suddenly were! But she couldn't touch them. In front, like a shutter,
fell a vision of her married life" (p. 47). Her married life will con¬
sist of looking into the Club every evening, of visiting back and forth
with Lesleys and Callenders and Turtons and Burtons, "while the true
India" slides by unnoticed. "Colour would remain--the pageant of birds
in the early morning, brown bodies, white turbans, idols whose flesh was scarlet or blue—and movement would remain. . . . But the force that lies behind colour and movement would escape her even more effectually than it did now. She would see India always as a frieze, never as a spirit" (p. 47).

Not romantic but amorphous, not mysterious but muddled, India's personality overpowers the novel but fails to direct it. As Adela and Mrs. Moore travel by train to the Marabar, for example, the endless expanse of India's uncultivated acres appears as a "timeless twilight."

As the miles race by, Adela turns her thoughts to "the manageable future," but a glance out the window reminds her that India is unmanageable: "The branch line stops, the road is only practicable for cars to a point, the bullock-carts lumber down the side tracks, paths fray out into the cultivation, and disappear near a splash of red paint" (p. 135).

"India the primal" remains primitivistic, invaded by such civilized mechanisms as Mail trains that resemble "coffins from the scientific north" troubling the scenery only a few times a day (p. 161). "How can the mind take hold of such a country?" asks the narrator (p. 136). The logical mind cannot take hold of India. India does, however, have prescience: "India 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).

India's character and "personality"—its presence—cannot be adequately described in discursive prose. It is true that at times the narrator attempts to do so by telling the reader about India's nature, as in the following:
In Europe life retreats out of the cold, and exquisite fireside myths have resulted—Balder, Persephone—but here the retreat is from the source of life, the treacherous sun, and no poetry adorns it because disillusionment cannot be beautiful. Men yearn for poetry though they may not confess it; they desire that joy shall be graceful and infinity have a form and India fails to accommodate them. The annual helter-skelter of April, when irritability and lust spread like a canker is one of her comments on the orderly hopes of humanity. (p. 250)

But India's *dramatic presence*, not simply as representative of values, must be presented poetically, "presentationally," to use Susanne Langer's term, if it is to come alive. Forster uses poetic technique to make India come alive presentationally by making it concrete.

First he gives it animation. Personified over and over by the pronoun "she," India soon becomes more than a pathetic fallacy; it becomes a felt presence. For example, although India's base is "implacable rock," even that rock has life: it is "flesh torn from the sun's flesh" (p. 123). Boulders say, "I am alive," and smaller stones say, "I am almost alive" (p. 151). This presence is often paradoxical or enigmatic. The scenery "smiles" but falls "like a gravestone on any human hope" (p. 321). Moonlit pinnacles "rush up" at Mrs. Moore "like fringes of the sea" (p. 209), but the dawn at Bombay is "soupy," the sky "suave," the countryside "stricken and blurred" (p. 209, p. 160, and p. 265). India is animate but its living force is not entirely positive. In fact, as Alan Wilde says, about India "only one thing is certain: the strength of the nonhuman world." 22

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22 Wilde, p. 124.
The Hot Weather, for example, is a real force that must be reckoned with, not a heat wave to be passively endured. Newcomers to India may not recognize its force. Still holding to her rational outlook, Adela, for example, does not "believe in" the Hot Weather. "People like Major Callendar who always talk about it--it's in the hope of making one feel inexperienced and small, like their everlasting, 'I've been twenty years in this country'" (p. 134). On the other hand, Mrs. Moore, more experienced in the ways of human beings and more attuned to the natural, cyclic realities, understands that the Hot Weather is a real thing that affects men's lives in tangible ways, although she at first underestimates it: "I believe in the Hot Weather," she says, "but never did I suppose it would bottle me up as it will." For owing to the sage leisureliness of Ronny and Adela, they could not be married till May. . . . By May a barrier of fire would have fallen across India" (p. 134). Terms like "barrier of fire" and the dramatizing of the palpable effect climate has on human lives create not just a backdrop or setting but a particular, concrete "thing."

Another factor in India's vibrant presence is its mythic personhood, sometimes touched on only lightly, as the narrator tells how the Marabar region came into being: "The mountains rose, their debris silted up the ocean, and the gods took their seats on them and contrived the river, and the India we call immemorial came into being" (p. 123). Here the narrator's pose as geologist is altered only slightly by his mythic mask. At other times he sets forth India's earth and sky as potently mythic actors in the mythic union of earth-mother and sky-father. The

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23 Notice that Forster capitalizes "Hot Weather," giving it increased status.
sky, he says, "which settles everything," can "rain glory into Channerapore"; its strength "comes from the sun, infused in it daily; size from the prostrate earth" (p. 9). In the novel's final section, "Temple," this mythic union is again echoed as sheets of rain and the model of the god are "confounded with the father and mother of the Lord" (p. 315). Similar to the retelling of the same ages-old myth in The Longest Journey, where "the cloud would descend and visibly embrace the earth . . . and the earth itself would bring forth clouds" (a phenomenon, says the narrator, that "seemed the beginning of life"), this version of the mythic union suggests the reuniting of the broken parts of the universal syzygy—masculine and feminine, light and dark, good and evil. In the ancient myth of creation, the earth rightly has passive feminine qualities and the sky creative, masculine ones. The sky over India, then, should properly have fiery heat, omnipotent creative ability, dominant assertiveness, all of which its power to "settle everything" indicates. But myth holds polarities in tension. When Forster slackens this tension, he disturbs universally held human expectations, and slacken it he does, devitalizing the mythic sense of his allusion. The sky's strength comes from the sun—he makes a point of this commonplace. But then he proceeds to rob the sun of its masculine authority. It is "merely a creature, like the rest, and so debarred from glory" (p. 115). As the Hot Weather approaches, India's sun, one would think, would attain its greatest power. Certainly the Hot Weather dominates every corner of life on this peninsula. Yet April, "herald

of horrors," brings the sun back to his kingdom without that attribute more powerful than power: beauty. "April, herald of horrors, is at hand. The sun was returning to his kingdom but without beauty—that was the sinister feature" (p. 115). Yet the sun is distinctly personified as a mythic character:

If only there had been beauty! His cruelty would have been tolerable then. Through excess of light, he failed to triumph, he also; in his yellowy-white overflow not only matter, but brightness itself lay drowned. He was not the unattainable friend, either of men or birds or other suns, 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)

Here we have ironic myth. The legendary, mythic, religious quality of the narrative is underscored by the Biblical turn of phrase, "failed to triumph, he also." But its mythic quality is then flattened with negatives of phrasing and meaning that follow. The narrator specifically denies that the sun is the Islamic god, the unattainable "Friend" so often implored by Aziz; nor is the sun the eternal promise of Christendom. And there is another denial, more basic, not tied to any religion but to all human myth. We in the West think of the sun as warming and procreative—it promotes growth and provides enlightenment both actual and metaphoric. But our "idea" of the sun as glorious creator is not, according to Jung, a concept we "think" of; it is an archetypal image stemming from the collective unconscious of all mankind. Archetypes, Jung taught, as soon as we become aware of them, partake of the external world, "for from it they have drawn the matter in which they are clothed."25 Light is the primary archetype; the sun is one of light's

images in the external world, an image that connotes warmth and pro-
creation for humans wherever the sun's function is benevolent. Thus the image of the sun here as passive, hostile, or treacherous challenges the Western reader's psychically generated archetypal image. It is not simply a matter of "adjusting our thinking." We find a split between symbol-as-expected and symbol-as-prehended. The expected fit is not there. At every turn the sun (and also the sky, because it is consistently seen as an arch, an incomplete circle) fails to fulfill its mythic role. It fails even to supply a glorious sunrise to accommodate Adela's hopes:

"Look, the sun's rising--this'll be absolutely magnificent--come quickly--look. I wouldn't have missed this for anything. We should never have seen it if we'd stuck to the Turtons and their eternal elephants."

As she spoke, the sky to the left turned angry orange. Colour throbbed and mounted behind a pattern of trees, grew in intensity, was yet brighter, incredibly brighter, strained from without against the globe of the air. They awaited the miracle. But at the supreme moment, when night should have died and day lived, nothing occurred.

(p. 137)

This incident of the thwarted sunrise is not simply a naturalistic detail. The author underlines it pointedly, attaching divine male creativity and personhood to the sun, yet stressing its failure to fulfill humanity's expectations of divine power:

It was as if virtue had failed in the celestial fount. The hues in the east decayed, the hills seemed dimmer though in fact better lit, and a profound disappoointment entered with the morning breeze. Why, when the chamber was prepared, did the bridegroom not enter with trumpets and shawms, as humanity expects? The sun rose without splendour. He was presently observed trailing yellowish behind the trees, or against the insipid sky, and touching the bodies already at work in the fields.

(pp. 137-38)

By setting his novel on the underside of our hemisphere and depicting
the sun as denying human expectations, Forster is able to create both paradox and unease for the Western reader, who is unlikely to accept paradox and incongruity with the equanimity of an Easterner.

Not only sun but earth in India baffles the Western sense of order, not because earth in the western hemisphere is intrinsically different from the eastern but because of the way Forster treats it. By casting India's earth as the passive partner in the mythic narrative of earth-sky union, he invests it with the universally understood feminine qualities of passivity, pliability, moistness, and fertility, and he stresses these qualities by insisting on the teeming multiplicity of this vast land. Instead of challenging the archetypal expectation, he seems to underscore it. Yet in Forster's Indian landscape, feminine passivity hardens into intractable rigidity: "... the spirit of the Indian earth tries to keep men in compartments" (p. 127); "There is something hostile in that soil. It either yields, or else it is unexpectedly rigid and sharp ..." (p. 18). In its emotive effect that arises partly out of the cognitive and partly out of its scarcely analyzable presence, India projects disparity and paradox, mystery and muddle, strength and disorder, all sorts of contraries: multiplicity-unity, authority-vacillation, excellence-indifference, diversity-tdium, hostility-submission, alienation-embracement. Such antitheses are common in archetypal symbols because they embody the tensions of their psychic origins, and it is these tensions that supply much of their power. But these tensions also generate much of the uneasiness felt by the Western reader.

India as overmastering perspective figures forth in the novel as the image of "Life" that Forster's friend Dickinson describes in a let-
ter that Forster took care to include in his biography of his friend. Dickinson's impression of life, he writes, is that it "extends so variously through time and space, is so incredibly various, even if one confines oneself to humans. And when one takes in also the animals and insects! not to mention the stuff physicists deal with. . . . Grim and grimmer it is and will be, but as it becomes more terrible becoming also more mysterious and perhaps up to something greater than we can conceive." 26 To an analyst attempting to abstract logical meanings from the image of India in this novel, India remains an impossible enigma, but to one who will accept its mystery, its ambiguities, its contradictions, India amounts to something greater than we can conceive. After we have asked "whether human faculties are capable of such understanding at all," says Frederick Crews, "we are left again with the enormous and irrational presence of India, a riddle that can be ignored but never resolved." 27 Precisely. India the primal, with its endless divisions and utter shapelessness, attains a presence that embodies all meanings cognitively assigned to it and yet conveys a qualitative experience beyond the sum of all its concepts. Its vastness, its timelessness, its evocation of eternity and infinite space—all give hints that man is not a being ranking just under the angels, nor the center of God's interest, nor more than a speck, in fact, in the vast scheme of things that is not even anything so orderly as a scheme. Its enormous and irrational presence makes us see man as "small in the right way," a function Forster


sees as one of art's primary goals. Books like Dante's *Divine Comedy*, Gibbon's *Decline and Fall*, and Tolstoy's *War and Peace*, he says, are more than monumental: "They impressed me by their massiveness and design. . . . But to realize the vastness of the universe, the limits of human knowledge, the even narrower limits of human power, to catch a passing glimpse of the medieval universe, or of the Roman Empire on its millennial way, or of Napoleon collapsing against the panorama of Russian daily life--that is not to be influenced. It is to be extended." Forster's own novel works similarly. Although it may influence readers (and it did influence the world of British politics and imperial power), influence is not its primary effect. It extend's one's perspective; it allows him a qualitative cosmic experience. It not only serves the purpose of discursive prose, that of stimulating thought, but it is also a work of art, a "celebration of man's qualitative experience."

India as presence provides a large part of this novel's qualitative experience, one that is unique and palpable. A reader may draw from it what meaning he can, but in the end he must absorb its atmosphere and let it color his impression of the novel's being.


29 This phrase is from W. J. Handy, *Kant and the Southern New Critics* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1963), p. vii.
Similarly, one may analyze the meaning of the Marabar Caves and try to draw from that analysis the solution to the novel's puzzle. We may ask with Louise Dauner, "What Happened in the Cave?" and answer according to one of several mind-sets—psychological, philosophical, theological. Yet the Caves, even more stubbornly than India, resist analysis and remain mysterious. "The Marabar" (Forster's phrase, which seems to include the Hills and the caves within them) is in concentrated small what India is in diffuse large, embodying numerous analytical interpretations and yet adding up to more than their sum. All our abstractions and paraphrases, though they may aid in fuller comprehension, will not yield the full quality of experience that the Marabar Caves render the reader. Because caves are archetypal images of the first hierarchy, what Carl Kerenyi calls archai, "ageless, inexhaustible, invincible in timeless primordiality," the bulk of their numinosity is built-in, an advantage Forster does not have in using India as image. A cave is a seminal image; arising from the human psyche, the image of a cave anywhere—in art or in life—has power to evoke emotional response because it takes its shape from those most basic and universal human tendencies, the psychic archetypes. Jung tells us caves represent the Great

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Mother archetype, which includes both Nourishing, Nurturing Mother and Terrible, Devouring Mother. (Here we have a prime example of the capacity of archetypes for holding oppositions in tension, and also a rudimentary reason for assigning more than a single interpretation to the Marabar.) In its fruitful aspect the Great Mother's most frequent image is a round of any sort, a hollow. In its dreadful aspect, the Great Mother may appear as a grave, a sarcophagus, or death. Thus Clara Rising's pithy summary of the Marabar Caves as "wombs and tombs" is an apt one.

Alfred North Whitehead uses the term "presentational immediacy" to identify the mode of perception that helps one to apprehend the totality of the perceived object, of its presence as well as its signification. Presentational immediacy can be achieved in fiction if that fiction calls into play the various senses. Forster depicts the Marabar presentationally by impressing our senses of sight and hearing, by giving it animation, by underlining its uncanny "extraordinariness" with frequent narrative declaration (and also with the characters' reactions to it), and by relaying all reactions to it, including his own, with genuine artistic immediacy. Because he places it in a mythic context and speaks of it in mythic tones, he endows the Marabar also with mythic presence. This "extraordinary" place thus becomes poetically and mythically concrete, presentationally alive.

32 Jung, pp. 181-82.
The Marabar Hills seem presentationally or presententially alive first of all because their visual outlines give readers their first awareness of them:

League after league the earth lies flat, heaves a little, is flat again. 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)

"The sense of presence that occurs to one who catches a sudden glimpse of, say, a certain contour of hills or of a red wheelbarrow in the rain defies explanation," says Philip Wheelwright.35 As William Carlos Williams introduces his red wheelbarrow in the rain without expository context, so Forster brings forth his image of the Marabar Hills as "fists and fingers" thrust up against the horizon. The image is pictorial but kinetic, with verbs of strong action like "heaves," "thrust," and "interrupted." The effect of suddenly catching a glimpse in the mind's eye of this contour of hills defies explanation, even according to the narrator of the novel: "A glimpse of them makes the breath catch. They rise abruptly, insanely, without the proportion that is kept by the wildest hills elsewhere" (pp. 123-24). As the visitors near the Marabar, the topmost boulder presents another striking visual impression, again described by a verb of vigorous action: "Kawa Dol was nearest. It shot up in a single slab, on whose summit one rock was poised--if a mass so great can be called one rock. Behind it, recumbent, were the hills that contained the other caves" (p. 137). Because the other hills lie

recumbent, they seem less foreboding than this particular hill, the one containing the Cave into which Mrs. Moore goes. Not only contour but color contributes to visual impression: "the sky to the left turned angry orange. Colour throbbed and mounted behind a pattern of trees, grew in intensity, incredibly brighter" (p. 137).

Senses other than sight build up presential aliveness in these fictional caves. Fictional representation of sound adds another dimension to their presence. The "spiritual silence" surrounding them and the chaotic, overlapping echoes within them make memorable impression on their English visitors and on readers: "a new quality occurred, a spiritual silence which invaded more senses than the ear" (p. 140). Once Mrs. Moore finds herself inside a Cave, this weird spiritual silence becomes a raucous cacophany, All-Sound, generated by echoes that overlap and writhe. Movement, in fact, characterizes the whole Marabar region, inanimate though it supposedly is: "Films of heat radiated from the Kawa Dol precipices, increased the confusion. They came at irregular intervals and moved capriciously. . . . a patch of field would jump as if it was being fried, then lie quiet" (p. 141). From a distance, the Marabar Hills sometimes seem animated, although from afar this animation appears romantic rather than ominous. To Adela they seem to have "crept near, as was their custom at sunset; if the sunset had lasted long enough, they would have reached the town, but it was swift, being tropical" (pp. 45-46). Even Fielding, a man devoid of romanticism usually, sees the hills moving toward him like a queen, lovely and exquisite (p. 191). The Marabar attains an animism that has paradoxical aspects, both benevolent and menacing. The feeling of a presence both beautiful and threatening pervades the entire Marabar episode.
As tensive symbol the Marabar thus serves as an archetypal image that goes beyond intellect and works on emotive faculties. But feeling is not all, despite Faust. The achieved content—the quality of experience imparted by the Marabar—includes cognitive as well as affective elements. Its constituents may be split into two categories, but there is artistic harmony between subliminally conveyed atmosphere and cognitively effected meaning. Nevertheless, we find within its intellectually apprehended meaning symbolic suggestions that are themselves split—suggesting first evil and then incomplete evil or even unity. Caves not only reflect archetypal "wombs and tombs"—not only the original egglike engendering center for life and the tomb-like suppressor of life, a cave may also be "the place of rebirth, that secret cavity in which one is shut up in order to be incubated and renewed." Thus we see rolled into one symbol various possibilities for interpretation: the cave as source for all life and growth, the cave as denial of life and value, and the cave as source of renewal—psychological or theological—of life. Forster's characteristic split leads us to expect that his double vision will be cast over the Marabar too, and so it is.

He consciously intended the Marabar to serve as structural nucleus for events in his novel. The Caves, he said, "represented an area in which concentration can take place. A cavity. They were to focus everything up: they were to engender an event like an egg." The Marabar Caves engendered not only a fictive event but an avalanche of analysis. The Caves, it has been said, suggest such Dionysian concepts as natural

36 Jung, p. 136.

or sexual symbols, Adela's unconscious, Chaos and Old Night, eternity and infinity, or the unity of Atman and Brahman. They also represent such Westernized, Alexandrian, and, in a sense, Apollonian, concepts as Christianity and reason, pride and narcissicism, repressed sexuality, intellect, or logic. They are also said to symbolize the Hindu World Mountain, "life entire," and perhaps even "God without attributes."

One interpreter even considers the Caves' message to be "the absolute negation of all these things it might be."  

Here we have another split within a split: within the analyzable components of the Caves' symbolism we find a disparity in kinds of meaning. Yet there is benevolence and calm unity underlying the ominous surface impression of Dionysian cognitive and emotive elements even as there is hope and order beneath the more Apollonian, "scientific" interpretations.

Clara Rising has gathered together critical comment on the meaning

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For a summary of some of the same sources as quoted above, see Rising, below, and Levine.
of the Caves experience for Mrs. Moore, noting especially Thomson's calling it "the horror of narcissism or an initiation to rebirth," Shahane's "a negativity which is evil," Stone's "a negativity which is the absence of evil," Brown's "a vacuum implying fullness," Crews' "a dilettantish yearning for such a unity that is echoed but not answered," and Allen's saying it is "the cost of trying to be one with the universe." Rising's own interpretation is that Mrs. Moore finds reality or true life in the Cave by momentarily living on the subconscious level; she later finds this truer life eternally by dying to the conscious life and taking up life on a supraconscious or spiritual plane, thus proceeding a step upward in the ongoing process Hegel calls aufheben: annihilation-yet preservation, assimilation, and new creation, a process that by its very nature is never-ending. This interpretation allows for optimism, unlike the prevailing idea that the Marabar represents an entirely negative Wasteland. Crews, for instance, says the Caves hold no ultimate truth. And after studying the manuscripts of Passage, Thomson concludes that India and the Marabar represent obverse themes: "the many changes from manuscript to book confirm beyond doubt Forster's deliberate intention of making a sharp and meaningful distinction between the Marabar as symbol of absolute negation implying the non-existence of God or spirit, and the India of Part I and II as a symbol of the wasteland in which God is absent but not on that account nonexis-

39 Rising, pp. 345-46, primarily from sources quoted in my text above.

40 Rising, especially pp. 329-34.

41 The similarities between Forster's Marabar region and Eliot's setting for The Waste Land prompt many readers to construe the Marabar as a wasteland of negation.

42 Crews, p. 159.
Because Forster stresses that the Caves are absolutely empty and have absolutely no attributes, Thomson takes them as symbol of total negation and therefore evil: "Forster may also have understood that the primordial feminine, the vessel of the world and life, can be a vessel of death as well, can be cave or coffin, tomb or urn. Such a conception integrates death into the life cycle. But no such idea is implied by Forster's caves, which are empty." But this very emptiness is what makes them representative, in an Eastern view, of all life. Their emptiness is negative only to those trained in positivism. The emptiness of the Great Void can suggest its opposite: fruitfulness.

To Westerners trained in the philosophy of being, the Tao-Te-Ching's idea of the ultimate as "nothingness," the "not," the "empty," can be very puzzling. In Western philosophy generally, the negative is an inherent character of finite things. Non-being means absence or negation; while being is equated with the real, the highest principle is Being. . . . When we understand that in the Tao-Te-Ching the ultimate principle of the world is regarded as a mother principle, we can explain why emptiness is exalted above the full, the dark is prior to and productive of the bright, and the low-lying is more powerful than the high-rising, and non-being is more ultimate than being. Furthermore, the wu can be connected to the emptiness of the female productive power, and is fertile, moving, and inexhaustible. In the Tao-Te-Ching the female is the origin of motion, life, and unity in all things.

Forster was oriented to the Eastern mode of thinking and to Oriental mythology, and had the background to know of Nothingness as the Ultimate

43 Thomson, p. 268.
Principle in Eastern philosophy, anthropology, and religion. He could very well have intended to embody in the female principle—imaged by the Cave, the Great Mother archetype—all opposites like darkness-light, motion-stillness, lowness-highness, nothingness-all-being. This conception may seem paradoxical to the logical Western mind, but to the intuitive Eastern mode of consciousness—in other words, in mythic thought—it makes perfect "sense."

Most readers, to be sure, carry away with them an impression of the Caves as dreadful and eerie. It is probably fair to say that the presiding effect of the Marabar is ominousness. Between this ominous atmosphere and the philosophic idea that emptiness can connote fullness and fertility, then, there is a split. I offer a rebuttal, therefore, to the opinion that the Marabar represents total negation, without at all denying the Caves' ominousness, and not because one more interpretation is needed, but because it is important to see that Forster's split impulses have created a Marabar pregnant with a presentational reality that is itself split. Part of the Caves' total presence arises from the cognitive ideas incorporated into the symbols and imagery (which work emotively, primarily) of the Caves.

The Marabar's beauty is there in the fiction, undeniable. But it is a kind of beauty often slighted by the Western Apollonian consciousness because it is distinctly Dionysian and most of Western man has been during much of his history puzzled or downright frightened when faced with the unformed energies of the Dionysian. The Marabar's sexual overtones ("more voluptuous than love," "skin smoother than windless water") and the fact that the Cave is enclosed in that most perfect form, the circle, are important indicators of its Dionysian character. To primi-
tive peoples the Dionysian is expressed in symbols of wholeness and security: the Great Round, for example, that archetypal image even more elemental than the Great Mother. Other images like the snake that Forster attaches to the Marabar suggest to the primitive or Eastern mind the productive and beneficial (as it does in Freudian symbolic language), even though to Western Christendom it represents sinister, insinuating evil. We find these images in Forster's Marabar; they link the Marabar with the ancient concept of "life entire," Frank Kermode's all-encompassing phrase for the Marabar's connotations. As symbol of the feminine— including the diametrically opposed features of the sheltering, nurturing feminine and the devouring, entrapping feminine, a cave is entirely apropos. And as image of that "secret cavity in which one is shut up in order to be incubated and renewed," the Marabar Cave is entirely apt, especially for Adela and Mrs. Moore, who are both renewed in certain ways. This primordial symbol means many things at once, a plurality—not a mother or a destroyer. Because caves are essentially round, they function symbolically as do all circles, rounds, and spheres, images of what Erich Neumann calls the Great Round.

Forster's Marabar bears uncanny resemblance to Neumann's Great Round. All rounds are aspects of the self-contained, says Neumann, which is "without beginning and without end," "prior to any process, eternal." The Marabar too has this quality of being prior to any process: "If flesh of the sun's flesh is to be touched anywhere, it is here, among the incredible antiquity of these hills. . . . To call them

'uncanny' suggests ghosts, and they are older than all spirit. . . . they were sealed up before the creation of pestilence or treasure" (pp. 123-25). The Marabar also echoes the Great Round spatially, for the Great Round has "no above and no below," whereas the Marabar has "neither ceiling nor floor." 48 Neither the Great Round nor the dark Marabar Cave has attributes, phenomena, or history; each is something "static and eternal, unchanging and therefore without history." 49 The Marabar, we are told, bears "no relation to anything dreamt or seen. . . . Nothing, nothing attaches to them . . . Nothing is inside them . . . if mankind grew curious and excavated, nothing, nothing would be added to the sum of good or evil" (pp. 124-25). Time, space, and consequence, says Neumann, come to the primordial Great Round only with the coming of light, or consciousness. Light also brings consciousness and consequence to the Marabar: "There is little to see and no eye to see it, until the visitor arrives for his five minutes, and strikes a match" (pp. 124-25). Immediately another flame arises in the granite and a little worm begins to coil—consequences of human consciousness. Yet nothing can be added to the sum of good or evil. These unmistakable verbal parallels with those used by Neumann to describe the Great Round hint that the Marabar Cave, like the Great Round, represents both good and evil, both nurturing, succoring Mother and terrible, destroying Mother. But paradox is predictable in archetypal images. Even though the Great Round lacks attributes and history, it is "at the same time the place of origin and the germ cell of creativity. . . . the Primal Being

48 Neumann, p. 10 and A Passage to India, p. 125.

49 Neumann, p. 49.
that says 'I am Alpha and Omega.'" Forster's Caves, we remember, were to serve as creative germ, "something to engender an event like an egg." As node of symbolic meaning, the Marabar also generates other symbols that carry its influence into every corner of the book, and not all of these lesser symbols suggest the negative only.

One of these Marabar-spawned images is the echo, seemingly set in motion by the worms, snakes, or serpents that "writhe independently" and "descend and return to the ceiling." Some critics see the worms as emblems of pure malignancy. The image may seem productive as well as malignant, however, if we consider ancient Eastern symbolism. The snake biting its own tail is a common enough symbol of eternal life, but not so commonly known is its frequent association with the Great Mother or "uroboros," Neumann's term for the World Parents before separation, the prototypal syzygy. Says Neumann: "The uroboric form of the oldest Mother Goddess is the snake, mistress of the earth." The snake is also redemptive because it suggests rebirth as it sheds its skin and becomes a "new" creature. In the Marabar, the snake's diminutive, the worm, comes into existence only when a visitor arrives and strikes a match, that is, with the coming of light and thus of consciousness. It is consciousness that also causes the splitting of the uroboros in ancient myth. In Forster's Cave, the scratching of a match starts a little worm coiling. Two lights, the match flame and its reflection, leap to life, strive to unite and cannot, "because one of them breathes air, the other stone" (p. 125).

50 Neumann, p. 49.


52 Neumann, p. 49.
The World Parents, once split by the coming of consciousness, try forever after to achieve oneness again. Mrs. Moore is trying to become "one with the universe"; Adela is trying, though subconsciously so she does not articulate her wish, to achieve oneness with her unknown self. Their attempts are beautifully symbolized in this uroboric image of the serpent descending and returning to the ceiling, for the snake that completes a full circle and thus attains a perfect circular form symbolizes whole, eternal life.

This imagery, moreover, underscores Rising's suggestion that Mrs. Moore is proceeding an upward step in the process of aufheben. It also gives pictorial form to Louise Dauner's idea that Adela confronts in the Cave her unconscious, repressed, sexual self. All of these interpretations are ways of saying the Caves represent the Dionysian, for included in the Dionysian are all unconscious, irrational, spiritual, and universalizing forces. The dark and chthonic energy symbolized in a strangely attributeless, undecorated cave stuffed full of snakes that writhe independently may destroy rational order and longheld Christian faith—as they do in Mrs. Moore—but in the process this destruction "aids in the conquest of the subjective, the release from the ego and the silencing of the individual will and desire" that Nietzsche says characterize the "self-oblivion of the Dionysian state." Even though Mrs. Moore's vision at the Cave is one of disillusion and horror, Nietzsche would say that the forces she feels emanating from the Cave are Dionysian (and thus ultimately beneficial once one is able to penetrate

53 Dauner in Shahane, p. 60.

54 Nietzsche, Philosophy, p. 967.
beyond the surface chaos of the Dionysian to its underlying unity). The
Dionysian, says Nietzsche, does not at first "liberate us, in the heal-
ing intuition of the eternal, from desire and suffering. Instead what
we actually experience . . . is a state . . . which includes suffering
and pain as part of a primordial essence of all things." But the Dio-
ysian state does make us realize that "in spite of terror and pain,
life is at bottom indestructibly powerful and creative." When Mrs.
Moore reaches "that place where completeness may be found" (p. 286)--or
steps onto a spiritual plane of existence where physical life and love
are left behind and bhakti pervades all, as Rising has it--she has
achieved the self-oblivion of the Dionysian state. This oblivion is
counterpart to that identity with nature of which Thomson speaks. As
Nietzsche says, once the Principium individuationis collapses, "we shall
gain an insight into the nature of the Dionysian. . . . Under the charm
of the Dionysian not only is the union between man and man reaffirmed,
but Nature which has become estranged, hostile, or subjugated, celebrates
once more her reconciliation with her prodigal son, man." It is this
process that takes place in A Passage to India. Nature is indifferent
if not hostile to man in India, definitely threatening in the Marabar,
and its irrational force there undermines Mrs. Moore's consciously held
faith. At first. What she eventually accomplishes--or what Godbole ac-
complishes for her--as she reaches that place where completeness may be

55 Rose Pfeiffer, paraphrasing Nietzsche, Nietzsche: Disciple of
56 Ibid.
57 Rising, Chapter VI, passim, and pp. 390-91.
58 Nietzsche, Philosophy, p. 955.
found, is a reconciliation with all nature, a merging into oneness with all creation, a reaffirmation of the underlying but forgotten union not only between man and man but between man and nature. A wasp, a stone— they also enter Godbole's vision and he impels them also to that place where completeness may be found. (The narrator tells us he was "wrong to attempt the stone," however; "logic and conscious effort [the principle of individuation] had seduced," and he fails [p. 286].) Mrs. Moore's final merging into oneness with the universe begins with her moment of horrifying vision in the Cave. What begins as horrifying ends as unifying. "The mystic experience can be beatific, satanic, revelatory, or psychotic, but whatever its nature, it is one of unity." Mrs. Moore's first reaction to her mystic experience at the Cave is the opposite of unity: she no longer wants to be one with the universe, nor to communicate with anyone, not even her children home in England, "not even with God" (p. 150). Her vision is at first revelatory only of horror and nullity; it seems actually satanic, an element of antiChrist, for it scorns Christian love and has nothing of the beatific. Not until she reaches Godbole's place of completeness will she be able to comprehend the unity in what seems to her at first a vision of a "petty" abyss, a "serpent of eternity made of maggots" (p. 208). Mrs. Moore is bound by her own Apollonian restrictions from comprehending right then and there the Dionysian Truly Primal Unity (Nietzsche's phrase) underlying the Caves' chaos. Her blackest moment comes just after her visit inside the Cave but as she nears Bombay on her farewell journey across India, she draws back a little from her irritable alienated position, just as

the oppressive heat has "drawn back a little" (p. 209). The moon, no longer the "exhausted crescent that precedes the sun" (p. 255) but a completed sphere once more, shines over "landscapes that were baked and cleached but had not the hopeless melancholy of the plain" (p. 209).

She now notices what man has built on this hostile continent, and these accomplishments seem to her evidence of "the indestructible life of man and his changing faces, and the houses he has built for himself and God, and they appeared to her not in terms of her own trouble but as things to see" (Ibid.). Her train describes a semi-circle around the bastion of Asirgarh, one of man's more permanent achievements. It looks at her twice and seems to say, "I do not vanish" (Ibid.). Realizing she has "not seen the right places," she longs to stop and "disentangle the hundred Indias that passed each other in the streets" (p. 210). The images of completed circles in the moon and the twice circling of Asirgarh plus the suggestion of unity in her wish to disentangle the hundred Indias point to the oncoming sense of completeness asserted when Godbole impels her spirit to union with all things in a spirit of universal love, or bhakti. Nature itself assures Mrs. Moore that despair may yet be alleviated: "Thousands of cocoanut palms appeared all round the anchorage and climbed the hills to wave her farewell. 'So you thought an echo was India; you took the Marabar caves as final? they laughed. What have we in common with them, or they with Asirgarh? Good-bye!'"

No, says the narrator, not every event to stem from the Marabar has wrought evil: the Caves "had been a terrible strain on the local administration; they altered a good many lives and wrecked several careers, but they did not break up a continent or even dislocate a district" (p. 237).
Thus we do not need Mau to balance Marabar (Thomson says "Temple" balances the Marabar's evil\(^60\)), for we have already learned from the narrator's statement that the Marabar's evil is only another incompletion of the myriad incompletions in India. The narrator's verbal declaration, however, is opposed by the sinister ominousness of the Marabar that is imparted by less discursive means. The split between declared intention and imparted atmosphere widens the gap between the two modes of vision so apparent in this as in all Forster's work. Forster does not deny the evil of Marabar, but clearly does not accept this evil as total and final. In the way the goblins are followed by the forces of splendor and heroism in Beethoven's Fifth Symphony according to Forster's famous gloss on it \(^61\) in *Howards End*, evil is followed by the forces of good in this novel. The narrator says so when he points out that the echo has dissipated and that the Marabar has failed to dislocate a district. But the evil can always return, as the goblins can, which is why E. K. Brown believes we can trust Forster as Forster claims we may trust Beethoven.\(^62\) It is the lack of finality that Forster admires in the Fifth Symphony and that he has echoed in *A Passage to India*. At its close evil has receded but lurks in the background. Polarities remain; the sense of hope for the future is weak because evil has not been obliterated. But hope is there.

The Marabar functions, like the Grecian Urn of Keats's poem or the Brooklyn Bridge in Hart Crane's major work, or even as the beast in Henry James's nouvelle, "The Beast in the Jungle," as what Wheelwright calls

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\(^60\) Thomson, p. 272.


a "presiding symbol," extending its influence into every subtlety of the work. The Marabar forms the nucleus as well as the outreach of the quality of experience offered by the novel. As clusters or nodes of symbolic meaning that spread their "problematic residue" (Wheelwright's phrase) backwards from their central position to the beginning of the novel where they first appear as extraordinary fists and fingers thrust up through the hostile soil, and forward to the novel's end where their influence proves to have been less than devastating, the Caves remain full of ambiguity and mystery as a true symbol should. Their problematic residue is diffuse but persistent. Presiding symbols function just this way, "by holding together certain imaginative experiences and possibilities of experience which partly are expressed within the poem and partly are suggested as having a more universal life outside it." Caves have a universal life outside art, of course, as actual geologic formations and as archai, or archetypal symbols of the first hierarchy. But this particular Cave is like Moby Dick, one of those symbolic images that will not remain contained within their vehicles. "Even when a symbol belongs somewhat uniquely to a particular poem, it does not, if it is truly effective, stay confined there," writes Wheelwright. "Moby Dick cannot remain confined within Melville's novel; as Northrop Frye has remarked, 'he is absorbed into our imaginative experience of leviathans and dragons of the deep from the Old Testament onward.' Any tensive symbol is likely to have lurking potencies of infinitely expanded reference." Some readers of A Passage to India may not for long remember

63 Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality, pp. 93-95.
64 Ibid., p. 93.
65 Ibid., p. 102.
the characters' idiosyncracies or be able to analyze the novel's total meaning, but all, without exception, I believe, retain the impress of the Caves. The presentational reality of the Marabar extends throughout the novel and also makes indefinitely expanding ripples outside it. It has entered our imaginative experience.

A cave, that natural and yet preternatural empty concavity, is one of those things in nature which "can in some way be expressive of the Great One," as Bigelow says every thing in nature can be.66 This particular literary cave is one of those symbols that Ira Progoff calls "an embodiment of reality itself."67 It may seem illogical to claim that one image can represent everything in life, even spirit, but literary meanings may not be entirely the outcome of logical thinking, as W. J. Handy reminds us.68 "They represent presentational meanings which are logically irrelevant but which successfully embody the particularity of experience in its unabstracted state." The Marabar successfully embodies the unabstracted state of experience even as it becomes the means of communicating an illogical and perhaps irrelevant truth. It may even represent "God without attributes," that "passage to India" which is "not easy, not now, not here, not to be apprehended except when it is unattainable" (pp. 314-15). As such, the Marabar images all that comes within the broad parameters of Forster's double vision, a vision of the sacred as well as of the secular.

68 Handy, p. 42.
CHAPTER II
THE SPLIT IN PLOT: MYTHIC AND MUNDANE

Daily life, whatever it may be really, is practically composed of two lives—the life in time and the life by values.  

E. M. Forster

Even as he resurrects primeval reality in his mythic evocation of place, Forster weakens the mythic vitality he has created by confounding it with ironic myth: archetypal plot incompletely or parodied. The central event around which the plot of A Passage to India gathers—the journey to the Marabar Caves—is mythic, and a basic, primary myth at that (though not of the first hierarchy, not one of the archai). Northrop Frye, in fact, identifies the quest motif as "the central" motif of all Western literature.¹ The mythic journey down through the underworld in search of rebirth, life everlasting, or some other gift of the gods becomes in modern times the exploration of the subconscious; in any time the mythic journey is a quest to attain a goal, whether the goal be to understand and assimilate one's unconscious self or some more divinely oriented spiritual achievement. The simple mythic plot of A Passage to India is a literal journey—a picnic excursion. Yet it is a figurative journey too.

The journey to the Marabar is toward spiritual enlightenment for Mrs. Moore, toward a whole self for Adela, toward acceptance of some of

life's unromantic realities for Aziz, but incomplete for all. Adela, for example, confronts in the Cave her repressed self, according to psychological interpretations, but fails to complete the archetypal process of individuation. Mrs. Moore, instead of achieving her aim of becoming "one with the universe, so dignified and simple," suffers disillusionment. Her faith in God or any principle she had heretofore clung to disintegrates. Only after her death is there a hint that she may have reached that place where oneness, completeness, may be found. Forster postpones her becoming one with the universe and makes it possible later only at the hands of an agent other than herself—the Hindu Godbole. And he makes the suggestion tenuously, since all other reconciliations brought about in "Temple" prove transient.

There is no tangibly attained Grail at the end of this quest, even though the journey otherwise parallels its mythic model. Thus the reader is left with a feeling of incompleteness that is very different from the effect of the strongly mythical presential reality of India and the Marabar. Their presence is felt as whole and alive, whereas this mythic journey tapers off into perplexity. In many ways the plot reflects accurately such events and people as we would feel no surprise at encountering in everyday life. Certainty is seldom the outcome of actual life's puzzling events. Yet the stress in this novel—brought about in large part by symbolic means (including symbolic plot and character) and narrative commentary—is on metaphysical matters to the extent that daily life loses its importance even though it is depicted realistically. The plot of A Passage to India is split—it depicts the life in time and the life by values.
Forster has been accused generally of ineptness as a maker of credible plots and specifically of "melodrama," of "insufficient causality," of "the device of coincidence," of scorning "the fetish of 'adequate motivation.'" His plots, instead of unravelling mimetically, fit symbolic patterns determined ahead of time by the author. He does not at all let his characters "run away with him" as he claims the best characters do. Nor does he let his "raw material, life itself," dominate, in spite of his stand on that question. He chaffs at Meredith's attempt to elevate the plot of Beauchamp's Career "to Aristotelian symmetry, to turn the novel into a temple wherein dwells interpretation," and does not like plot to triumph "too completely." No, he says, "all human happiness and misery does not take the form of action, it seeks means of expression other than through the plot, it must not be rigidly canalized." Yet, like Henry James, who, Forster claims, forces life to fit into an artistic pattern in the carpet, Forster himself employs characters and plot that create preconceived artistic effects rather than accurately reflecting life as it is most likely to happen. He is not simply inept as a plotmaker, however. Rather he deviates from the usual nineteenth- and twentieth-century mode and uses the methods

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4 Ibid., p. 91 and pp. 94-95.
of romance rather than of realism.\footnote{Waggoner, in Bradbury, \textit{Collection}, p. 88.} As Frederick McDowell says, Forster is not careless with plot but uses it to achieve effects other than verisimilitude.\footnote{Frederick McDowell, \textit{E. M. Forster} (New York: New York University Press, 1969), p. 134.} Forster's so-called melodramatic or incredible incidents sometimes yield a "truth to life" larger and more significant than he might attain with accurate mimesis of the statistically probable. He "sings" rather than transcribes life.

Forster is more nearly the pure romancer or fabulist in his early novels and short stories, which are largely near-fantasies with symbolic or archetypally-patterned plots. Most of his short stories could almost be called parables, and the plots of the early novels (except \textit{Maurice}) are realistic only in that such happenings are sometimes--though seldom--the stuff of which daily life is made, like the "fairytale" marriage of Lucy Honeychurch to George Emerson in \textit{A Room with a View}, the sudden deaths in \textit{Where Angels Fear to Tread} and \textit{The Longest Journey}, and the symbolic compromise between Margaret and Henry Wilcox at the close of \textit{Howards End}. These incidents of plot--particularly the closing of \textit{Howards End} where Helen's son, the offspring of the cultured intelligentsia and the elemental yeoman class, is to inherit "Howards End" and the red rust of London is encroaching only slowly on the meadows that have just produced "such a crop of hay as never--have been called "tacked on," "facile," and even "faked."\footnote{Francis Gillen, "Howards End and the Neglected Narrator," \textit{Novel: A Forum on Fiction}, 3, 2 (Winter, 1970), 141; Alan Wilde, p. 23; and Frank Kermode, in Bradbury, \textit{Collection}, p. 92 (Kermode refers here to artistic organicism in general, not to \textit{Howards End} per se).} Some claim that Forster simply announces
rather than develops motivation for such events. Waggoner analyzes this symbolic plotting not as ineptness but as a deliberate focusing of our awareness on "the intrusion of the unknown, the unpredictable, into our ordered and secure existence." The reader is uneasily aware, as he reads Forster's last novel, of the unknown and unpredictable as a real possibility, which makes the novel all the more disturbing. Critics oriented toward realism complain of melodrama in his early novels but speak approvingly of his turn toward realism in A Passage to India.

But even in this, his most realistic novel where events have a life-like inevitability, the plot is distinctly symbolic. True, there is little romantic sentimentalizing. Friendships, for example, "peter out in A Passage to India as they do in life," political matters remain muddled as they do in real life, and events have complex, multiple generating causes as they usually do in actual life. Still, the nature of those generating sources and the fact that Fielding's "truth of mood" prevails over "verbal truth" give symbolic dimension to a plot that is oddly out of kilter with realistic expectations. The author takes pains to show, for one thing, that it is an occult or spiritual reality, not simply a psychological phenomenon, that confronts Mrs. Moore at the Cave, and that it is not only Adela's psychological functioning but something that cannot be explained by ordinary or scientific means that opens her mind to the dead Mrs. Moore's influence in the courtoom. Once she frees Aziz by withdrawing her charge, Adela becomes an ally of sorts with

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8 Waggoner, in Bradbury, Collection, p. 84.
10 See Rising, From Hegel to Hinduism, pp. 304-06.
Fielding and the Chandrapore Mohammedans, at which point we might, in a novel of less adulterated realism, expect Adela and Fielding to fall in love and marry. They have certainly found much common ground, and their marriage would have satisfied realistic expectations. Instead, Fielding marries Mrs. Moore’s daughter in a symbolic union. The reader gains little sense of Stella as a personality, but she fulfills several symbolic requirements: she is named after the stars with which her mother feels a kinship; she, like her mother, has an Eastern receptivity to the Unseen; and her coming back to India with Fielding brings the plot full circle.

This following of a figure in a carpet could as easily be called "faked," "unrealistic," or "tacked on" as the ending of Howards End. But the fact is that critics do not make such evaluations of the closing incidents of A Passage to India (although some do question the artistic and thematic differences wrought by the addition of the "Temple" section). This novel depicts the life by values, symbolic life, along with such accurate miming of daily life that the charge of melodrama never arises. The remarkable thing about Passage, in fact, is that life’s two levels are merged so successfully that the reader is little aware of the fantastic or symbolic element. This novel has none of the "improvised air" that Forster found in fantasy. (He felt the reader has to "pay something extra" to accept the supernatural or improvised air in fantasy where "the stuff of daily life will be tugged and strained in various direc-

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11 E. K. Brown’s early estimate of Forster says that "before one reaches the middle of any of his novels, one has a distinct sense of two levels on which one cannot focus at once." In William Van O’Connor, ed., Forms of Modern Fiction (Bloomington, Ind.: Indiana Univ. Press, 1962), pp. 171-72. Later, in Rhythm in the Novel (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1950), Brown in effect overrides his own charge as he calls the novel "great" rather than simply "remarkable."
tions." Although his Italian novels and The Longest Journey do give their happenings a fortuitous air as Forster says fantasy does, his "idea novel," Maurice, does not, nor do Howards End and A Passage to India. (We may have to except here the ending of Howards End and possibly even the marriage between Henry and Margaret as well as the "one-night affair" between Helen Schlegel and Leonard Bast.) The reader of A Passage to India may half-consciously expect something to come of Adela's and Fielding's liaison, but he feels no sense of straining and tugging at daily life when they go their separate ways. Nor does the narrator of Passage have to work at defining the symbolism held in setting, character, or event. In Howards End, for example, the narrator announces rather pointedly Mrs. Wilcox's symbolic function: "she and daily life were out of focus: one or the other must show blurred. And at lunch 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." In A Passage to India, however, Mrs. Moore's affinity for the Unseen is dramatized in her actions and mental configurations rather than explained by the narrator. This is not to say that the author's philosophy is different from Mrs. Moore's or that we fail to feel his opinion in a subtle way throughout. We do. But it is through Mrs. Moore's consciousness that we grasp the unease generated by the arches stretching infinitely and silently beyond the arch of the sky over Chandrapore, and through Fielding's consciousness that we glimpse the life of values that he is missing as it is suggested by the distant, seemingly animated, wise...
and lovely Marabar Hills. Symbolic places and plot partake so strongly of the real that the reader feels the supranatural not as an obstruction but as part of the novel's daily life. The spiritual realities so pre-sentially alive to Mrs. Moore, the occult experience that overtakes Adela in the courtroom, the metaphysical something that Stella Moore Fielding is "onto" and that Fielding wishes he too could value—these manifestations of "another life more important than daily life" all appear in the novel as perfectly credible though intangible realities. The Unseen is always present to the reader, seeming significant and live to receptive characters, remaining unsuspected or suspicious to nonreceptive characters, but woven into the fabric of the novel with such deftness that the reader is only subliminally aware of them as the woof woven in and out of the warp of the novel's realism. Forster's accomplishment in *A Passage to India* is, as Gertrude White remarks, "an almost successful attempt at an all-but-impossible task: an attempt to fuse the real world of social comedy and human conflict with the meaning and value of the universe which that world mirrors."¹⁴ That Forster so nearly succeeds completely, she claims, is the wonder of it, not that the novel fails of complete success.

The plot of *A Passage to India*, then, is realistic and symbolic at the same time. It is not fantasy as are his earlier plots nor is it melodramatic or at all incredible. White sees *A Passage to India* as a novel of ideas, but it is also realistic and probably romantic in the way it treats certain primary ideas like Good and Evil and Life and Death. It is these major events or principles in life that Forster has ideas about,

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¹⁴ Gertrude White, in Rutherford, p. 63.
and that he expresses in symbolic plot. Social relations, man's deficiencies, politics—these matters he leaves to satire. Forster is definitely concerned with the "separations and gaps" between men that Whitman speaks of in his poem, "Passage to India," but he is also concerned with the fissures between man and metaphysical reality (as is Whitman, although in a less skeptical way) or whether this metaphysical reality is one great gap—a void. Here he and Whitman part company.\textsuperscript{15}

Not only is Forster skeptical about man's ability to form community with his brothers; he is also doubtful about the benevolence or even existence of an ultimate Truly Primal Oneness. Paradoxically, he is not so sure of his doubts that he can rule out altogether the possibility of an eternal reality that might be called God. "Properly read," says Waggoner, "Forster's novels are disillusioning: they open up fissures in the structure of our secular faith, fissures through which we may glimpse the dark vistas that surround and contain our easy, well-lighted world of security . . . . They repeat, with many variations in many keys, the theme of Eliot's Four Quartets: 'Dark, dark, dark, they all go into the dark.'"\textsuperscript{16} Whitman's fissures and gaps widen and crack in Forster's novel.

One way we learn this is through plot that represents disturbances of ideal order and that exhibits characters acting as though evil happens not out of them but through them. Take note of Elizabeth Bowen on this concept: "Though [the characters] do not generate evil, they do, like

\textsuperscript{15} Whitman's "Passage to India" reads: "All these separations and gaps shall be taken up and hook'd and link'd together,/. . . . Nature and man shall be disjoin'd and diffused no more,/ The true son of God shall absolutely fuse them" (Sec. 5). It is generally thought that Forster named his novel after Whitman's poem, significantly naming "A" "passage to India." His single possibility of passage is vastly less hopeful than Whitman's broader, more confident discussion.

\textsuperscript{16} Waggoner, in Bradbury, Collection, p. 85.
The idea that moral evil is impossible for man to eradicate (an idea that Waggoner and Thomson see in Forster's fiction) constitutes a disturbance of what we like to think of as moral order, a disturbance akin to that produced by the sudden deaths in earlier novels. The kind of evil Forster writes about is a transcendent principle, not emanating from the heart or mind of man, nor eradicable through social or political reform, nor at all something we can eliminate from human intercourse by means of religion or ethics. Humans encounter it but are not its source. It simply exists, as does the principle of good that Western man finds much easier to accept. That evil exists separately from and transcendent of man is made perfectly clear in Passage. Fielding, for example, feels after Aziz' arrest that "the evil was propagating in every direction, it seemed to have an existence of its own, apart from anything done or said by individuals" (p. 187). "He felt that a mass of madness had arisen and tried to overwhelm them all; it had to be shoved back into its pit somehow" (p. 163). Adela, too, feels it: "Evil was loose . . . she could even hear it entering the lives of others" (p. 194). Mrs. Moore feels "increasingly (vision or nightmare?) that, although people are important, the relations between them are not," and she feels this with such force "that it seemed itself a relationship, itself a person who was trying to take hold of her hand" (p. 135).

Evil and good stem from the same origins, in Godbole's view. His way of expressing this idea shocks Fielding: "When evil occurs, it ex-

17 Bowen quoted by Thomson, p. 48, from p. 25 of her Collected Impressions (New York, 1950). Thomson discusses evil's "inhabiting" the selves of numerous characters throughout Forster's fiction, but see the chapter entitled "Novel as Archetype" for evil in the characters of A Passage to India.
presses the whole of the universe. Similarly when good occurs," says Godbole. "You're preaching that evil and good are the same," complains Fielding, "irritated," but Godbole refutes this charge. "[Evil and good] are not what we think them, they are what they are . . . . Good and evil are different, as their names imply. But, in my own humble opinion, they are both of them aspects of my Lord. He is present in the one, absent in the other, and the difference between presence and absence is great, as great as my feeble mind can grasp. Yet absence implies presence, absence is not non-existence . . . ." (p. 178).

In conceiving of good and evil as everlasting, nonhuman, but living principles, Forster departs from the Victorian liberalism and Bloomsbury optimism that inhabit part of his make-up. His is a stand certainly divorced from any confidence that man can better his condition and overcome the forces making him miserable, a stand allied to the Puritan conviction that man's fate is chosen for him by God, the Calvinist belief in the elect and the damned. Montgomery Belgion's much-maligned essay on Forster's system of "diabolically" discriminating between the "sheep and the goats" makes this very point, although the consensus rejects Belgion's proposition and claims Forster is too tolerant of human frailty to make such a damning distinction. This last claim is valid if we look at Forster's fiction as if it is only a realistic assessment of

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18 This last comment is often quoted to buttress the contention that Forster's skepticism is not cynicism. It shows that Godbole, at least, does not take God's absence to mean he does not exist.

19 Says Belgion: "For Mr. Forster, it seems evident, you are either born a sheep or a goat, and, whichever it is, that you are doomed to remain. There is no hope for you." "The Diabolism of E. M. Forster," The Criterion (October, 1934). Trilling, like most critics viewing Forster's work as realistic, says Forster creates characters that are both sheep and goat. He says: "... the fact is that in Forster there is a
human beings. Sharp as he is with his satire, Forster is never so intolerant as to overlook a character's redeeming qualities. His mythic vision, however, sees good and evil not as human characteristics but as principles that exist on their own, a view which would account for his tolerance of even "goats." And, as Godbole's remark shows, evil cannot claim permanent victory over human life. Evil comes in the absence of God, but God's absence does not mean he does not exist. In *A Passage to India* evil is crucial to plot as the factor precipitating all incidents contingent upon the Caves and the Hot Weather. But evil is no more gratuitous in this novel than in the more "melodramatic" plots of Forster's earlier career, although its position as *prime* motivator of human behavior vacillates. The principle of good surges forward alternately with that of evil in Forster as it does in Beethoven, not triumphing as it does in the Fifth Symphony but at least mitigating the effects of evil. The Marabar, we remember, "did not break up a continent or even dislocate a district." Their evil has receded, has remained incomplete and non-victorious. The truth we are left with is what Bowen found so lucid in Forster, a truth that shows dual but not fuzzy, a refinement and complexity of the more dogmatically held viewpoints presented in the early work. In the way that the truth so readily articulable becomes more complex and suggestive in his last novel, the symbolic plotting that was unequivocal in its message earlier becomes undogmatic and multifarious in this last work. It is truly symbolic, not signlike. The story line of *A Passage to India* is no less mythic than the obviously mythic plots deep and important irresolution over the question of whether the world is one of good and evil, sheep and goats, or one of good-and-evil, of sheep who are somehow goats and goats who are somehow sheep" (pp. 111-12).
and mythological allusions of the early novels. In fact, it is even more traditionally mythic, especially in its central incident, the trip to the Marabar Caves. Forster indicated the essential mythicness of the novel's plot when he stressed in the Paris Interviews the necessity he felt to build a plot around "a solid mass ahead, a mountain over or through which the story must somehow go."  

This sense of the essentiality of an obstacle over or through which humans must struggle is mythic. The archetypal pattern of growth toward maturity is one kind of mythic struggle; another is the pursuit of a spiritual goal. The search or quest myth often takes the form of initiation. Such a journey through anguish and despair or through the evils of the mature world forms the basic plot for representative works of Western literature from Beowulf to Dante's The Divine Comedy to Mann's The Magic Mountain, and in American short stories like Hawthorne's "Young Goodman Brown" or "My Kinsman Major Molineux." In "Young Goodman Brown," for instance, the innocent makes a journey that is typical of initiation myths, the "journey that must be made through the woods at night--the experiencing of evil, necessary to an understanding of life."  

The archetypal initiation process may take figurative form or literal, whether its goal is spiritual (perhaps a Holy Grail) or psychological or philosophic.

Subordinate to the journey that is central to the plot of A Passage to India is the subplot that also has a mythic model: the task pattern. Neumann tells us that the archetypal hero's first task in the most archaic form we can trace it is the dragon fight.  

Fielding is the hero who

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20 Forster in Writers at Work, pp. 26-27.


22 Neumann, p.149.
takes on a figurative dragon—the dragon of the British Empire at work in India. Fielding feels he has a task to perform, one of archetypal proportions: to help this globe of men reach one another "by the help of good will plus culture and intelligence" (p. 62). His self-imposed mission is no less than to overcome the separations and gaps that Whitman sings of as man's great task. Within the novel's scope this mission fails. After the Marabar and the trial, Fielding's aspirations taper off; he is then content to "plod along as best he can" (p. 318). Fielding is not so far outside society or his former goals as to become a Stranger like Camus' or a man who lives underground like Ellison's. But he fails to complete his task and falls short of mythic attainment, which makes him an antihero of a sort. "Today," says Burrows, "at a time when literature often presents not heroes but antiheroes, protagonists may ruin the task they are to perform so as to oppose the mythically heroic."23 Not that Fielding purposefully ruins his task, but his failing to accomplish it makes him antiheroic. A man of intelligence and good will himself, who consciously strives to live by his principles, he nevertheless fails to establish what Margaret Schlegel in Howards End calls "the rainbow bridge," despite his romping from one side to another at Bridge parties and despite his symbolic attempt to bridge the gap between peoples with his personal relationship to Aziz. (Our knowing that Britain and India exacerbated their separations and gaps and parted political company probably underscores this interpretation of the novel's events.)

Second only to the beneficent influence of ancestors and mythic places, "personal relations" have been Forster's great hope in all his

23 Burrows, p. 135.
fiction until *A Passage to India*. Here he plays personal relations as "his last trump card," as Rising phrases: it, and the card fails. Rising offers some cause for hope in spite of the failure of personal relations, however: personal relations are of this world, whereas only by lifting onto a higher plane of existence after withdrawing from this world can a spiritually receptive character (Mrs. Moore) become one with the universe. As Thomson puts it, "A personal relation implies exclusion; it is a double image of the individual in isolation. But a spiritual relationship reveals what one man has in common with another man, and with all men; it is a microcosmic image of the brotherhood of man." That Forster had some such thought in mind is indicated by Fielding's predicament at the novel's close. "You and I and Miss Quested," he remarks to Aziz, "are, roughly speaking, not after anything. We jog on as decently as we can, you a little in front—a laudable little party" (p. 318). His wife, he notes, "is after something. . . . [she] is not with us." Stella has ideas and aspirations he cannot share; "indeed," he says, "when I'm away from her I think them ridiculous. When I'm with her, I feel different, I feel half dead and half blind" (p. 318). Here again Fielding voices the suspicion that he is missing the submerged part of life's iceberg, sounding like a devotee of the conviction prevalent among certain schools of psychology that rational, scientific, logical Western man perceives only a small part of total reality. Before a personal relation can become a "microcosmic image of the brotherhood of man," there must be a spiritual bond, a universal merging of at least parts of the individual entities, and Fielding senses that the beginnings of such a spiritual bond have formed between him and his wife since their

24 Thomson, p. 221.
visit to Mau. Mau, the setting for the "Temple" section of the novel, a Hindu state where Hinuism works its effects (temporary though they may be), is literally and metaphorically far from official, westernized Chandrapore. Here Fielding can say, "There seemed a link between them at last—that link outside either participant that is necessary to every relationship" (p. 318). Between him and Aziz no such spiritual bond arises, only a modified detente. The petering out of friendship between them (and also of the affinity between Fielding and Adela that also fades) is an objective correlative, then, of Forster's changed ideas on the efficacy of purely human personal relations; Mrs. Moore has expressed their diminished value when seen from the standpoint of time: "centuries of carnal embracement, yet man is no nearer to understanding man" (p. 135). Fielding's failure to complete his self-imposed task on this globe is an element of plot reflecting this same conviction. Because the plot does not cement the friendship of East and West, and because it allows no one principle, whether evil or good, to prevail, it objectifies the idea that man cannot control his relations with other men, that nations and people will remain forever torn by strife unless they forge the necessary spiritual links. The author has posed this question very early in the book through narrative commentary: "All invitations must proceed from heaven perhaps; perhaps it is futile for men to initiate their own unity, they do but widen the gulfs between them by the attempt" (p. 37).

Because Fielding's relation with Stella has taken on a spiritual tone, the plot takes an upward swing, objectifying a less pessimistic facet of the same idea. And because neither tendency—toward separation from Aziz or toward unity with Stella—is declared certain, the ending
remains open, objectifying yet another attitude of the Forsterian mind: the skeptical, modern, we-shall-see attitude. Forster's plotting follows mythical models only to a point. The questers are still searching as earth and sky say, "No, not there," and No, not yet," to them.

Aziz' portion of the story can also be seen as myth, but it is myth parodied as well as incomplete. Thomson lightly suggests:

Aziz' career could be seen as a parody of the hero's experience. Mrs. Moore in the mosque is the shadowy figure who must be propitiated. This done, the hero sets out on his journey to the Marabar--with an entourage. The journey culminates in a cave with no markings, in nothing, and in non-union with a false bride-mother, Adela. In attempting to return the hero is captured and imprisoned by the Anglo-Indians, the deities or rulers of the nothing-world. All of which is followed by trial and escape.25

Thomson does not feel that seeing Aziz' career as a parody of myth is "a profitable way of looking at Aziz's nature and destiny," however. Nor do I. But the suggestion of myth is there. Its parody is implied consistently in the slightly mocking tone of voice that narrates Aziz' activities. In spite of the obvious sympathy with which the narrator looks upon Aziz, the narrative stand indicates a slight withholding from total commitment to him. Always there is the ironic countertone. For example, as Aziz lies sick, the narrator comments: "Aziz fell ill as he foretold--slightly ill. Three days later he lay abed in his bungalow, pretending to be very ill" (p. 100). Nor can one tell whether comments like, "It was Sunday, always an equivocal day in the East, and an excuse for slacking," comes from Aziz' mind or the narrator's, or from the one filtered through the other. This sort of impossible-to-attribute comment--

tary underlines the antiheroic sequence of events in Aziz' life. His "tragedy" evolves into a tragicomedy. The reader sees it and him with sympathy but also with ridicule, his journey through life as less than archetypally heroic. In fact, we are told that in the courtroom he seems "negligible, devoid of signifiiance, dry like a bone, and though he was 'guilty' no atmosphere of sin surrounded him" (p. 220). Even Aziz' guilt, then, is incomplete. It does not carry the transcendent principle of evil.

The major incident of Aziz' life is narrated with a detective-story suspense that casts a popular aura about the tale: we are told that Adela goes into a cave "thinking with half of her mind 'sight-seeing bores me,' and wondering with the other half about marriage" (p. 153). Aziz, shocked by Adela's asking whether he has more than one wife, lets go her hand and plunges into one of any number of caves "to recover his balance." When he returns he finds the guide alone. Upset at having lost track of Adela, he finds that Fielding has arrived with Miss Derek in her car. Aziz is only slightly put off at hearing that Adela has returned to Chandrapore with Miss Derek, resigning himself to his disappointment by thinking, ironically, "Guests must do as they wish, or they become prisoners" (p. 157). There is little hint of disaster until the train brings him and his party from the eighteenth-century Indian countryside back into the twentieth-century town and he is peremptorily arrested (p. 161). The manuscripts of Passage show that Forster reworked this part of the novel over and over. The end result is an understating of the portentousness of the Caves incident. Aziz' shock and the rest of his personal story thus seems less a parodied myth than simply a suspenseful semi-mystery.
If one sees Aziz' journey to the Marabar as a mythic search for a hero's goal (and Thomson feels that if anyone in this novel were to be called the hero it would be Aziz), he must admit that the quest is fated for frustration. Aziz' role as harbinger of modern science in a primitive world also atrophies as the novel proceeds. Doctor Aziz, the narrator points out, found his profession fascinating "at times, but he required it to be exciting, and it was his hand, not his mind, that was scientific. The knife he loved and used skilfully, and he also liked pumping in the latest serums. But the boredom of regime and hygiene repelled him, and after inoculating a man for enteric, he would go away and drink unfiltered water himself" (p. 53). After the trial he moves to Mau, where British officialdom has not penetrated. There his surgical skills go unused, his instruments rusting: "Nominally under a Hindu doctor, he was really chief medicine man to the court. He had to drop inoculation and such Western whims, but even at Chandrapore his profession had been a game, centered around the operating table, and here in the backwoods he let his instruments rust, ran his little hospital at half steam, and caused no undue alarm" (p. 292).

His goal in undertaking the Marabar picnic was to build on his already-formed relationship with Mrs. Moore. (Perhaps one should not say that he had a goal in planning the trip because he was actually trapped into it by his own words spoken unthinkingly. But to think of his part in the plot as mythic at all we must play down the realistic human foibles he displays and underscore the symbolic suggestions.) The story of the frustrated picnic, the failure of his and Fielding's attempt at friendship, and his and Mrs. Moore's failure to spread brotherly love—all are perfectly credible realistically. These credible, realistic
failures also serve as *symbols* of such failures, as parodies or in-completions of mythic ideals.

On the other hand, one needs little imagination to see the central story line, the journey that Mrs. Moore and Adela make to the Cave, as myth. Theirs is a mythic quest; only its frustrated goals mark it as myth failed. Though the journey's goal remains unattained for either, their journey is necessary to the consequences—a necessary cause, not merely a contributing cause. Barrett says, "Mrs. Moore is not at the center of the plot, nor does she launch the crucial actions; but all the plot flows past and around her, and what happens to her in the process is the story within the story of the novel."26 Whether Mrs. Moore or Adela (or Aziz, or even Fielding) is the main carrier of the plot is difficult to say. It is Adela whose actions make the story move; it is she who rouses Anglo-India against Aziz and she who rectifies her mistake. But Mrs. Moore moves Adela in some occult way to realize her mistake; it is Mrs. Moore who is the central "idea-carrier," for as Stone says, the main idea is that "physically of the same environment, we are also psychically one."27 It is Mrs. Moore, with her wish to "be one with the universe," who expresses this idea.

As all myth embodies antitheses, the Marabar journey condense into Mrs. Moore's experience the opposites of good and evil. Burrows describes the mythic opposites found in the journey motif, as in all myth: "Beneath all myths is a basic belief in opposites, by which is meant the elements of the collective psyche. These unite as the binary groups of Eros and Thanatos, of good and evil, of man and woman, of love and hate, of order

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26 Barrett, p. 296.

27 Stone, p. 339.
and chaos, and so on. The journey is thus the attempt to balance these opposites within man himself, or within the community." For Mrs. Moore the opposites combined in this mythic journey are Eros and Thanatos, good and evil, love and hate, order and chaos—with Thanatos, evil, hate, and chaos predominating. (For Adela the opposites are more clearly sexual: of man and woman.) Mrs. Moore has thoughts of death and consciously wishes to withdraw from life. Her mind has been on the temporality and carnality of physical love; as the train carries them closer to the Marabar she finds suddenly that love and all personal relations seem unimportant. After her disagreeable few moments in the Cave her cynicism deepens into a profound malaise; she realizes she does not "want to write to her children, didn't want to communicate with anyone, not even with God. . . . She lost all interest, even in Aziz . . . " (p. 150). Personal relations even with her loved ones no longer matter. Even a personal relation with God has lost its attraction and significance. Chaos seems to rule over order, and it is the echo that defines the chaos: "The crush and smells she could forget, but the echo began in some indescribable way to undermine her hold on life" (p. 149). The Marabar's evil is not even romantic to her—the Cave is a petty abyss housing a serpent of eternity made of maggots instead of a magnificent devil. "Devils are of the North, and poems can be written about them, but no one could romanticize the Marabar because it robbed infinity and eternity of their vastness, the only quality that accommodates them to mankind" (p. 150). At the Marabar everything amounts to the same: "Everything exists, nothing has value" (p. 149). "The wonderful India of her opening weeks, with its cool nights and acceptable hints of infinity, had vanished" (p. 158).

28 Burrows, p. 224.
Mrs. Moore's moment of vision, although not immediately attended
by the usual soaring into the empyrean that has attended Forster's
eternal moments before this novel, is nevertheless what Wilde calls a
"structural counterpart to what may be called Forster's philosophy of
the great moment. . . . It provides the otherwise commonplace, realistic
world of the novel with an atmosphere of strangeness; it pulls and tugs
at the normal arrangement of things and leaves everything slightly dis-
ordered."29 The result of this sort of tugging and straining, which,
we will remember, Forster identified as the hallmark of fantasy, is "to
throw both the characters and the reader back on, to use Forster's own
words, 'whatever transcends our abilities.'"30 This "whatever transcends
our abilities" is the second of the dual levels of life, the life of
values as opposed to and separate from daily life. Mrs. Moore, one
feels, has been at or near the boundaries of life,31 close to the divi-
ding line between daily life and other life "that may be of greater im-
portance," as Mrs. Wilcox of Howards End was. Mrs. Moore's glimpse of
the Dionysian constitutes an eternal moment, even though it is not at
first freeing or beatific. Instead it is shattering to her peace of
mind, to her faith in God, to her conviction that love is important.
It brings about a change in her kindly nature that is almost melodrama-
tic because its cause is not clear. Forster has seemingly here "scorned
the fetish of 'adequate motivation.'" Her trip to the Marabar is a

29 Wilde, p. 17.

30 Gillen, 149, quoting Forster in Aspects of the Novel, p. 110.

31 Barrett says that by the time Forster wrote A Passage to India
he had been at or "at least near the boundaries of life, and had come
back purged of illusions and more detached" (p. 308).
"journey through dream or nightmare, a journey through a sea of darkness and twilight to a strange other world. But on this journey there is no hero and no goal. The chapel perilous—Forster does not mention so orderly a Western concept—is a cave, an absolutely empty cave." True, the cave which substitutes for the chapel perilous is absolutely empty, but emptiness, we remember, is not necessarily evil, especially in Eastern thought where emptiness may be valued over the full. Nor is the twilight into which Mrs. Moore has sunk, the "twilight of the double vision," totally dark. Twilight, Thomson notes, is "a state in which light is absent but the existence of light is implied." The wording parallels Godbole's definition of the absence of God as related to evil: "Absence implies presence, absence is not non-existence" (p. 178). Although Mrs. Moore's vision has been incomplete and her passage to India unfinished (she has "not seen the right places"), she has, if we accept Rising's interpretation, progressed in the process of aufheben. Aufheben is never finished, always incomplete, but not a hopeless process by any means. Light is implied. The Marabar's evil and negation, even though they send Mrs. Moore into despair, are no more complete than the goodness and kindness with which she has tried to live her life. Not only as images in their own right but also as influences on the plot, the Caves fail to make their evil emanations total and final. Again, as Mrs. Moore herself says, "there are so many kinds of failure" (p. 52). Mrs. Moore realizes she has failed to spread her gospel of love, but its opposite—a gospel of evil and hatred—has also failed, leaving the process of aufheben ongoing.

32 Thomson, p. 222.

33 Ibid., p. 233.
For Adela the failure is her unrealized self. The journey represents her need to explore and acknowledge the Dionysian, which includes the sexual side of her personality that has been repressed all her life. The Dionysian also includes a move toward oneness with all the world, a metaphysical merging that is the spiritual equivalent of a psychological merging of conscious with unconscious. "The journey," Burrows tells us, "and the quest motifs relate to the fall into experience. Ultimately, though, the quest hopes to find the Self through uniting the conscious with the unconscious." In modern psychological terms the quest signifies this search for self (and surely Adela's surname is suggestive: Quested). For Adela the journey to the Marabar is a fall into experience. If we read the incident as psychological realism (which is closely related to myth, both having psychic sources), we see that in the Cave she recognizes her fear of physical love and her lack of whole love for Ronny or Ronny's for her. The footholds in the rock suggest this deficiency to her, for they remind her of the accident in the Nawab's car, an accident that aroused the "spurious unity" between herself and Ronny. The incompletely circle of the semi-circular foothold marks underline the incompleteness of her love for Ronny. The Marabar of course represents the unconscious in her case, as any cave, being an archetypal image of the unconscious, can do. Thus it is not difficult to see her visit there as a confrontation with heretofore unrecognized elements of her instinctive, Dionysian self.

Such an archetypal journey in myth can have beneficial or disastrous consequences: "The voyage through life to attempt to acquire the treasure,

34 Burrows, p. 135.
35 See Dauner, "What Happened in the Cave?"
or the lost Eden, or the Self," writes Burrows, takes the quester "through various exploits, various avenues of life (stages of development), through despond (evil, death, the underworld) either not to emerge from the darkness or to progress to the desired heavenly path of light." Mrs. Moore's progress is upward after her initial downward path and physical death, but Adela's upward progress is extremely slight. Her subliminal attempt to acquire her whole self concludes in almost total frustration: "It's as if I ran my finger along that polished wall in the dark, and cannot get further. I am up against something," she tells Fielding (p. 263). She and Fielding decide the life of the stars is "not for the likes of them." They hold back from entering into the Dionysian joy of existence, from Primordial Being, and hold fast to the controlled and the rational. A "scientific" explanation almost satisfies them: hallucination or telepathy may have caused her conviction that Aziz had attacked her:

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. Perhaps life is a mystery, not a muddle; they could not tell. Perhaps the hundred Indias which fuss and squabble so tiresomely are one, and the universe they mirror is one. They had not the apparatus for judging. (p. 263)

The narrative persona who relays their thoughts seems far removed from these two, far wiser and wider of perspective. Decades ahead of the current awareness that humans seldom let all that is possible enter their consciousness, Forster is also ahead of our present vogue, for he also

36 Burrows, p. 457.
retains a respect for reason, a retention that is recently evident again in our own culture. As he presents a strong case for acknowledging the Dionysian, he never forsakes the rational Apollonian approach even as he seems to castigate the conventional Englishman as a repressed Calvinist. He sees life whole but also steadily.

Fielding and Adela see it steadily but not whole. After they agree that "the dead don't live again," "There was a moment's silence, such as often follows the triumph of rationalism" (p. 241). But Adela's initiation in the Cave, the initiatory hut, has gained her at least some recognition of her deficiencies ("My instincts never help me"), and she has opened herself to Mrs. Moore's occult influence enough to place herself back at the Cave on that fatal day to relive it, not simply to remember it. (Indeed, the immediacy with which her experience is relayed to the reader plays a significant part in the Caves' presential reality.) Her moment of receptivity to the Unseen is followed by honest intellectual probing of her own motives and behavior. She is almost back where she started, a "queer, honest girl" who takes notes on every experience in life. ("Plans had been a passion with her since girlhood" --pp. 136-36.) At the end of her spiritual tether, Adela has at least stretched it a little before she returns to England and a life of "cultural refinement." (An Adela Quested is mentioned in Howards End as a member of Margaret Schlegel's Bloomsburylike circle in an almost Faulknerian interweaving of characters and places.) Carl Jung's essay on "Synchronicity" gives us a metascientific explanation of how communication between Adela and the dead Mrs. Moore could have come about--if we need one. But as myth, the journey to the Cave with Adela's consequent fall into experience and Mrs. Moore's fall into disillusionment
before enlightenment seems poetically, mythically true without any explanation from the rational world. Yet as myth the journey falls short. Forster portrays vividly a skeptical modern's idea of myth. He allows us to see the inner essentials of the life by values, covering this kernel with realistic husks of daily life. Yet one is never sure whether after stripping off the husks that kernel is vital as myth. Places like the Marabar Caves and India live within and even outside the book, but the indeterminate ending of the plot, the trailing off into incompleteness of all the tasks started, belittle the primeval reality resurrected in those mythic places and cast a modern Pyrrhonism on their vitality.

Thus the rise-fall-rise pattern that E. K. Brown sees as the novel's overall structure finishes with only a slight rise:

Three big blocks of sound—what is A Passage to India consists of. A first block in which evil creeps about weakly, and the secret understanding of the heart is easily dominant. A second block, very long, and very dark, in which evil streams forth from the caves and lays waste most everything about, but yet meets an opposition, indecisive in some ways, but unyielding, in the contemplative insight of Professor Godbole, and the intuitive fidelity of Mrs. Moore. A third block in which evil is forced to recede, summarily, and spectacularly, not by the secret understanding of the heart, but by the strength on which the secret understanding of the heart depends, contemplative insight, intuitive fidelity. Then the final reminder, that good has merely obliged evil to recede as good receded before evil a little before.

The three parts of A Passage to India, says Brown, are in balance as they interweave. That the parts do interweave, the three big blocks of sound treating the same themes in different ways, one cannot doubt.

This novel is clearly an art work of unified form and exquisitely wrought.

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37 Brown, in Bradbury, Collection, p. 158.
38 Ibid.
detail. But because the upward lift at its close is less definitive and less hopeful than we have been led to expect by the establishing of true rapport between Aziz and Mrs. Moore in Part I, and then by the re-establishing of that rapport between Mrs. Moore's son Ralph and Aziz in Part III, the three parts are actually thrown a little out of balance. The novel's pattern, like that of a yantra, provides an instrument for aiding that contemplative insight by which Professor Godbole establishes a Hindu hope for salvation. But the rise of that pattern is neither regular nor trenchant.

Forster himself acknowledged this lack of balance when he said he added the "Temple" section because he "needed a lump" to balance the novel architecturally. "But the lump sticks out a little too much," he added. This lump sticks out a little too much because it countermands the mood of the second large part in which "evil streams forth from the caves and lays waste most everything about." But it also is itself countermanded by the definite re-establishing of the fissures and gaps in the last few pages. The metaphysical oneness of Mrs. Moore and the universe, the indwelling of the Hindu spirit that transfigures momentarily all those taking part in the festival—these tenuous assertions of unity are left to stand. But the unity in everyday life among everyday people that has been brought about by the "baptismal" waters of the tank at Mau—that unity is questioned. The doubt remains, as Crews phrases it, whether the English and Indians have been "drenched in Hindu love or simply drenched." The authorial voice says the "divisions of daily life were returning" (p. 321). As Fielding and

39 Forster in Writers at Work, p. 28.

40 Crews, p. 151.
Aziz ride together for the last time, even the natural world pulls them apart. The scenery, "though it smiled, fell like a gravestone on any human hope" (p. 321). They wrangle about politics; Fielding mocks Aziz' idealistic (but, as it turns out, quite realistic) hope for a unified India capable of ejecting its foreign conquerors: "India a nation! What an apotheosis!" (p. 322). The gap here between Fielding's condescension and the authorial persona's perspective provides an irony that denigrates the once-tolerant Fielding's swing to the right. 41 Aziz encourages his own horse to rear, but lets his affection for Fielding overcome him one last time: "he rode against him furiously—and then,' he concluded, half kissing him, 'you and I shall be friends'" (p. 322).

Thus what Robert Langbaum calls, interestingly, the "Apollonian hope" of Part I—the hope of breaching the "gap between India and England through the friendship of enlightened individuals—notably the friendship of Aziz with Fielding and Mrs. Moore"—is touched upon again but played down. 42 This hope has broken down in "Caves," says Langbaum, before "irrational forces." That irrational forces emanate from the Marabar Caves few will doubt. That the nature of these forces is purely malevolent, however, is in doubt, since the narrator and certain events of plot deny it. Mrs. Moore's encounter with these Dionysian, irrational forces, for example, is a kind of Fortunate Fall for she eventually becomes one with the universe if we are to take at all seriously Godbole's efforts to impel her to that place of all-completeness, or, in terms more palatable

41 This irony was remarkably accurate, for India did become a nation standing on its own in 1948. Forster's contemporaries seldom suspected his irony, however.

to a reasoning Western Apollonian audience, Rising's idea that Hegel's aufheben illuminates Mrs. Moore's behavior. Even the second big block of sound where evil streams forth darkly is not entirely pessimistic simply because it is irrational. Nietzsche would say that modern man's only hope is with the irrational and Dionysian, and Forster follows him to a point. Having preached in all his fiction and dramatizing in A Passage to India the folly and incompleteness of life lived according to reason alone, Forster also acknowledges—by way of artistic structure—the dangers of slipping into pure feeling. That way lies madness, he seems to say, not the madness of Christianity's practice of narrow exclusion so it will be left with something for itself (p. 38), nor the madness of "reasonable" Western man who cannot endure "the lantern of reason if it is exhibited for one moment longer than decreed" (p. 165), but the madness of over-emotionality that the abandonment of reason brings. Like Nietzsche, Forster aims in the long run for a blend of the Apollonian and the Dionysian, a blend of the kind Nietzsche extols in ancient Greek tragedy, a blend that makes the Truly Existent Primal Unity of the Dionysian apprehensible to mankind. Forster never "says so" in this novel, but his highly structured plot and his careful working of design in molding his Dionysian material say it for him.

Levine says Forster found in the Caves the objective correlative for Mrs. Moore's profound malaise.\footnote{Levine, p. 88.} He has also found in his plot an objective correlative for his own double vision of the world. His vision sees the whole of life, including its Dionysian side with all its ugliness and all its beauty, from a balanced Apollonian, steady, if skeptical perspective.
CHAPTER THREE

THE SPLIT IN CHARACTERIZATION: ARCHETYPAL AND REALISTIC

... the plot, instead of finding human beings more or less cut to its requirements, as they are in drama, finds them enormous, shadowy and intractable, and three-fourths hidden like an iceberg.

--E. M. Forster

Forster's characters are one element in his fiction on which most critics agree. Almost to a man, they find his characters to be of two types that we might label "realistic" and "symbolic" or "archetypal." The split between the two kinds is perhaps clearest in his short stories where the symbolic characters are like demi-gods in fantasy and the realistic portrayals are all too true-to-life. In the early novels, too, the characters who line up on the side of convention, celibacy, organized religion--what Forster would call the "anti-life" people--are consistently too inhibited, too rational, too devoted to form of one kind or another, and Forster caricatures their devotion. They are the Mr. Beebes, the Charlotte Bartletts, the Mrs. Herritons, the Pembrokees. "The type will be institutionalized in A Passage to India as the wives of the English officials who regard the Indians with a vindictive cruelty," says Trilling.¹ They certainly must strike every reader as accurate even though exaggerated; we know people very much like them and enjoy seeing them impaled on Forster's rapier.

¹ Trilling. These are the characters Trilling would classify as Forster's "goats." See p. 48 and pp. 110-11.
Lined up on the other side are the pro-life people, the sheep in the sheep-and-goats distinction. Most of these "good" people become symbolic of or are strongly influenced by the Dionysian spirit. Those who are substantially swayed by the redemptive, Dionysian, symbolic characters find their lives fulfilled and their selves made whole in early stories and novels that are almost all comic in spirit. The Lucy Honeychurches, the Miss Rabys, the Margaret Schlegels are realistically handled, whether their portraits are painted in depth or with a few deft superficial strokes. It is the symbolic characters who influence these fortunate learners, the "intuitive," "redemptive," or "guardian" characters, as they are variously called, who bear the charge of unrealistic characterization. A study of Forster's narrative commentary in all his novels will reveal that it is those characters not fully delineated by the narrator's satiric comments who fail to materialize as real persons. As satire shows us a character's faulty side, it makes him realistic. It is the mythic characters who seem unrealistic. In Forster's fiction, as Trilling says, "what is bad in life has indeed the look of reality, but what is good has the appearance of myth."\(^2\)

All of these symbolic, redemptive characters--whether drawing their wisdom and strength from primarily earthy or spiritual sources--come under critical attack as being incredible or inadequate as realistic, convincing people. They are symbolic figures not particularly credible as real persons. It is clear that to many critics, Forster's symbolic characters are counterparts of the universalized, "melodramatic" events in his plots; these figures do not convince us they live in time as they do convince us they live by values.

\(^2\) Trilling, p. 115.
A refusal to make characters realistic, however, is not necessarily a failure to do so. Forster would not agree with Joseph Warren Beach that "the primary end of fiction is the study of human nature in the concrete." Forster portrays a universalized reality that includes but is not restricted to human nature, and he portrays it largely symbolically. No doubt he would agree with Nietzsche, who thought our passion for naturalistic detail came upon the world along with the demise of mythic tragedy:

... we see at work the power of this un-Dionysian, myth-opposing spirit, when we turn our attention to the prevalence of character representation. The character must no longer be expanded into an eternal type, but, on the contrary, must develop individually through artistic subordinate traits and shadings, through the nicest precision of all the lines, in such a manner that the spectator is in general no longer conscious of the myth, but of the vigorous truth to nature and the artist's imitative power.  

Forster's characterizing methods reflect the split in his vision: they are both realistic/satiric and symbolic/mythic.

What Nietzsche calls an eternal type Jung would call an archetypal symbol in humanoid form. Some contemporary critics, alive to the power that archetypal treatment can bring to fictional characters, appreciate, as McDowell does, Forster's symbolic characters as felt presences instead of esthetic failures:

In the tradition of romance with its archetypal figures, Forster's books contain major characters that are often more arresting as felt presences than for social relationships they exemplify. On occasion, Forster design-edly sacrifices probability of motive in the interests of ulterior truth. Characters like Gino Carella, Stephen Wonham, and Ruth Wilcox lack sufficient substance

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4 Nietzsche, Philosophy, pp. 1043-1044.
as real people to be entirely convincing, yet as presences they are not the esthetic failures that some critics have declared them to be.\(^5\)

Phrases like "probability of motive" and "sufficient substance" belong to realism, "ulterior truth" to symbolism. Archetypal or eternal characters may seem esthetic failures in a fictional world that is expected to be realistic, but in their own symbolist fictional world they loom as felt presences. A reader does not soon forget a character like Gino Carella or Stephen Wonham even though he may sense insufficient substance in the characterization or wonder whether the character's motives and actions are entirely credible.

But in the two kinds of characterization found in *A Passage to India* we are really dealing with two kinds of split, the split between realistic/satiric and symbolic/mythic characterization, and the split between a given character's two sides, the Apollonian and Dionysian. Each realistic characterization in a Forster novel or story can be assessed as primarily Apollonian or Dionysian (or as primarily sheep or goat.)\(^6\) And in most of his work all the characters, including the idealized or mythic ones, can be judged to be realistic or typified.

\(^5\) McDowell, p. 135.

\(^6\) Forster has admitted that his characters readily fall into the two categories of sheep and goat, but has bemoaned the fact that readers could so readily categorize them. The goats who will be condemned to the left side of God are, in Forster's conceptualized world, those who deny passion and feeling and live by conventional response. The sheep are of course the "good" characters--the redemptive, symbolic characters and those they "save." The natural attributes of the two animals that serve as symbols dividing mankind into types, however, offer considerable complication to this kind of categorizing. In Forster, the "good" people, or sheep, have many attributes usually assigned to goats--such as indiscriminateness and sexual activity--and vice-versa. We simply will follow the Biblical distinction as Forster did--rather lightly.
The interesting—and really remarkable—development in Forster's fiction is that in his final novel the distinctions blur enough that critics no longer speak of unrealistic or incredible characterization for even the most highly symbolic figures. In *A Passage to India*, especially in Mrs. Moore, one of the novel's two "guardians" (of what is actually the Dionysian spirit), we find such a fine amalgam of realism and symbolism that critical complaints fade away. Perhaps like Blake, who found that his contemporary audience did not fully comprehend his meaning in his short poems and so devised a private mythology of his own to communicate his ideas, Forster turned to a new method to communicate his dual view more fully. He was running against the grain of his realism-attuned times and his readers did not take his stories as accounts of "ulterior truth" but as moral pointers for life here on earth, and they seemed to resent his "didacticism." In *A Passage to India*, however, Forster has had great success in meeting the cry of "incredible characterization" without muddying ulterior truth.

The archetypal, symbolic characters of *Passage* are not simply triumphs of symbolism. Sometimes Godbole borders on caricature, for example, and at times Mrs. Moore's realism prevents our "soaring" with her as Brown claims we soar with Mrs. Wilcox. In this novel Forster achieves the most effective blend of realism and symbolism in all his fiction. To assess the directions of his split, however, we must pull apart this amalgam and examine its constituents.

Not puzzling but perfectly clear is Forster's judgment of Anglo-Indians. Their primary—and sometimes only—ingredient is the "undeve-

7 Blake was probably not successful in this aim, for he became, it is generally agreed, more—not less—abstruse.
Forster made a point of distinguishing between the undeveloped heart and the cold one—"the difference is important," he said. I cannot agree with Thomson when he sees Forster's good and bad characters as one-dimensional, and says that it is only in his nonfiction that Forster severely modifies his version of a sheep-or-goat humanity. Nor can I agree entirely with Trilling when he stresses the "compromise" Forster makes when judging a character's morality. Rather, both critics are right; each stresses one side of Forster's double view.

Forster exported to India the heavily disciplined and conventional Sawston and London of Edwardian England. In his Anglo-Indians the goat is so obvious that Forster has often been accused of being unfair to British colonials. But Trilling is right; even in them we find extenuating qualities. Ronny Heaslop, for instance, protégé of the British "ruling race," embodies all their inhibitions and prejudices, yet emerges as an earnest if limited young man. With his red nose and stiff upper lip in time of adversity (as when Adela breaks her engagement to him), Ronny does indeed seem a caricature of the minor British colonial official. Accused by his mother of trying to pose as a god, as she claims Englishmen in India like to do, Ronny breaks out, "rather pathetically": "Oh, look here . . . what do you and Adela want me to do? I'm not a missionary or a Labour Member or a vague sentimental sympathetic literary man. I'm just a servant of the Government; it's the profession you

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8 Forster, "Notes on the English Character," in Abinger Harvest, p. 13. Forster's seeing the English heart as undeveloped is related to his espousal of feeling and passion, which are Dionysian, "un-English" qualities. "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 . . ." (p. 13).

9 Thomson, p. 48; Trilling, p. 111. Says Trilling: "In A Room
wanted me to choose myself, and that's that. We're not pleasant in India, and we don't intend to be pleasant. We've something more important to do" (p. 50). This statement indicts Ronny as anti-humane, anti-sympathy, anti-literature, serious charges in Forster's view. But even Ronny, possibly of all the novel's characters the closest to a villain, is not all goat. His pompousness is softened by his earnestness. Immediately after allowing Ronny's own words to castigate him, Forster rushes in to subtract from that judgment so that we see his heart as undeveloped rather than cold:

He spoke sincerely. Every day he worked hard in the court trying to decide which of the 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. That morning he had convicted a railway clerk of overcharging the pilgrims for their tickets, and a Pathan of attempted rape. He expected no gratitude, no recognition for this, and both clerk and Pathan might appeal, bribe their witnesses more effectually in the interval, and get their sentences reversed. It was his duty.

( pp. 50-51)

Forster's support of Ronny rings rather half-heartedly, it is true. But he does seem to defend the Briton in his frustrating position. Ronny is only one of those realistic/satiric characterizations in whom Forster's split is a split between scorn and compassion or tolerance, a perspective that sees each person as good-and-evil. Because Ronny's portrayal

with a View [Forster] compromises—as it is the novelist's right to compromise—between these two views [that the world is one of good and evil, or one of good-and-evil]. Mr. Beebe is goat, Charlotte is a goat with a sheep hidden somehow within her, she is good-and-evil. And this uncertainty about moral judgment will haunt Forster's intellectual life; on the whole, the view which sees life as good-and-evil will gain over the other, but will never be completely in control " (pp. 111-12). Trilling, too, we see, acknowledges Forster's persistent double vision.

As an aside, please notice Ronny's surname, Heaslop. Is Forster playing with "He's a slop"?
is the most filled-in of all the British officials', Forster is able
to maintain with him what Beach calls "amiable" satire. Ronny is at one
end of a continuum of satiric-to-mythic types in the novel's characteri-
izations.

Fielding's characterization is also primarily realistic, but not at all satiric. There is even a touch of the author about him, especi-
ally in his physical description: "Outwardly of the large, shaggy type,
with sprawling limbs and blue eyes, he appeared to inspire confidence
until he spoke. . . . Neither a missionary nor a student, he was happiest
in the give-and-take of a private conversation" (p. 62). Because we
can picture him and because we are privy to his innermost thoughts at
a few special moments, and because all of this about him is rendered
through the consciousness of a most sympathetic narrator, we feel Field-
ing's characterization as sharply human and real. He is one of Forster's
greatest successes if we measure successful characterization by a realis-
tic yardstick.

But Fielding is also archetypal, and it is here that Forster's
secondary split appears. Fielding fulfills certain archetypal roles,
but only ironically. He is credible as a real person of an Apollonian
nature, and he is also credible as Outcast, as Hero who undertakes the
bridging of the gap between East and West, and even, momentarily, as a

10 One yardstick by which Forster measures human success is one's
ability to establish personal relations. One who is "happiest in the
give-and-take of a private conversation" measures high on this yardstick.
Notice that Collector Turton, that most officious of colonial officials,
is just the opposite; he is "calm" as he addresses the gathering of Bri-
tish colonials at the Club after Aziz' arrest: "He was indeed always
calmer when he addressed several people than in a tête-à-tête" (p. 181).
The "public personality," the officious official, always come across in
Forster's fiction as inferior to the person who can and does establish
intimate personal relationships with others.
god to his students. But in these roles his success is strictly limited. As in the mythic suggestions of the plot, we find a pulling back on Forster's part from total commitment to myth.

"Archetypal characters," says Burrows, "are those who repeatedly appear within the cycle of life, exhibiting consistent traits, intentions, functions, and relationships with other characters."\(^\text{11}\) Burrows goes on to give examples so that his definition achieves specificity instead of seeming to apply to all typed characters: wise fool, savior, scapegoat, temptress, quester-hero, and so on. If we try to discern these archetypal figures in the motley group at Chandrapore, their shortcomings as realistic human beings immediately detract from the numinosity truly archetypal characters would sustain. Yet these fictional creations better serve their author's purposes than his early symbolic and more truly archetypal figures did. Readers find in them more meaning they are willing to incorporate into their own experience than less realistic characters could impart.

First a look at Fielding as an actual person. His ties to both Apollonian and Dionysian realms may be suggested first of all by his name and his dwelling. If Forster wanted his readers to see Cyril Fielding as an echo of that other Fielding who valued both heart and mind, \(^\text{12}\) he could not have carried out his intention better than by placing him in an eighteenth-century house. By placing this house of formal design in a lush tropical Indian garden, he also suggests that this Fielding is attuned to the spirit of India with its formless, fertile beauty. The garden suggests the Dionysian, whereas the house with its arches of

\(^{11}\) Burrows, p. 221.

\(^{12}\) Kettle, in Rutherford, p. 46.
beautiful appearance and control suggests the Apollonian. Fielding's house and its garden setting reflect his, as well as Forster's, two directions. Of course, such techniques of suggesting character can be used by realistic as well as by symbolistic writers. But Forster incorporates another technique that is primarily symbolistic: casting Fielding in archetypal, mythic roles.

Fielding has come to India, we are told, with heroic intentions, to unite natives and "intruders" in two ways: practically, by means of education, good will, culture, and intelligence; and symbolically, in his brotherly love for Aziz. His failing at this task diminishes his mythic weight considerably. In his other archetypally heroic aspects he is only semi-mythic too. Fielding's encircled position at Chandrapore, where he suffers the suspicions of both Indians and British, makes him an Outcast. The remark that has done "him the most damage" with his British cohorts is a "silly aside to the effect that the so-called white races are really pinko-grey. He only said this to be cheery . . . The pinko-grey male whom he addressed was subtly scandalized; his sense of insecurity was awoken, and he communicated it to the rest of the herd" (p. 62). The men, however, do not cast him out from their circle completely: they tolerate him "for the sake of his good heart and strong body; it was their wives who decided that he was not a sahib really. . . . He had discovered that it is possible to keep in with Indians and Englishmen, but that he who would also keep in with Englishwomen must drop the Indians. The two wouldn't combine" (pp. 62-63).* Fielding takes no notice of the Englishwomen, "and this, which would have passed without

* The Englishwomen in this novel seem to make up a collective Terrible Mother. Forster satirizes the women a good deal more caustically than he does the men.
comment in feminist England, did him harm in a community where the male was expected to be lively and helpful. Mr. Fielding never advised one about dogs or horses, or dined, or paid his midday calls, or decorated trees for one's children at Christmas, and though he came to the club, it was only to get his tennis or billiards, and to go" (pp. 62-63). "Part of the psychological significance of the outcast," we are told, is that he "becomes the conscience of the community by being its disruptive force. . . . he exercises wisdom and restraint not shared by the false hero and those he leads."¹³ Like Ethan Brand, Fielding serves as moral conscience to his community and is cast out for doing so. Neither faction in India can bear the lantern of reason if it is exhibited for one moment after its extinction is decreed.

Not only an outcast from the civil station, Fielding is also suspect among even the educated Indians. Suspicious of his presence at Aziz' sickbed, for example, and of his motives in educating their children, the Indians find his "zeal for honesty" "too definite and too bleak" (p. 112). Even after breaking with the British after Aziz' arrest, Fielding is more a curiosity to them than a brother. Even "at the moment when he was throwing in his lot with the Indians, he realized the profundity of the gulf that divided him from them" (p. 173). Thus Fielding is outcast from both sides, a man without a country in a country not his own. That he fails to fulfill the role of Outcast completely is to his credit rather than to that of his milieu, for his tolerance and good will are viewed on both sides as treachery.

¹³ Burrows, p. 222. Fielding operates with ideas, and thus "the feeling grew that Mr. Fielding was a disruptive force, and rightly, for ideas are fatal to caste, and he used ideas by that most potent method--interchange" (p. 62).
Fielding's failure is signified in the faltering of his friendship with Aziz. Though he has none of the derogatory feeling toward Aziz or other Indians that his countrymen feel, he realizes at once that he will "not be intimate with this fellow, nor with anyone. That was the corollary" (p. 118). British and Apollonian, tolerant but reserved, Fielding feels none of that urge to become one with the universe that Mrs. Moore feels. Though he is aware of Dionysian depths in the universe that he is missing, he is simply devoid of Dionysian feeling himself. His life has taught him much, "and helped him toward clarity, but clarity prevented him from experiencing something else" (p. 118). A fine, reasoned Apollonian clarity causes him to declare that India is a muddle and not a mystery (p. 69); it also keeps him from experiencing whatever it is that the Marabar Hills represent as they move toward him "like a queen."

In his clarity he can perceive that his forty years have seen a creditable achievement, "but he felt he ought to have been working at something else the whole time,—he didn't know at what, never would know, never could know, and that was why he felt sad" (p. 191).  

Feeling similarly deprived as his wife grows spiritually and he does not, Fielding sees himself as part of the laudable little party that jogs on as best it can but never catches up with people like Stella and her mother. He feels "half dead and half blind" in their presence. The spiritual universe, whether benevolent or malevolent, Fielding cannot apprehend. As he muses on the echo spawned by the Marabar, he comprehends only that "it belonged to the universe that he had missed or rejected" (p. 276).  

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14 Burrows says "part of the psychological significance of the outcast is his ability to recognize the imbalance of the superego" (p. 222). Fielding here seems to recognize the imbalance of his own British, reserved, repressive conscience.
Thus all that the Marabar represents—the Dionysian, in fact—belongs to the realm Fielding cannot reach, even though he is not insensitive to it nor ignorant of it.

Perhaps even more anti-mythic is the way Fielding rejects his students' treating him as a god. Immediately after the trial when all his instincts tell him to go with Aziz to celebrate, Fielding feels obliged to protect Adela from the mob of students who then act as horses for his carriage. Irony here turns to parody:

Fielding wearied of his students. The more they honoured him the less they obeyed. They lassoed him with jasmine and roses, scratched the splashboard against a wall, and recited a poem, the noise of which filled the lane with a crowd.... Half gods, half guys, with sausages of flowers round their necks, the pair [Fielding and Adela] were dragged in the wake of Aziz' victorious landau.

(p. 233)

Even though his students are his devotees and he has become in their eyes a god, "in the applause that greeted them some derision mingled. The English always stick together!" (p. 233). Because Adela, who is anathema to all Indians with any knowledge of Aziz' case, has joined him in his carriage, a credibility gap arises so that Fielding remains only partially a god and that only momentarily.

Most readers agree that Fielding's characterization is a triumph of realism. Yet his actions and demeanor suggest a mythic or archetypal aspect to his characterization too, although in an ironic and incomplete way. Fielding is no failure as a novelistic protagonist who can change and develop, but as an archetypal hero he does fail. He himself experiences the "failure of faith and hope" that "brings about a transference of the heroic to the anti-heroic and of the eternal to the mundane."15

15 Burrows, p. 225.
Closer to the realistic antihero who rebels against the values of his society than to a mythic conquerer who saves his people from their self-inflicted destruction, Fielding is yet only an incomplete antihero too. By befriending natives he scorns the values of his colonial cohorts, but when he returns to England he embraces Western ideals of form and takes a turn to the political right. Even in India he looks into his heart and finds tolerance, sympathy, and good will but never a desire to be intimate with anyone, all of which is typical of his British background where people are taught it is bad form to feel intensely, as Forster points out frequently throughout his fiction. Fielding's defaulting as both hero and antihero is no failure, however. What Forster achieves here deepens the split in both matter and manner.

Adela's characterization ranks at mid-point on a scale of mythic-satiric treatment. In her portrayal we can easily discern Forster's split impulses at work. First, she has a psychological realism seldom found in Forsterian characters, enough that we can call her Apollonian to the core. (Despite a general and "remarkable lack of interest in the psychology of Forster's characters," critics have commented often on Adela's psychology.) Yet she has a mythic role that is easier to see than Fielding's. Perhaps because there are natural affinities between myth and psychology, readers have enough insight into Adela's inner self to see her as person and as mythic figure. Like Fielding, Adela is only ironically mythic, but we may follow Thomson when he sees her as mythic carrier of—but not human source of—the principle of evil. She is not responsible for evil: "Adela's moment of deepest evil when

16 Thomson, p. 18.
she believes she has been attacked by Aziz simply overtakes her. And her moment of vision, her moment of highest good, is simply given. She may appear worthy or unworthy, but she is never represented as criminally responsible for her evil act or as sublimely responsible for her good act. "Thomson's idea that the evil and the good of Adela are separate and transcendent—principles existing on their own—coincides with a Jungian interpretation of her actions. Although Forster treats her inadequacies more sardonically than he does Fielding's, he also allows an objective psychological probing of her self that he does not allow of Fielding. As a psychological study of a real person, Adela's portrayal provides plentiful data. But her characterization is also highly symbolic, even mythic. She is as close to type and archetype as she is to a realistic individual.

Taking Adela as an actual person, we find she is a product of what Nietzsche calls our intellectualized Alexandrian culture. "Plans had been a passion with her from girlhood," the author tells us (pp. 135-36). Thinking things through is her way of approaching a problem, even a problem involving illogical, irrational feeling. Notice that she suddenly comprehends the incompletion of her love for Ronny even though she plans to marry him, and feels "vexed rather than appalled" (p. 152). Although she tries earnestly to establish personal relations with people and to see "the real India" not as a frieze but as a spirit, she fails because her efforts are "from her heart" but do not "include her heart" (p. 245). She recognizes that her "instincts never help" her (p. 259). She is a step nearer than Ronny to completion as a human being because

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17 Thomson, p. 213.
she is at least aware of her deficiencies, even at the novel's beginning where she comprehends that married life with Ronny in Anglo-India will "fall like a shutter" between her and the Marabar as beautiful vision of the "force that lies behind colour and movement," the Dionysian. Variousely called Edith, Janet, or Violet in the manuscript versions, her final name admirably suits the dry, rational, spinsterish young lady who comes out to India to look over her fiancé "in context" before deciding to marry, the very British girl who "loves plans" and plans to love. This "queer, cautious" girl who "always said exactly what was in her mind" and who "enjoyed facing difficulties" is limned as primarily Apollonian.

Psychological interpretations of her Cave experience see her as confronting there the unknown aspects of her self, the dark Dionysian, passionate "living part of the personality" that "cannot be argued out of existence or rationalized into harmlessness."¹⁸ This is what Jung calls the Shadow, and its mythic dwelling place is the labyrinth or cave. The two, in fact, are virtually synonymous. "The Shadow, in fact, is a tight passage, a narrow door, whose painful constriction no one is spared who goes down to the deep well."¹⁹ Adela experiences this painful constriction as she starts down the eight-foot entrance tunnel to a Marabar Cave: "there was this shadow, or sort of shadow, down the entrance tunnel, bottling me up" (p. 193). A Jungian description of confrontation with the shadow sounds remarkably like Adela's experienc-

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¹⁸ Jung, p. 20.

¹⁹ Ibid., p. 21.
ing of the Marabar:

... one must learn to know oneself in order to know who one is. For what comes after the door is, surprise¬
 singly enough, a boundless expanse full of unprecedent-
ed uncertainty, with apparently no inside and no outside,
 no above and no below, no here and no there, no mine
 and no thine, no good and no bad. It is the world of
 water, where all life floats in suspension... where
 I experience the other in myself and the other-than-myself
 experiences me. 20

As Adela lies ill in the McBrydes' bungalow, submitting to having the
 cactus spines pulled out of her skin, her remarks show that she feels
 herself in this boundless expanse beyond the door of the shadow. By
 repeating, "In space things touch, in time things part," she seems to
 be reassuring herself that conventional space and time do operate in
 spacelessness and timelessness. Water imagery attends her recuperating
 period in a regular way: when she pushes out of her mind any hint that
 she may have been mistaken about the attack, she feels submerged in the
depth. When she makes effort to achieve brotherhood with her fellows by
 thinking Aziz innocent or by touching Ronny's or Mrs. Moore's hand, her
echo (the omen of evil) gets better and she rises to the surface: 21

"Ronny, he's innocent. I made an awful mistake."

"Well, sit down anyhow." He looked round the room,
 but only two sparrows were chasing one another. She
 obeyed and took hold of his hand. He stroked it and
 she smiled, and gasped as if she had risen to the sur¬
 face of the water, then touched her ear.

"My echo's better."

(p. 202)

Adela's part in the plot parallels remarkably closely the mythic confron-
tation with the Shadow, and is also uncannily accurate as Freudian or

20 Jung, pp. 20 ff.

21 See Thomson, p. 291, n.11, and Rising, p. 304 for this idea.
Jungian psychology. Adela does meet her unconscious in the Cave as she glimpses the Dionysian there. It is the unconscious and occult of her psyche that reveals ulterior truth to her there and in the courtroom when she receives an extrasensory message from Mrs. Moore, who is now dead and existing if at all in another sphere. Rising points out how it is the punkah wallah, that representative of unconscious humanity, who provides the link between Adela's conscious mind and her unconscious. Adela has brought up the collective unconscious, the mythic mind of all mankind, to the surface of conscious life in the courtroom.

Yet much of her mythicness is ironic. She could be called the archetypal Temptress because she supposedly tempts some male attacker; or she might be called a Quester-Hero(ine) because she is searching for her whole self; or we could see her as Outcast once she betrays the values of the British community, or even, for one moment of parody, a Goddess-Savior by virtue of Fielding's taking her into his carriage. Only ironically or incompletely does she fulfill any of these roles, however. For example, she is eligible on two counts to be a Temptress, who often "represents an alien culture" and is "a contributor to Man's fall and the agency deflecting him from the journey and the quest." Adela is alien to the Indian culture and she does destroy Aziz in his position

22 Forster claimed that he learned the "modern subconscious way" of looking at character from Proust, that he could not read Freud or Jung himself, that they had to be "filtered" to him (Writers at Work, p. 34). Yet Thomson points out parallels in Forster's thinking to Jung's: both considered modern man in search of a soul as the central issue of our century, both thought at first that individual personality was the goal of this search and later that universal spirit was this goal, and both early recognized myth and symbol as the best way to express this understanding (Thomson, p. 28).

23 Rising, pp. 304-07.

24 Burrows, p. 423.
at Chandrapore, deflecting both him and Fielding from their task of bridging the gap between peoples. But she is decidedly not seductive. Aziz, supposedly the tempted, is horrified when Fielding hints that she attracts him: "It disgraces me to have been mentioned in connection with such a hag," he cries (p. 241). "Adela's angular body and the freckles on her face were terrible defects in his eyes, and he wondered how God could have been so unkind to any female form" (p. 68).

Equally inadequate in her role as Quester-Heroine, Adela seeks but does not find. Her surname, of course, signifies her role as Quester. (That she is given a Christian name, incidentally, adds a bit of realism to her characterization, making her less of a universal type than Mrs. Moore, for example.) Adela Quested seeks more knowledge of her human self as she journeys to the Caves. That goal, if we interpret her mythic journey psychologically, is the totally integrated Self that existed before the syzygy of the World Parents was split and to which, in Jung's view, all humans seek a return. As myth, her journey also becomes the fall from innocence into experience, equivalent to the rites of passage from adolescence to adulthood. Such a fall necessitates "pain, sexual experience, and an awareness of evil or death in the world."25 Adela certainly goes through some such rite, becoming aware of evil in the world and going through pain and even sexual experience, if only vicariously. As she enters the Cave she is a sexual innocent, wondering with half her mind about marriage and with the other half about Aziz' physical beauty, his thick hair and fine skin and whether he has one wife or several. She emerges with her innocence shattered--not her physical

25 Burrows, p. 96.
innocence per se but her conception of it, for she is wounded psychically as well as physically (by the cactus spines as she runs down the hillside). Louise Dauner, in her Freudian interpretation, says the cactus wounds could symbolize phallic wounds, indicating that Adela does encounter sexual experience symbolically. Such bodily wounds, especially those that affect the sexual centers, symbolize initiation into experience. Life is made up, mythically, of three major phases, says Wheelwright: Innocence, Alienation (from Innocence) and Aspiration. Symbols of the stage of Alienation include "Chaos, the abyss, directionless wandering, and cacophony (producing deafness to, or detraction from, the Logos)." This last, of course, pertains closely to Mrs. Moore's loss of faith in the Word, but the other symbols of Alienation from Innocence describe Adela's experience. She suffers bodily wounds after sensing chaos and evil in the abyss, then runs frantically and directionlessly downhill afterward. "The idea of Hell is the idea of hopeless immersion in the kind of being that these symbols represent," says Wheelwright, and indeed, life has become a hell for Adela. She is alienated from everyone, cannot bear to be touched, and constantly hears the echo that represents evil. Its disturbing sound lets up only at moments when she wonders if Aziz may be innocent. Even after she publicly admits her mistake, her fall into experience is not completed, although she has changed enough so that she is "no longer examining life" but "being examined by it." "Why didn't I rush up to Aziz after the trial?" she asks


27 Ibid.
herself. "I can do this right, and that right; but when the two are put together they come wrong. That's the defect of my character. I have never realized it until now. I thought that if I was just and asked questions I would come through every difficulty" (p. 259). So she falls short of completing the archetypal process of completing her Self.

Nor does she become wholly any of her archetypal roles. For example, she becomes an Outcast for only a short time, cast out from the English colony after exonerating Aziz: "Miss Quested had renounced her own people. Turning from them, she was drawn into a mass of Indians of the shopkeeping class, and carried by them towards the public exit of the court. . . . Without part in the universe she had created, she was flung against Mr. Fielding" (pp. 231-32). Irritated because her helpless and unsafe state oblige him to protect her when he wants to be celebrating with Aziz, Fielding shouts at her: "Why don't you keep to your own people? . . . what have you been doing? . . . Playing a game, studying life, or what?" (p. 232). Adela's courage has gained her only animosity from both sides; both sides cast her out. But then a strange thing happens. Simply because she is beside Fielding in the carriage and because his students connect her with the Esmiss Esmoor whose name was chanted at the trial, she partakes of the deification Fielding's students crown him with. Adela's position changes rapidly, from loathed lady to near-goddess:

The carriage jerked into the main bazaar where it created some sensation. Miss Quested was so loathed in Chandrapore that her recantation was discredited, and the rumour ran that she had been stricken by the Deity in the middle of her lies. But they cheered when they saw her sitting by the heroic Principal (some addressed her as Mrs. Moore!) and they garlanded her to match him.

(p. 233)
As Goddess-Heroine Adela retains only a momentary glory. The author's treatment of her does not create mythic feeling in the sense that it claims our awe. Though she has heaped upon her head all the burdens for the Scapegoat of the English colony after she recants her charge against Aziz, she never attains Savior status, that is, the aura of a hero or heroine who "conquers evil and thus frees his people from destruction and death." Because Adela does conquer the evil of the echo and frees Aziz, she does qualify in a minor way as a Savior. But she frees Aziz to a life of only trivial accomplishment and Aziz, though a Scapegoat himself, fails utterly to become a Christ figure. No matter how we consider Adela's characterization, as real person or as mythic personage, we find it wanting. Failing to claim our total response as an archetypal figure, her characterization also fails to offer total psychological insight. We regard Adela with only the "remote interest" Trilling professes partly because she is only remotely interesting, and partly because our view of her is remote. Only at her moment of vision in the courtroom do we feel ourselves within her consciousness, and even then, as Thomson points out, there is a "strange objectification." Narrative method, of course, is one of Forster's Apollonian-induced ways of shaping his Dionysian material. Even though there is a semi-stream-of-consciousness review of Adela's mental and emotional processes at many points in the novel and especially frequently between the time of her Cave experience and the courtroom scene, the reader gains little understanding of a cause-and-effect sequence. It is as Thomson says--

28 Burrows, p. 225.

29 Thomson, p. 166. Thomson refers here to Forster's moments of vision in general, not specifically to Adela's moment of vision.
her acts of good or evil simply overtake her.

The characterization of Aziz is often praised as intensely mimetic, true to life. One Indian critic even sounds as though Aziz exists in the actual world, saying he would not allow Aziz to cross the threshold of his home. But Aziz too has archetypal aspects, though like Adela he never fits the pattern completely. Seeing him as Scapegoat for the sins of his people is not difficult. Certainly the British leap at him as their chance to unburden themselves of guilt for their less-than-human treatment of natives. The stereotyped White Anglo-Saxon Protestant McBryde reveals his class's stereotype of the dark-skinned, southern-born in his famous theory that places guilt on Aziz' shoulders without any logical evidence at all: "Mr. McBryde was shocked at [Aziz'] downfall, but no Indian ever surprised him, because he had a theory about climatic zones. The theory ran: 'All unfortunate natives are criminals at heart, for the simple reason that they live south of latitude 30. They are not to blame, they have not a dog's chance--'") (pp. 166-67).

Like many Scapegoats, Aziz is an Outsider, certainly from the English colony where he is snubbed by the ladies and excluded from even entering the Club, and also from primarily Hindu Indian society. Only in his own home or those of his Moslem friends does he belong. But like Adela and Mrs. Moore, and like Fielding in another sense, he is also a Quester-Hero foiled. As mythic purveyor of friendship between East and West he falters in what is one of the novel's most poignant

30 Nirad C. Chaudhuri, "Passage to and from India," in Shahane, p. 117. "Men of [Aziz'] type are a pest even in free India," he says, in an essay that considers the novel primarily a political and humanitarian tract.

31 Here Forster employs stereotypes of his own, a device he has rightfully been accused of using.
examples of the many kinds of failure Mrs. Moore mentions. Having felt an affinity with Mrs. Moore in the mosque, Aziz has taken a giant step toward real brotherhood between peoples. Sensing a less certain but equally hopeful friendliness with Fielding, he has, after the tea party, felt he could take another step in the same direction: he allows Fielding to see his wife's picture, an action unheard of between Moslem and unbeliever. Fielding realizes he "will not be intimate with this fellow or any other," but Aziz, more emotional, has rushed headlong into affection for the reserved Britisher. Because Aziz is native to India but not a Hindu, he is less defensive toward the British than he might be otherwise. His feeling himself a Moslem first and Indian second allows him this expenditure of emotion toward a nonIndian, and his naturally emotional nature encourages it too. (He accuses Fielding of logically weighing his emotions as if they were a sack of potatoes--p. 254.)

Later, after moving to the Hindu state of Mau and becoming disillusioned with all things British, he begins to feel more like a native of his own land. His friendly feeling for Fielding fades when he reads in one of Fielding's letters from England that Cyril has married an English girl, "someone whom you know." Aziz is immediately sure the girl is Adela. "Subsequent letters he destroyed unopened. It was the end of a foolish experiment. . . . 'I am an Indian at last,' he thought, standing motionless in the rain" (p. 293). Too illogical to understand from Fielding's (uncharacteristically) imprecise wording that Cyril has married Stella, Mrs. Moore's daughter, and not Adela, Aziz' affection for Fielding turns to bitterness. His poetry now loses its Islamic nostalgia and concerns such matters as the freeing of Indian women. As he settles into his post-Marabar provincial Indian attitude,
his poems become illogical, "like their writer." They now concern the
mother-land and bhakti (p. 293). Aziz' movement from Western sympathy
back to Eastern foretells his split with Fielding at the novel's close.
Not only does their reunion falter as an expression of affection between
them; it also serves as instigation for his explosive remarks against
the British imperialists: "Clear out, all you Turtons and Burtons. . . .
Clear out, clear out, I say. . . . India shall be a nation! No foreign-
ers of any sort! Hindu and Moslem and Sikh shall be one! . . . We
shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea . . ." (pp. 321-22).
It seems on the surface to be the official British presence in India that
prevents his and Fielding's brotherhood, for when they have driven "every
blasted Englishman into the sea," he says to Fielding, "you and I shall
be friends" (p. 322). His efforts to arrange the Marabar picnic, then,
were to have helped him become friends with the British in spite of the
official situation. That goal foiled, he postpones such friendship until
after his children's generation has driven out every last Englishman.
His Marabar plans have gone ironically awry. What was to have brought
love and understanding has brought divisiveness instead. His role has
been to bring down on his own head and on the heads of all Indians the
defensive scorn of the British "ruling race," so he is a Scapegoat but
never a Savior. As human link between East and West or between science
and the irrational, Aziz has proved a failure. We may attribute that
failure to his psychological shortcomings--he is overly emotional and
"incredibly inaccurate"--or to Forster's deliberate eviscerating of his
role as archetypal link between men.

Probably the most balanced blend of realism and symbolism found
in the whole range of Forster's characters is Mrs. Moore of A Passage
to India. Like Mrs. Wilcox of *Howards End*, Mrs. Moore carries the symbolism of the Unseen and of Love, but unlike Mrs. Wilcox she remains alive throughout most of her novel so that her influence is easier to sustain as tangible and real. For the lover of reality she is more richly satisfying than Mrs. Wilcox for several reasons. For one, we have a sketch of her person with ruddy face and white hair; we also see her from several narrative perspectives. From her son's view she seems a "globetrotter" who "does not signify"; from Adela's view she seems the source of goodness who alone can drive the evil of the echo back to its source; from the viewpoint of the Hindu crowd at the trial she seems to be Emiss Esmissor, a saint or goddess; and from Aziz' standpoint she seems an "Oriental" because she understands people through intuition instead of intellect; then, too, from the perspective of a narrator at times very close to her and at times both within and without her consciousness she appears to be a kindly old woman at the same time she seems mystic and capable of occult understanding. For another, her death is made


33 As an example of the very close narrative view, the narrator reports on Mrs. Moore's outwardly observable actions as she notices the wasp on the clothes peg: "'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). It seems to be both narrator and Mrs. Moore who notice the atmosphere of the night. Again, as she reconsiders her impression of Aziz at the mosque after Ronny calls him impertinent and swaggering: "Yes, it was all true, but how false as a summary of the man. The essential life of him had been slain" (p. 34). An example of the narrator's perspective as wider than Mrs. Moore's but at the same time intensely empathetic to hers, consider the comment as she leaves the novel in body if not in spirit. The narrator's voice takes on a timelessness: "She had come to that state where the horror of the universe and its smallness are both visible at the same time—the twilight of the double vision in which so many elderly people are involved." Then he brings in an excerpt from her own consciousness: "To be one with the universe! So dignified and simple. But there was always some little duty to be performed first, some new card to be turned up from the diminishing pack and placed, and while she was pottering about, the Marabar struck its gong" (pp. 207-08).
credible instead of mysterious or melodramatic because she displays well-known symptoms of hypertension and cardiac weakness: irritability, redness of face, difficulty in breathing. The other sudden deaths in Forster's fiction are less realistically prepared for; they leave the reader incredulous or mystified.

Nevertheless, with all her realistic portrayal, Mrs. Moore's precipitous change in behavior poses a question. Why, we ask, would a true Christian woman who believes in kindness, kindness, and more kindness become so disinterested in and withdrawn from human relationships? Why would a woman who has established a true bond of friendship with the native Aziz refuse to testify at his trial? Why would a mother whose first concern has been to see her children happily settled suddenly cease to care whether she even communicates with them, no matter how unnerving her own experience in a Marabar Cave? Rising answers these questions with a philosophic/theological explanation: Mrs. Moore withdraws from this physical world in order to live on a spiritual plane where another kind of reality supplies the Absolute. One could also answer by concentrating on Mrs. Moore's mythic functions. She is never so realistic as, say, a James heroine like Isabel Archer or Milly Theale. We never know Mrs. Moore's inner workings even though we sense her spirituality. We do not know what she likes for breakfast, her preferences in life's minor details, how her mind works on all matters, not even her exact age or detailed appearance. Her realism is sketched only briefly after all. But as mythic personage she looms as felt presence. Of course she is far closer to seeming actual than the frankly fleshless essence whose song in Forster's early story, "The Point of It," identifies it/him as Nietzsche's Dionysian Truly Existent Primal Unity: "I was before choice," he sings.
"I was before hardness and softness were divided. I was in the days when truth was love. And I am." By the time of *A Passage to India*, this same Dionysian spirit lives in the realistically drawn Mrs. Moore (as well as even more vividly in Godbole). Critical comments often align Mrs. Moore with traditional mythic characters or with symbolic value more general. K. W. Gransden, for instance, says she "has with her a hint of Oedipus at Colonnus," and Rex Warner calls her a "kind of Magna Mater."  

Rising points out how the moon consistently attends Mrs. Moore as "her symbol, perfectly expectable for an Earth Mother." Mrs. Moore's age makes her eligible to be a Grandmother figure, one whose name suggests her greater greatness than the Mother's at the same time it shows her affinity with the Great Mother. The archetypal Grandmother's image is often split: "Not infrequently the grandmother assumes the attributes of wisdom as well as those of a witch. . . . the grandmother's exalted rank transforms her into a 'Great Mother,' and it frequently happens that the opposites contained in this image split apart. We then get a good fairy and a wicked fairy, or a benevolent goddess and one who is malevolent and dangerous."  

The split in Mrs. Moore's personality that we find inexplicable and disconcerting if we view her as an actual

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36 Whitmont, p. 102.
person is thus not only explained but made inevitable if we see her as archetype. What we might consider schizophrenic in a real person is simply the nature of an archetype, because archetypes always embody antithesis.

Mrs. Moore feels "wrapped in the shawl of night" with the moon and stars over India, a comment that the narrator twice interjects. This feeling links her to the Mother archetype, for as Edward Whitmont says (after Jung): "We are all wrapped as her children in the mantle of this great Isis [the Mother archetype]." Many things that arouse devotion or feelings of awe, says Whitmont, can be mother-symbols, and Adela certainly feels devotion and awe toward Mrs. Moore. As Mother-archetype and Grandmother figure combined, Mrs. Moore, in fact, suggests the whole novel's design. The novel is conceived in the form of a mandala or yantra—as demonstrated by Wilfred Stone—and the mandala too can be a form of Mother archetype. Thus the Mother-archetype suggests the ongoingness of the design as well as defining Mrs. Moore's double nature.

Her irritability and lethargy can also be explained on mythic grounds, for as Dionysian representative she is naturally lethargic. Nietzsche says "we must realize that in the ecstasy of the Dionysian state, with its annihilation of the ordinary bounds and limits of existence, there is contained a lethargic element, in which are submerged all past personal experiences. It is this gulf of oblivion which separates the world of everyday from the world of Dionysian reality."  

37 Whitmont, p. 94.

38 See Stone, pp. 298-346, especially p. 317; Carl Jung says: "Because of the protection it implies, the magic circle or mandala can be a form of mother archetype" (p. 81).

39 Nietzsche, pp. 983-84.
As Mrs. Moore's black mood takes hold of her, she sits swinging her foot "sulkily" outside the Cave, presenting an image of the person recalled from Dionysian oblivion. "But as soon as we become conscious again of this everyday reality, we feel it as nauseating and repulsive; and an ascetic will-negating mood is the fruit of these states," says Nietzsche. In this mood Mrs. Moore resembles Hamlet, another literary figure who has attained mythic status and who penetrates into the true nature of things. Such Dionysian characters, says Nietzsche in speaking of Hamlet, "have perceived, but it is irksome for them to act; for their action cannot change the nature of things; the time is out of joint and they regard it as shameful or ridiculous that they should be required to set it right." Mrs. Moore's revulsion from love and sex, her inaction in the political, judicial world of Chandrapore, her rejection of human communication—all stem from her "insight into the terrible truth," which, like Hamlet's, preponderates "over all motives inciting to action, in Hamlet as well as in Dionysian man."

With a good deal of solidity of specification, Mrs. Moore's characterization nevertheless has archetypal, universal symbolic value that keeps her from being totally acceptable as an analyzable real person. Because she represents both aspects of Forster's split impulses, however, she is all the more valuable as fictional element. E. L. Brown articulates her impressiveness very well. Speaking of Mrs. Moore and Mrs. Wilcox of Howards End, he says they may impress some people as "genii which

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40 Nietzsche, pp. 984.
41 Ibid.
42 Ibid.
now and again swell out of the slender vases in which they are contained, and take on forms so huge and vague that the eye cannot focus on them as wholes. Perhaps genii which perform in this fashion are not the best material for fiction, but the reader who can focus on them as wholes will return to the scenes in which they reach their full grandeur in quest of a pleasure that is to be found in no other novels."

About Godbole a good deal more critical controversy rages. Is he the mediator between human and transcendent worlds, the "character equivalent of the Forsterian voice," as James McConkey calls him, or is he a mere parody of Hinduism, a caricature, as David Shusterman would have him?  In an article re-examining the "curious case of Professor Godbole," Shusterman refutes "Godbolean" advocates like McConkey, who claims Godbole is "the one most responsible for whatever sense of hope is granted" in the novel. Both sides have valid textual support for their views. Why must we decide between them? Godbole's characterization reflects again Forster's split. If we assess Godbole as a real person, we must confess his personality is puzzling, other-worldly, spiritually oriented, Dionysian in its irrationality (though not in any leaning toward bodily passion). Taken as an emblem, however, his characterization is part parody, part straightforward representation of all that Hinduism means: all-inclusiveness, nonmaterialism, enigma accepted, muddle and mystery mixed. As a real person, his "sly" glances, his in-

43 Brown, in O'Connor, p. 173.


45 McConkey, p. 86.
explicable inconsistencies, his "miscalculations" that result in serious complications for his acquaintances, all pose irreconcilable inconsonances with his sincere bhakti--his love for all things--and his truly humble attitude. Would it not be more profitable to see Godbole through a Manichean eyeglass than to put him into one ill-fitting category or another? Both the Godbolean advocates and his denigrators are correct, which is perfectly expectable in a novel of double vision. If we assume that Godbole is both joke and benefactor, both realistic and mythic, both parodic and straightforward, the epitome, in other words, of split artistic impulses, we may grasp how Forster's vision includes antitheses not only intellectual but artistic.

Shusterman, one critic who takes Godbole as a real person, sees him as the sly manipulator of events who withholds information about the Marabar and deliberately makes Fielding miss the picnic train. Forster's tongue must have been in his cheek, says Shusterman, when he described Godbole as dressed in a turban that looks like purple macaroni and socks with clocks that match the turban. The professor's appearance, claims Forster's narrator, "suggested harmony--as if he had reconciled the products of East and West, mental as well as physical, and could never be discomposed" (pp. 72-73). What are we to think of this assertion, seemingly made straightforwardly? The professor's appearance is indeed laughable to an audience of Western taste. And that he knows something he cannot or will not articulate is clear. About the Marabar, for instance, he simply does not give any information, though he claims to know all about the Caves. When asked to describe them for Fielding's tea-party guests, he claims it will be a great honor to do so, but then says only: "There is an entrance in the rock which you enter, and through the en-
trance is the cave" (p. 75). He denies any ornamentation or holiness about them with simple "No's." Then Aziz presses him further to describe the Caves:

"It will be a great pleasure." He forewent the pleasure, and Aziz realized he was keeping back something about the caves. . . . Handled subtly, he might regain control and announce that the Marabar Caves were--full of stalactites, perhaps; Aziz led up to this, but they weren't. (pp. 75-76)

But it is Aziz who feels Godbole is holding back something, not the authorial persona. The narrator supplies the insight that Aziz assesses Godbole as he does "because he often suffered from inhibitions himself" (p. 76). I find it impossible to say whether Forster is ironic as he claims Godbole's appearance suggests harmony or that he was keeping back something. Perhaps he is merely pointing to the gap between Eastern and Western ideals of taste, and allowing his created character to seem ridiculous to one who apprehends only the Western.

Even if we accept Shusterman's concept of Godbole as a realistic character, it is difficult to find the purposeful evil in him that Shusterman finds. Yet it is true that "Godbole's pujah did" make Fielding and Godbole late for the Marabar train. "The Brahman lowered his eyes, ashamed of religion. For it was so: he had miscalculated the length of a prayer" (p. 131). Are we to take at face value the statement that Godbole was ashamed of religion? Another instance, Fielding's "queer, vague talk with Professor Godbole" shortly after Aziz' arrest, poses more questions. When Godbole "politely" tells Fielding he hopes the Marabar expedition was "a successful one," and Fielding replies, "The news has not reached you yet, I see," and Godbole assures him it has, Fielding's perplexity is more than puzzle. It resolves into the anor-
mously important question of what constitutes good and evil. GODbole's definition of good and evil—and the credit or guilt for performing them—is exasperating to the rational Fielding, to whom the question is simply, "did he do it or not?" (p. 177). To GODbole, however, the matters needs no explaining, no facts; he simply accepts a "truth" far simpler, more profound:

"No, not exactly, please, according to our philosophy. Because nothing can be performed in isolation. All perform a good action, when one is performed, and when an evil action is performed, all perform it. To illustrate my meaning, let me take the case in point as an example.

"I am informed that an evil action was performed in the Marabar Hills, and that a highly esteemed English lady is now seriously ill in consequence. My answer to this is, that action was performed by Dr. Aziz." He stopped and sucked in his thin cheeks. "It was performed by you." Now he had an air of daring and of coyness. "It was performed by me." He looked shyly down the sleeve of his own coat. "... when evil occurs, it expresses the whole of the universe. Similarly when good occurs."

(pp. 177-78)

GODbole denies Fielding's claim that he has defined good and evil to be identical. "Oh, no, excuse me once again. Good and evil are different, as their names imply." He illustrates this point with his analogy about the presence or absence of God: "But in my own humble opinion, they [good and evil] are both of them aspects of my Lord. He is present in the one, absent in the other, and the difference between presence and absence is great, as great as my feeble mind can grasp. Yet absence implies presence, absence is not non-existence . . ." (p. 178). GODbole's attitude is expressed in his definitions, in his dress, in his song that wanders "in a maze of noises, none harsh or unpleasant, none intelligible," in his stories that "frequently culminate in a cow," in his contradictory shy glances and seemingly disinterested reserve. Such
an unordered cast of mind is disconcerting to Western readers, but all
Godbole's behavior becomes easier to comprehend if we see him as a my-
thic characterization.

Godbole's parallels to the mythic figure of the Wise Fool are numer-
ous and irrefutable. The Wise Fool, usually an old man, is found in
mythic art the world over and most often symbolizes the spiritual fac-
tor in life as Godbole symbolizes the spiritual in A Passage to India. 46
Godbole also fits the physical description of this figure as "grotesque
and gnomelike." 47 The Wise Fool (or Shaman) incorporates both wisdom
and trickiness, the contradictoriness that inheres in all archetypes.
Benita Parry sees this split in Godbole's characterization: "In part he
is a comic figure, the opaque word-spinner possessed of an inexplicable
prescience, a sort of wise fool. But he is also an expression of Hindu-
ism, embodying passive resistance, harmonious contradictions. He is a
series of characteristics rather than an individual, fulfilling Forster's
observation that 'there is scarcely anything in that tormented land
which fills up the gulf between the illimitable and the inane.' 48
Clearly, Godbole's archetypal likenesses are apparent even to those who
are not looking specifically for them.

Parry's placing Godbole as the "fulfillment of the gulf between
the illimitable and the inane" underscores another characteristic of
the Trickster or Wise Fool: "He is a forerunner of the savior, and, like
him, God, man, and animal at once. He is both subhuman and superhuman,
a bestial and a divine being, whose chief and most alarming characteris-

tic is his unconsciousness. . . . Although he is not really evil, he does the most atrocious things from sheer unconsciousness and unrela-
tedness." Here we find explanation for Godbole's seeming malicious-
ness and lack of responsibility. The Trickster or Wise Fool as fore-
runner to the Savior is "on the one hand superior to man because of his superhuman qualities and on the other hand inferior to him because of his unreason and unconsciousness." Just so with Godbole. He is like Mercurius, a typical trickster figure combining a fondness for sly jokes and malicious pranks with the other half-divine side of his dual nature. Godbole is not only the sly prankster but also the agent of Mrs. Moore's "completion," and also the cause of Aziz' and Fielding's final coming together, which turns out to be completion deferred.

The hope we are offered by Godbole's efforts as Savior, moreover, remains as unrealized as any expectation in this book of nebulous asser-
tions. Unlike the Wise Fool in King Lear whose profound meaning becomes apparent to his audience, Godbole demonstrates not complete wisdom but deficient communication--his esoteric mind encompasses all that is un-
known to the Moslem or Western mind--and incomplete spiritual power. He cannot impel the stone, for example, to that place where completeness may be found for Mrs. Moore and the wasp. "He was 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). His love for all matter, bhakti, works miracles--almost. "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,

49 Jung, p. 263.
50 Ibid., p. 264.
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'" (pp. 290-91). Godbole's spiritual force can bring some
things to the place of completion, but he is not God, he is only imitating God, and he is thus incomplete. In the long run his solution to
man's problems is inadequate. The failure of Godbole's Hinduism to effec
t a permanent reconciliation after the "baptism" in the tank waters reveals that it is the values of his society that are wanting. (Burrows says the function of the Wise Fool is to point up the values that are wanting in a society.51) Even though bhakti overtakes momentarily the
participants baptized together in the tank, the "divisions of daily life"
return. Godbole's Hinduism is almost an answer, as Rising says.52 God
bole is Ancient Night; "he eludes the structures the Western minds have
erected to accommodate reality to themselves. His affinities are with
eternity, not with time, with the one, not with the many, and in him,
the Westerners come upon something to which they are unaccustomed and
of which they are somehow afraid."53 If Godbole as Hinduism's intelli
gen but enigmatic representative were the Way and the character equivalent of the Forsterian voice, the novel would not take on the reverbera
tions it does. It would satisfy instead of tantalize. Godbole's effect as a fictional element is split; thus he rightfully belongs in a work
of split effects.

Forster's characters, then, are admittedly split into realistic

51 Burrows, p. 310.
52 Rising, p. 327.
53 Wilde, p. 129.
and symbolistic categories, within which the major characters have attributes of both everyday reality and myth. Francis Gillen has spoken of how the narrator (in *Howards End*) alerts the reader to "modulation between the ideal and realistic visions." The characters of *A Passage to India* serve similarly. They force the reader to ponder which realm is the more real. The characters are, as Trilling says, "of sufficient size for the plot; they are not large enough for the story--and that indeed is the point of the story." But this imbalance only points up the contrasts of time and transcendence in which Forster deals. These characters that usually take their proper places against the backdrop now loom large as "felt presences." They become, as McDowell says, "heightened or foreshortened as they dramatize his intuitive realizations." Thus they seem part of the actual, mundane world that shrinks to insignificance against a larger mythic reality. Their mundane insufficiency makes them not esthetic failures but enhancement of that awesome, enigmatic metaphysical reality at the center of the novel's yantralike design, the reality "there's never room enough to draw."

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54 Gillen, 143.
55 Trilling, p. 147.
56 Bradbury, in Stallybrass, p. 132.
57 McDowell, pp. 134-35.
58 This is the remark Ansell makes to Rickie in *The Longest Journey* to describe the yantralike square-within-a-circle-within-a-square design that he draws to illustrate "reality." From E. M. Forster, *The Longest Journey* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1961), p. 27.
CHAPTER FOUR
THE SPLIT IN STYLE: POETIC AND SATIRIC

The characters mean more than what they say; the plot suggests more than is actually there. . . . His horizons expand beyond the limits he sets for them. His writing, in fact, is poetical, not realistic.

--Rex Warner

Except for the Marabar Caves perhaps no element in A Passage to India has caused more controversy than Forster's two ways of handling language. Not only the substance of the novel but also his manner of expressing that substance is distinctly split. That there are parallels between Forster's domestic comedy and Jane Austen's is commonly agreed; that the gap between Forster's poetry and his realism remains unhealed is equally recognized. Francis Gillen has suggested, however, that the dual narrative modes of Howards End mediate between the ideal and realistic worlds of the novel, and thus are not a flaw but a functioning, purposeful device. I suggest that in A Passage to India these same two modes— the symbolic or mythic and the satiric or realistic— persist to buttress Forster's implicit image of a split reality. For Forster as for Marshall McLuhan the medium is the massage—and also the message. As a symbolist writer, Forster makes his style incorporate meaning. He advocates art for art's sake and uses style as meaning. His two styles or modes refer subliminally to the chasm he sees between real and ideal.

In a work of symbolist orientation like A Passage to India the
aim is not to state meaning definitely and clearly but to approach it from several angles, to surround it with a penumbra of indefiniteness, to "tell the truth but tell it slant," as Emily Dickinson says it. But in *A Passage to India* there is also another aim: to satirize the social and political world of the novel. For satire we want not indefiniteness but sharp delineation. Thus in *A Passage to India* we find both modes of language, and they operate to underscore again and again, without explicitly saying so, that the everyday and the mythic worlds exist separately and do not always fuse.

To the extent that the language of *A Passage to India* says explicitly or even ironically what it is intended to say, it is discursive, nonpoetic, and often satiric. But to the extent that this language extends and intensifies meaning by such means as image, rhythm, sound, and metaphor, it is poetic--it works as lines in poetry do to evoke feelings that anticipate or reinforce statement. These devices of language--and particularly in the case of *A Passage to India* the two disparate narrative modes--create unstated levels of meaning that remain unarticulated because they are indefinable.

Because much of Forster's feeling about the world, his "message," is difficult to define and possibly incomplete or even ambiguous, language that expresses feeling without being analytical is the most suitable mode of expression. This novel's "truth" is difficult of access not only because its events are inconclusive but also because its language creates levels of meaning beyond the obvious. This kind of language, what Wheelwright calls "fully expressive language," is able to "get at Something More beyond anything that is actually known
or conceived."¹ This is the problem Forster faced in writing Passage: to articulate Something More beyond anything that is actually known or conceived, something inarticulable about which perhaps even the author's own conviction is incomplete or uncertain.

Tensive, fully expressive language gets at something more in implicit, often nonrational, impressionistic ways. It is living language, expressing more adequately than ordinary prose the writer's radical vision, the "living form of his thoughts," as Wheelwright says it. "Not that language is ever quite adequate to the changing contours of thought," Wheelwright admits; "its triumph is brief at best."² Nevertheless, language with poetic dimensions can come far closer than plain prose to expressing that Something More that hovers over A Passage to India.

Since this novel is meant to create an impression more than to enforce an argument, we may find it especially important to discover the ways this impression is imparted. A symbolist work like A Passage to India finds response in the reader's experience to complement its meaning. The reader's response, of course, depends partly on his own background and experience, but it depends too on how the novel's substance is presented to him. "Perhaps truth, like certain precious metals, is best presented in alloys," suggests Wheelwright.³ The truth of A Passage to India is presented in alloys. The satire and straightforward realism of one of its narrative styles needs no analyzing. But the symbolist, indefinite ways of expression, the suggestion rather

¹ Wheelwright, Metaphor and Reality, p. 172. Subsequent references to Wheelwright in this chapter will all be to Metaphor and Reality.

² Ibid., p. 17

³ Ibid., p. 173.
than statement and the presence rather than philosophy that constitute its second narrative mode and that is so well suited to this particular book, must be examined so that we may see how it contrasts with the realistic style to produce disparity.

To examine the poetic functions of language in *A Passage to India* it may be well to categorize the elements, although of course in practice no such division exists. Merely to facilitate examination, however, let us consider first the various elements of style like diction and syntax, then other components in the tensive relations of this medium, then the effect of the two narrative modes.\(^4\)

Beginning with purely verbal idiosyncracies because they are easily isolated, I should like to look at the first chapter of *A Passage to India*. It is only two-and-a-half pages long, yet it has all the characteristics of the novel to come, both in its three-part structure and in its language. We find, first of all, that critical complaints about the "tiredness" of the prose result more from rhythm and syntactic arrangement than from the diction itself, although Forster does use negative or energyless diction to underscore these qualities when they inhere in the things being described. The diction describing man's force, for example, is lackluster compared to the words portraying the natural world. Thus already in the first two and a half pages, Forster's very word choice points to one of the novel's implications: that man's at-

\(^4\) I should like to follow Ian Watt's pattern for a "multidimensional stylistic analysis" as he examines the first paragraph of Henry James's *The Ambassadors*. He first notes objectively-observable idiosyncracies of diction and syntax, then relates them to their function in the paragraph, to their effects on the reader, to character traits of Strether, and "ultimately to the philosophical qualities of James's mind." See Edward P. J. Corbett, ed., *Rhetorical Analyses* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 42 and p. 184.
tainments are as nothing compared to the power and strength of natural forces like sun and sky.

"Except for the Marabar Caves—and they are twenty miles off—the city of Chandrapore presents nothing extraordinary." There we have the opening sentence of A Passage to India. In this one sentence the author has piqued the interest of readers by suggesting there is something extraordinary only twenty miles away, yet he has done it by making a negative statement. This negative way of making positive suggestion typifies Forster's style. He goes on to say that Chandrapore, a "negligible," un-extraordinary town, is "edged rather than washed by the river Ganges." "Edged" is a hesitant word, not so strong as others he could have used like "bordered" or "flanked," even more delicate than "washed." Such tentative touches complement the negatives describing lower Chandrapore where the natives live: "there are no bathing steps," for example, "because the Ganges happens not to be holy here." Negatives like "no," "not," and "never" occur often in Forster's prose, and words suggesting tentativity like "perhaps" are among his favorites too. Whether the Ganges "happens not to be holy here" because of capricious Hindu reasoning or because of some more solid reason, Forster declines to say. But he casts a sardonic glance at the myriad complicated rules of organized Hinduism. The satiric touch is light but there.

Whatever is not delineated in out-and-out negative about lower Chandrapore is said to have little value: the streets are "mean," the

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5 Frank Kermode makes this point. See Kermode in Bradbury, Collection, p. 9. See also Susanne Langer, Feeling and Form (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1953), pp. 242-43: "In literature the words, 'no, 'not, 'never,' etc., occur freely; but what they deny is thereby created. In poetry there is no negation, only contrast."
temples "ineffective," the few fines houses "hidden away in gardens or down alleys whose filth deters all but the invited guest." Whatever zest for decoration did thrive here earlier had stopped in the eighteenth century, "nor was it ever democratic." Today there is "no" painting and "scarcely any" carving in the bazaars. The one sentence that moves ahead without negativity, subordination, or periodicity tells the single sturdy, progressive note about Chandrapore, and that has long since passed: "Chandrapore was never large or beautiful, but two hundred years ago it lay on the road between Upper India, then imperial, and the sea, and the fine houses date from that period." Here we have an affirmative compound sentence that includes only one negative term, "never," but it affirms a past splendor only.

When the narrative focus shifts away from the river to inland Chandrapore, sentences proceed in affirmative order and negatives disappear. "Inland, the prospect alters" (p. 8). Things seem to be looking up, the tone suggests. Here houses "stand," land "sinks," then "rises"--positive verbs, in active voice for the most part. Inland, "Chandrapore appears to be a totally different place," the guiding voice states, and its diction and tone support statement. Three succeeding sentences then begin with "It is," thereby asserting a state of being, of existence in the here and now: "It is a city of gardens. It is no city, but a forest sparsely scattered with huts. It is a tropical pleasaunce washed by a noble river." The negative, "no city," instead of disparaging the city, shows the superiority of forest-like inner Chandrapore to the lower part of town at the river's edge where only mud survives. Here the river is noble and it "washes" instead of "edges." Words like "noble" and "pleasaunce" have positive connotations.
Here lush tropical growth supersedes the sluggish mud of lower Chandrapore. Mango and peepul trees "rise"; nourished by plentiful water from ancient tanks, they "burst out of stifling purlieus," "seeking light and air." They "soar," they have "more strength than man or his works," they "build a city for the birds." They "glorify." The diction carries us into a different and higher world from the one at the river's edge where mud, monotony, filth, and execrscence remain the only indestructibles.

But the diction alters again as the focus shifts to the rise where "the ruling British live and work." Satire creeps in, pointing up the gaps between native and British Chandrapore. The British have to be "driven down" to the lower city to "acquire disillusionment" (p. 8). The narrator turns again to negatives and employs a touch of parody to describe the civil compound on the hill. "As for the civil station itself, it provokes no emotion. It charms not, neither does it repel." The Biblical echo from Matthew (6:28) brings about effects that may vary according to the reader's background. It contrasts the British civil station, full of rules and strictures, with the naturally beautiful lilies of the field that neither toil nor spin. The civil station is everything the lilies of the field are not--it is a worker-ant compound. It spreads nets, administers justice, preens itself. Forster thus subtly implies that the British in India do all these things. So ingrained is our familiarity with the Biblical source that most of us comprehend only subliminally that the ruling British are like Solomon arrayed in all his glory.

After the dryness of the "sensibly planned" civil station with its mundane Western necessities, its roads intersecting at right angles,
everything neat and in place with no curves to surprise, the narrative manner switches again to describe Chandrapore's wider setting. The tone becomes more profound and sensitive to mystery, describing the vividly colorful physical setting with active verbs and chromatic adjectives:

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 an 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)

This color-sensitive poetic tone merges into a truly mythic voice to conclude the chapter with a version of the mythical marriage between sky-father and earth-mother. The prose is powerful, full of unexpected action in the verbs and solid strength in the nouns and adjectives:

The sky settles everything—not only climates and seasons but when the earth shall be beautiful. By herself she can do little—only feeble outbursts of flowers. But when the sky chooses, glory can rain into Chandrapore bazaars or a benediction pass from horizon to horizon. The sky can do this because it is so strong and so enormous. Strength comes from the sun, infused in it daily; size from the prostrate earth. No mountains fringe on the curve. League after league the earth lies flat, heaves a little, is flat again. 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)

The strength of the diction not only has definable meaning for us (that sky, earth, and natural forces have far more energy and importance than man and his efforts) but also makes this excerpt mythic. This diction has the strength to make the retelling of the mythic story a "resurrected reality" for the reader, overpowering what small sense there is of a
narrative personality explaining the phenomenon. A count shows active verbs far outnumbering passives and copulas in all paragraphs of the first chapter, but the ratio is especially high in this last myth-bearing paragraph. If we line up the verbs from the first paragraph against those of the second, we find less verbal energy in the first describing lower Chandrapore. Of the sixteen active verbs in the first paragraph, twelve are of negative or passive cast like trails, shut out, deters, lay, stopped, shrinking. The second paragraph describing inland and official Chandrapore employs twenty-three active verbs, almost all of them defining action or having positive connotations: rises, stand, nourish, seeking, build, soar, glorify, acquire. The diction of the last two paragraphs describing the beauty of the overarching sky and the mythic infusion of strength from the sky into earth is replete with action and color. Verb count for the last paragraph shows six copulas, ten active verbs, and one passive verb; even this verb is passive in form only for it describes violent action: the Marabar fists and fingers "are thrust up." The complementary adjectives and participles also suggest action or power: the sky is "strong and enormous," the endless expanse of the sky "interrupted." Even the participial "infused" has strong connotations. Nor are the ten active verbs active in grammatical function only; they describe movement or decision: do, settles, rain, chooses, pass, do, comes, infringe, lies flat, heaves. And the land itself, the natural elements of the universe like landscape and sky, come alive on the page with diction of great power, forming a near-mythmic identification of the words with the things they describe. This mythic marriage between sky-father and earth-mother seems more like a reality than like a fairy tale; it is true myth, a resurrected reality,
and the diction makes it so. The vitality in word choice makes the
same progression as does the narrative: from lowly but indestructible
river's edge Chandrapore to inland, middle-class, momentarily flourishing Chandrapore, to the eternal land and sky overarching all the skies, to the mythic origins of earthly life—description gathers strength from the increasingly powerful evocation. This short introductory chapter demonstrates a use of language in which diction, to mention only one component, poetically reinforces meaning.

A paragraph from Chapter X illustrates this same principle.

Chapter X is a one-page chapter intervening between the first and second parts of Fielding's visit to the sick Aziz. At first Fielding finds his visit disappointing; then he goes outside to find his horse and notices the increasing heat. Going back into Aziz' bungalow, he reaches a closer rapport with Aziz during the second part of his call so that Aziz, at least, rests secure in the intimacy he and his new friend have found. In the meantime, the description of the oncoming Hot Weather and the philosophic links between it and the narrator's thought (that man and his doing are insignificant when held against elemental forces) has entered the narrative. The placement of this one-page chapter intensifies its salience. More than a descriptive interlude because of its placement, the chapter suggests thematic meaning, perhaps that the efforts of all men, including Fielding and Aziz, to achieve brotherhood will amount to little. Context and placement side, the chapter's internal content not only declares that the approaching Hot Weather will upset people; it also creates a similar upsetting effect in the reader, who is forced by the diction to feel the Hot Weather himself. Notice how reader-response is brought about by language that evokes feeling as
well as intellectual assent:

The heat had leapt forward in the last hour, the street was deserted as if a catastrophe had cleaned off humanity during the inconclusive talk. Opposite Aziz' bungalow stood a large unfinished house belonging to two brothers, astrologers, and a squirrel hung head-downwards on it, pressing its belly against the burning scaffolding and twitching a mangy tail. It seemed the only occupant of the house, and the squeals it gave were in tune with the infinite, no doubt, but not attractive except to other squirrels. More noises came from a dusty tree, where brown birds creaked and floundered about looking for insects; another bird, the invisible coppersmith, had started his "ponk-ponk." 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. Nor are the lower animals of England concerned about England, but in the tropics the difference is more prominent, the inarticulate world is closer at hand and readier to resume control as soon as men are tired. 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." They felt that they could not do their work, or would not be paid enough for doing it. The space between them and their carriages, instead of being empty, was clogged with a medium that pressed against their flesh, the carriage cushions scalded their trousers, their eyes pricked, domes of hot water accumulated under their headgear and poured down their cheeks. Salaaning feebly, they dispersed for the interior of other bungalows, to recover their self-esteem and the qualities that distinguish them from each other.

(p. 114)

The emotive effect on the reader is obvious. Andrew Deacon, in his charge that Forster too readily asserts significances he cannot or does not create, complains of the prose in this passage as tired; but it is the overall rhythm rather than the words expressing action—the verbs—that seem to lack energy. Deacon rightly congratulates Forster on the "obviously very individual writing" and notes that the verbs have "vividness and vigour"; some of them follow: leapt, cleaned off, stood, hung, pressing, twitching, creaked, floundered, desires, decides, clogged, pressed, scalded, pricked, poured. Nevertheless, Deacon questions the
tone and purpose of the evocations and finds the "glib generalizations" of the sentences in the middle of this paragraph to be "a rather fanciful excuse for Forster to express a sense of the pointlessness of human effort." Yet surely one of the novel's themes, if we can condense a feeling about its import into something so semantically exact as a theme, is the insignificance of human endeavor in the face of the immense indifference of the natural world and perhaps of the metaphysical as well.

The narrative voice declares as much when Mrs. Moore prepares to leave India after her disillusioning visit to the Marabar:

She had come to that state where the horror of the universe and its smallness are both visible at the same time—the twilight of the double vision in which so many elderly people are involved. If this world is not to our taste, well, at all events there is Heaven, Hell, Annihilation—one or the other of those large things, that huge scenic background of stars, fires, blue or black air. All heroic endeavour, and all that is known as art, assumes that there is such a background, just as all practical endeavour, when the world is to our taste, assumes that the world is all. But in the twilight of the double vision, a spiritual muddledom is set up for which no high-sounding words can be found; we can neither act nor refrain from action, we can neither ignore nor respect Infinity.

(pp. 207-08)

A respect for infinity is one of Forster's lifelong interests. He asks the reader in a narrative aside in Howards End not to think the less of Margaret Schlegel for seeing hints of infinity in the King's Cross railway station, and Margaret is, of all his characters with the possible exception of Rickie Elliott, closest to Forster's own habits of mind. A twilight of the double vision, a spiritual muddledom that can neither ignore nor respect infinity, is in his opinion a devastating state of

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7 Howards End, p. 12.
mind; this quality is what makes the Marabar Caves so dreadful—they "rob Infinity of its vastness" (p. 150). To the author personally, and here he seems to be speaking in his own voice about rather than with Mrs. Moore, heroic endeavor and art that assume the huge scenic background of stars and fires are man's highest attainments. Here we have a novel depicting a superior woman who actually lives by the principle of love she believes in. This woman falls into despair and—even worse—spiritual muddledom. This same novel also reveals that the finest example of tolerant, rational man and of emotional, affectionate man, Fielding and Aziz, are unable to cement a lasting bond of brotherly love. Is it not plausible then to say that this novel suggests that man's best efforts are insignificant, even doomed to failure in the world as it is here and now? And if this suggestion is one of the novel's themes, why is not a prose rhythm that expresses tiredness and flatness an effective device for supporting this meaning poetically?

In the central lines of the excerpt on which Deacon focuses his complaint, little action inheres in the verbs. Copulas and verbs that locate activity in a mental, not a physical, continuum predominate: matters, decides, desires, minds, are, is, resume control. But action in Forster is not predominantly mental; the earthy, physical side of his thought processes finds expression in earthy, physical diction that describes actual happenings. Action and power inhere in the words depicting the phenomenon of heat, for example. When he writes of mental reactions, he chooses verbs like decides, matters, desires, that make clear the action is at that point mental. When he writes of physical phenomena, he chooses words that denote power and movement. The contrast between the two kinds of diction is striking. This disparity
between kinds of diction and between diction and rhythm (in some cases) creates a tension, a gap, suggesting uncertainty or incompleteness.

In the excerpt above, this contract exacerbates the reader's apprehension of the enervating effect of the Hot Weather on men's minds, and exaggerates the hopelessness of human wishes. This enervated thought need not necessarily be Forster's—though it probably is—any more than the thought of the narrator of "The Liar" can be attributed to Henry James or that of Brighton Rock to Graham Greene. Instead, the enervated rhythm and diction of the passage, whether consciously or unconsciously devised (and Forster would say unconsciously, that few realize how little a writer is conscious of such things), are just one part of a complex poetic technique that supports and intensifies the impression the novel imparts.

In many other instances we find the same phenomenon: energyless diction and rhythm support tired, cynical thought, but the elemental realities—land, sky, heat, nature's inevitabilities—are made live by powerful word choice. And the disparity suggests meaning. Consider the following excerpts, noting their rhythm as well as their wording:

. . . walking fatigued him as it fatigues everyone in India except the newcomer. There is something hostile in that soil. It either yields and the foot sinks into a depression, or else it is unexpectedly rigid and sharp, pressing stones or crystals against the tread. (p. 18)

Everyone was cross or wretched. It was as if irritation exuded from the very soil [Irritation is suggested in the short, interrupted sentences]. Could one have been so petty on a Scotch moor or an Italian alp? (p. 78)

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8 When the Paris Interviewers asked Forster whether he planned "technical clevernesses" like the wasp motif in Passage, he offered a disclaimer: "People will not realize how little conscious one is of these things. . . . If critics could only have a course on writers' not thinking things out—a course of lectures . . ." Writers at Work, p. 34.
[India] 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)

Perhaps life is a mystery, not a muddle; they [Adela and Fielding] could not tell. Perhaps the hundred Indias which fuss and squabble so tiresomely are one, and the universe they mirror is one. They had not the apparatus for judging. (p. 263)

The earth and sky were insanely ugly, the spirit of evil again strode abroad. (p. 236)

. . . [Aziz] watched the Marabar Hills recede, and saw again, as the provinces of his kingdom, the grim, untidy plain, the frantic and feeble movements of the buckets, the white shrines, the shallow graves, the suave sky, the snake that looked like a tree. (p. 160)

Men yearn for poetry though they may not confess it; they desire that joy shall be graceful and infinity have a form and India fails to accommodate them. The annual helter-skelter of April, when irritability and lust spread like a canker, is one of her comments on the orderly hopes of humanity. (p. 210)

This last excerpt, with its singsong rhythm in "joy shall be graceful and infinity have a form and India fails to accommodate them," undergirds meaning with rhythm: both declare hopelessness, one verbally, the other subliminally. Similarly, the "hundred fissures in the Indian soil," the "hundred voices of India," phrases repeated several times in the course of the book with "hundred" used so casually it might almost be "myriad," suggests that India's divisions are endlessly numerous and permanent. Man is small when set against the limitless backdrop of this disorganized but powerful land. The thumping, short Anglo-Saxon line of four stresses echoes in lines like "the spirit of evil again strode abroad," driving home the impression that natural India holds ineluctable power. Indefinite rhythm that tapers off into soft consonants and amorphous stresses, like "She is not a promise, only an appeal," creates the penumbra of indefiniteness that suggests the opposite—that India, though powerful, has a hundred fissures, perhaps all of them of differ-
ing degrees of shapelessness and obscurity.

In addition to rhythm, we find imagery that reinforces semantic statement in this striking figure of irritability and lust spreading "like a canker." This image engraves itself on the sensibility here in prose as it would in poetry. Other images sound as though Forster pays close attention to Wordsworth's dictum to use everyday language instead of "poetic diction." Note the physicality and mundaneness of the following images:

The country was stricken and blurred. Its houses, trees and fields were all modelled out of the same brown paste, and the sea at Bombay slid about like broth against the quays. . . . With Egypt the atmosphere altered. The clean sands, heaped on each side of the canal, seemed to wipe off everything that was difficult and equivocal, and even Port Said looked pure and charming in the light of a rose-grey morning. (p. 265)

Electric fans hummed and spat, water splashed on to screens, ice clinked, and outside these defences, between a greyish sky and a yellowish earth, clouds of dust moved hesitatingly. (p. 210)

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. (p. 148)

The faint, indescribable smell of the bazaars invaded her, sweeter than a London slum, yet more disquieting: a tuft of scented cotton wool, wedged in an old man's ear, fragments of pan between his black teeth, odorous powders, oils—the scented East of tradition, but blended with human sweat as if a great king had been entangled in ignominy and could not free himself, or as if the heat of the sun had boiled and fried all the glories of the earth into a single mess. (p. 231)

Meaning can be drawn from the medium, and the medium here is a blend of word and idea. The last quotation is especially representative of this blend in Forster's art. He reinforces the meaning he has stated in abstract terms—a great king tangled in ignominy—with a concrete analogue: the sun boiling and frying all the glories of the earth into a single mess. Many of his images have this everyday solidity about them. Others
are more esoteric. The major, in fact, dominant or "presiding," image of the novel is that of the Marabar Caves. It overrides all other impressions with the Caves' prime quality: ominousness. Yet the author has taken pains to impress their interior beauty on the reader too. Not only as myth-maker but as poet, Forster endows this rocky, inorganic, "nasty little cosmos" with a living presential reality by means of words. His technique deserves emphasis here as poetic imagery even though the antithetical beauty and ugliness of the Caves are both necessary to a discussion of the novel's myth.

Note the differences in the kinds of diction describing the weird exterior and the lovely interior of the Marabar. From the outside, they appear "astonishing," "without the proportion that is kept by the wildest hills elsewhere," "uncanny," "older than all spirit," "unspeakable," "extraordinary." They are also completely devoid of attributes, claims the narrator: "Nothing, nothing attaches to them" (p. 124). The rock in which they are enclosed shoots "up in a single slab" from the alienating brown plain. But to describe the Marabar Cave's interior, words of straightforward description emphasizing the Marabar's grotesqueness give way to figures of speech highly poetic, enhancing the metaphor of the two match flames. Surely this is some of the most poetic language ever to come from a prose pen:

There is little to see, and no eye to see it, until the visitor arrives for his five minutes, and strikes a match. Immediately another flame rises in the depths of the rock and moves toward the surface like an imprisoned spirit: the walls of the circular chamber have been most marvel-polished. The two flames approach and strive to unite, but cannot, because one of them breathes air, the other stone. A mirror inlaid with lovely colours divides the lovers, delicate stars of pink and grey interpose, exquisite nebulae, shadings fainter than the tail of a comet or
the midday moon, all the evanescent life of the granite, only here visible. Fists and fingers thrust above the advancing soil—here at last is their skin, finer than any covering acquired by the animals, smoother than windless water, more voluptuous than love. The radiance increases, the flames touch one another, kiss, expire. The cave is dark again, like all caves.

(p. 125)

It is largely these poetic figures that makes the Caves a direct presentation of reality to the reader as they affect his senses without intervening intellectual process. Whatever philosophic meaning one draws from the description, the loveliness of the interior and its emotional import play an effective part in creating the novel's ambiguous atmosphere. The impression it creates, disregarding its argument even though to my mind the two coincide, includes both the weirdness of the insanely proportioned exterior and the beauty of the mysterious, marvelous interior. Incredible beauty, bizarre ugliness, hopeless division—these qualities predominate in the impression of the Marabar—and indeed of all India—but as a symbolist who includes all of reality in his presentation, Forster must make room for the incredibly beautiful too.

As the Marabar Hills move toward Fielding "like a queen," when the "cool benediction of the night descends," another image of exquisite loveliness suggests the beauty beyond the Caves' forbidding surface. Adela's friezelike vision of India as "a pageant of birds in the early morning, brown bodies, white turbans, idols whose flesh was scarlet or blue," colorful and moving, provides another example of India's beauty presented in poetic image. Another is in Aziz' impression of the Indian night as he sits before his mosque, an impression more abstract than most of Forster's poetic images, but nonetheless one that affects the senses of sight, hearing, smell:
The ground fell away beneath him towards the city, visible as a blur of trees, and in the stillness he heard many small sounds. On the right, over in the club, the English community contributed an amateur orchestra. Elsewhere some Hindus were drumming—he knew they were Hindus, because the rhythm was uncongenial to him, and others were bewailing a corpse—he knew whose, having certified it in the afternoon. There were owls, the Punjab mail . . . and flowers smelt deliciously [sic] in the station-master's garden. But the mosque—that alone signified, and he returned to it from the complex appeal of the night . . . (p. 19)

On that same night, India's appeal for Mrs. Moore is made live for the reader even as India's strangeness breaks in on its beauty. Gazing at the Ganges, Mrs. Moore says: "'What a terrible river! what a wonderful river!'" and sighed. 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. The women discussed whether they would wait for the change or not, while the silence broke into patches of unquietness and the mare shivered" (p. 32). Such imagery impresses both beauty and disquiet directly, affectively.

Other poetic techniques contribute to the way language allows the reader to apprehend the novel's quality of experience through senses other than intellect. Perhaps Mrs. Moore's sensations at the Mara-bar provide the best example of poetic prose as affective technique. Here the prose is singsong in its rhythm and it employs other devices—onomatopoeia, alliteration, symbol, and metaphor to enhance the cynical intellectual content of her first response to her experience. The reader is prepared by the poetic language for the assault on his own sensibilities that Mrs. Moore's dreadful sensations produce:
... the echo began in some indescribable way to undermine her hold on life. Coming at a moment when she chanced to be fatigued, it had managed to murmur, "Pathos, piety, courage—they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value. If one had spoken vileness in that place, or quoted lofty poetry, the comment would have been the same--"ou-boum." ... it would amount to the same, the serpent would descend and return to the ceiling.  

(pp. 149-50)

The bored rhythm as in "Coming at a time when she chanced to be fatigued" emphasizes Mrs. Moore's bored, cynical mood. Equally germane to the way his whole scene affects the reader, perhaps, is the way narrative mediation has been removed so that Mrs. Moore's physical sensations reach the reader unmediated. The usual Forsterian narrative method employs a strongly characterized narrative persona. In A Passage to India this persona is less obvious and certainly less obtrusive than in early novels, but is nevertheless there in the background, shaping our responses and influencing our interpretations ever so subtly. But in a few scenes the narrator simply disappears— he is not there. In these instances the reality experienced by the defining character comes to the reader directly, unmediated. As Mrs. Moore and the others approach the Marabar, the author manipulates the narrative persona in and out of the scene. A slightly sardonic social commentator, for example, tells of the preparations leading up to the fateful picnic. He relays farce with tongue in cheek: "They [the servants] shrieked that the train was starting, and ran to both ends of it to intercede. Much had still to enter the purdah carriage—a box bound with brass, a melon wearing a fez, a towel containing guavas, a step-ladder and a gun" (p. 129). "Lamps were put out, in order to save the trouble of putting them out later" (p. 128). But as the train stops against an elephant
on whose august back the party continues, the narrator drops social comedy and addresses the audience abstractly with "words of wisdom" in a manner reminiscent of the narrator of Howards End: "Most of life is so dull that there is nothing to be said about it" (p. 132). But gradually the narrative moves out of his sensibilities and into those of the participants to describe the physical scene in terms that evoke sensation:

Everything seemed cut off at its root, and therefore infected with illusion. ... The stones plunged straight into the earth, like cliffs into the sea, and while Miss Quested was remarking on this, saying that it was striking, the plain quietly disappeared, peeled off, so to speak, and nothing was to be seen on either side but the granite, very dead and very quiet. The sky dominated as usual, but seemed unhealthily near ... (pp. 140-41)

Here the reader feels as if he is at the spot himself, impressed with the presentational reality of the landscape as firmly as the characters are. This instance of mythic presence is created largely by the directness of the sense impressions. Although the narrator's comments are interspersed throughout this scene, at this moment he is not there, so that the bulk of the description and the heart of the incident—what Mrs. Moore experiences—impress the reader directly without narrative mediation. The reader, in fact, almost experiences her sensations himself as Mrs. Moore enters a Cave:

Crammed with villagers and servants, the circular chamber began to smell. She lost Aziz and Adela in the dark, didn't know who touched her, couldn't breathe, and some vile, naked thing struck her face and settled on her mouth like a pad. ... not only did the crush and stench alarm her; there was also a terrifying echo. (p. 147)

One clue to Forster's way of putting the reader into Mrs. Moore's sensibility is the way he uses the word "vile." "Vile" is Mrs. Moore's
assessment of the thing that struck her mouth, not the narrator's idea of her assessment or his own comment on it. Unusual for Forster, this elimination of narrative judgment allows the character's sensibility to predominate. But after using an impressionistic technique here, Forster has the narrator revert to commenting on Mrs. Moore's reaction from a removed and ironic viewpoint. The narrator's wider perspective and ironic judgment reinforce the cynicism of her reaction, which he couches in negative words and phrases:

Then she was terrified over an area larger than usual; the universe, never comprehensible to her intellect, offered no repose to her soul; the mood of the last two months took definite form at last, and she realized she didn't want to write to her children, didn't want to communicate with anyone, not even with God. . . . she surrendered to the vision. 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)

The z sounds in "hers but the air's" underlines her somnolent, negativistic thought and feeling. Sound, in other words, echoes sense. Whether the narrative allows for direct and immediate perception of the character's experience or for a report intermediated by the narrator, the language has poetic effects not found in ordinary prose.

This poetic, sometimes impressionistic aspect of Forster's art, brought to fruition for the first time in his last novel, is used to describe Adela's sensations in the courtroom as she recalls the day at the Marabar:

The fatal day recurred in every detail, but now she was of it and not of it at the same time, and this double relation gave it indescribable splendour. Why had she thought the expedition "dull"? Now the sun rose again, the elephant waited, the pale masses of rock flowed round her and presented the first cave; she entered, and a match was reflected in the polished walls—all beautiful and significant . . . (p. 228)
The sense of being there at the scene is inescapable for the reader even though it is Adela's presentation. Adela herself, Beer notes, "is no longer separate from the sense--instead the masses of the rock 'flow round her' in a symphony of experience."9 The sudden absence of narrative personality, the esthetic closeness and sense of immediacy thus achieved, plus the reader's sympathy, already established through the narrator's moderated sympathy for the well-meaning girl--all contribute to the reader's sense of involvement in the scene itself and to his sense that the Marabar is mythically alive.

Then, too, the farcical scene immediately preceding points up the almost magical seriousness of her reliving of this moment at the Cave. Moslems and British jockey for the most advantageous positions in the courtroom, natives outside chant "Esmiss Esmoor," distracting the already frantic Ronny, insults are traded from one side to the other, arguments are presented that so lack logic as to cancel the term "argument."

The courtroom presents to Adela's eyes "all the wreckage of her silly attempt to see India" (p. 220). The "incredible impertinence," the "agitation," the vacillating from "rash eminence" to "humiliation" of the self-important people--all this muddle fades into awesome silence as Adela relives, not simply recalls, that fatal day.

In a rather different manner, Forster evokes the Westerner's experience of participating in the Gokul Ashtami festival that is that highlight of the Hindu year. Although the scene is filtered through a Western consciousness amazed at the festival's "frustration of reason and form," and although the viewpoint is thus once more removed,

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9 Beer, p. 152.
the narrator's language gives the reader an authentic—even though not
direct—sensation of confusion, excitement, color, movement, sound, and
muddle:

God is not born yet—that will occur at midnight—but
He has also been born centuries ago, nor can He ever be
born, because He is the Lord of the universe, who trans-
cends human processes. He is, was not, is not, was . . .
. . this approaching triumph of India was a muddle (as
we call it), a frustration of reason and form. Where
was the God Himself, in whose honour the congregation
had gathered? Indistinguishable in the jumble of His
own altar, huddled out of sight amid images of inferior
descent, smothered under rose-leaves, overhung by oleo-
graphs, outblazed by golden tablets . . . and entirely
observed, when the wind blew, by the tattered foliage
of a banana. Hundreds of electric lights had been lit
in His honour (worked by an engine whose thumps des-
fried the rhythm of the hymn) . . . "God is love." Is
this the first message of India?

(p. 283-285)

Some of the sentences are almost Joycean in their pellmell lack of punc-
tuation: "The braying banging crooning melted into a single mass . . ."
(p. 284). Such sentences embody confusion; others with conventional
punctuation and syntax declare it:

. . . all who had packets of powder threw them at the
altar, and in the rosy dust and incense, and clanging
and shouts, Infinite Love took up itself the form of
SHRI KRISHNA, and saved the world. All sorrow was an-
nihilated, not only for Indians, but for foreigners,
birds, caves, railways, and the stars; all became joy,
al laughter; there had never been disease nor doubt,
misunderstanding, cruelty, fear.

(pp. 287-88)

Not even practical jokes are banned at such a celebration—all matter,
including melted butter, a model of the village, papier maché cobras,
the whole "divine mess, must participate in salvation" (p. 289). The
impression of these few pages that so convincingly relay the spirit
of this festival is one of amazed tolerance, Western, but very much
present at the scene.
Perhaps the most remarkable blend of direct apprehension of a character's inner experience and the narrator's perception of that experience occurs at Fielding's epiphany—the moment when he sees to the essence of things, the moment with the power to show forth or embody universal life and meaning in a particular instant of time and place. Fielding has just left the English club's stuffy, oppressive, "herdlike" atmosphere, feeling near-hopeless disgust at the nationalistic feeling mushrooming round Adela's charge against Aziz. The "lamp of reason" has been extinguished and so has Fielding's hope to make India a more reasonable place by means of education. Relieved at being evicted from the mob psychology developing inside the club, he walks out onto the upper verandah and not only sees but feels the Marabar Hills as an image of his salvation. Several of the principles of symbolist form elucidated by Gordon Bigelow are at work in this scene: the principle of indirection whereby we are shown instead of told what Fielding feels (at the same time we are told with the wider understanding of a narrative perspective, so that the showing is enriched); the principle of presential reality whereby in an epiphanic moment things or places are felt as living presences, and the principle of particularity whereby the symbolic particle (in this case the Hills) participates in its universal/eternal reality.  

At this distance and hour they leapt into beauty . . . it was the last moment of the light, and as he gazed at the Marabar Hills they seemed to move graciously towards him like a queen, and their charm became the sky's. At the moment they vanished they were everywhere, the cool benediction of the night descended, the stars sparkled, and the whole universe was a hill. Lovely, exquisite moment--but passing the Englishman with 

10 Bigelow, p. 99.
averted face and on swift wings. He experienced nothing himself; it was as if someone had told him there was such a moment, and he was obliged to believe. And he felt dubious and discontented suddenly, and wondered whether he was really and truly successful as a human being. After forty years' experience, he had learnt to manage his life and make the most of it on advanced European lines, had developed his personality, explored his limitations, controlled his passions—and he had done it all without becoming either pedantic or worldly. A creditable achievement, but as the moment passed he felt he ought to have been working at something else the whole time—he didn't know at what, never would know, never could know, and that was why he felt sad.

(p. 191)

From the standpoint of symbolist technique there is a great deal to comment on in this excerpt. As Dionysian insight to the depths of things, it is revealing, as true poetic insight is. As omniscient narration it is also remarkably yet subtly acute. (There is no satire in the narrator's view of Fielding because his consciousness is so close to Fielding's that there is scarcely an ironic gap, barely an individuating separation.) This blending of straightforward omniscience and a more symbolist direct apprehension of Fielding's experience is unusual, perhaps unique, even in Forster. By poetic means, the reader is given a direct perception of the reality within Fielding's perspective, yet we stand outside Fielding's consciousness, sympathetically appreciating with him that he is missing something significant in life, but ourselves experiencing directly only the presentia reality of the Hills. Our commitment to Fielding is up until now largely intellectual and moral, but as the wealth of the narrator's understanding points up with remarkable poignancy the poverty of Fielding's spiritual situation as it contrasts with the fullness of reality in the Marabar's presence, the psychological insight thus gained augments our commitment to Fielding into an emotional one. From this point on, our sympathy for Fielding
deepens almost into empathy because our sensibilities have become sensitive to his experience of spiritual deficiency. This haunting scene suggests but does not define meaning beyond what is stated and returns to the edge of the reader's mind again and again as Fielding later articulates his increasing awareness of the deeper dimensions in life that he is missing.

The blending of viewpoints also has another effect—it creates a "multidimensional" quality like that created by James (by means of slightly different techniques) for the first paragraph of The Ambassadors. Ian Watt perceives that if James had put Strether's question to the hotel clerk (whether his friend Waymarsh had arrived) into direct discourse, he would have merged Strether's consciousness into the narrative instead of isolating it for the reader's inspection. For such isolation, Watt tells us, "a more expository method is needed: no confusion of subject and object, as in first-person narration, but a narrator forcing the reader to pay attention to James's primary objective—Strether's mental and subjective state." Forster manages a similar emphasis on Fielding's mental and subjective state, but he also achieves a more universal look at its significance. We do apprehend directly Fielding's sense of spiritual barrenness, yet the blend of subjective and objective narration also makes Fielding more than an isolated psychological study—he becomes a representative of Western mankind. As such, his vision of the Marabar is mythic. Intellectually Fielding realizes that all his tolerance, rationality, good humor, faith in education—all fine qualities—are to no avail in his becoming a whole

11 Watt, in Corbett, p. 189.
person with spiritual as well as intellectual and physical bearing. In fact, his clarity prevents him from seeing the essence of things (see p. 118). We may draw psychological meaning directly from this glimpse of Fielding's mind. In Jungian terms, Fielding's struggle toward individuation or integration of his split psyche is up against an obstacle, which is his inability to experience the spiritual. Philosophic meaning may also be drawn from our grasp of Fielding as an example of Western man whose deficiencies in the spiritual realm have split him off from much of reality. By maintaining the narrative in a primarily mental continuum as James does in The Ambassadors, Forster achieves as James does for his narrative a great freedom from the restrictions of particular time and place, allowing us to take Fielding as representative of his kind of man. But by providing also a more direct experience of the physical reality of the scene with its mythic significance, Forster makes Fielding transcend time and space; he touches us with meaning which is not merely intellectual and philosophical but mythic. We feel ourselves to be physically on the upper verandah of the club with Fielding, watching the Hills move toward him. There is great power in the presentational reality of the Hills, a pressing sense of physical reality. Thus the abstract reality in Fielding's consciousness—his awareness of his spiritual deficiencies—takes on an aliveness, a presence, at the same time the physical reality of the Hills takes on the significance of the abstraction. Each intensifies the impression of the other, and Fielding's spiritual barrenness becomes a living component in the novel's atmosphere as well as in its argument.

Still another effect of this blend of subjective and objective points of view is the creation of unstated meaning. Because we are
presented with at least two perspectives on reality, two angles from which to approach "truth," we learn subliminally that any attempt to define truth must consider shades of gray and many undefinables. Even though this poetic sort of language can express reality more fully than ordinary prose can, it cannot reveal all the truth contained in the novel. It creates a more direct impression of reality than the author could create in his earlier works where his language is more definitive but less fully expressive. And yet it is largely in its indirection—its interpretation of reality through the consciousness of the narrator as well as in its other symbolist techniques—that the expression expands that impression of reality into Something More. As the narrative intermediary moves in and out of the fiction, giving us at one moment immediate perception of the novel's life and at other moments a mediated view, we feel that the inner core of reality is somehow lurking there in the pages of the book.

This narrator often suggests obliquely rather than declaring explicitly,\(^\text{12}\) an indirection which enables him to serve a symbolist purpose. The modern and symbolist affinities of the authorial persona can be detected in Forster's early fiction, but only in this last novel does the narrative persona become fully integrated into the art work and thus express the modern attitude. By means of rhythm, diction, personification, and a dramatic rendering of the characters' sensations

\(^{12}\) This is an example of what Bigelow calls the principle of variable perspective at work (p. 99). It operates with variation on each person according to his mood at the moment of reading, making it doubly variable. We may seize upon the satire when our own Apollo-nian sympathies are in the ascendency and upon the metaphysical or Dionysian suggestions when Dionysian impulses dominate our own responses. This principle could not be so effective were the prose not designed to allow variable reactions in the reader.
and thoughts, the author brings about a more powerful impression of his own fresh and idiosyncratic perspective on reality than he was able to do—or intended to do—in his earlier fiction. There his language is two-dimensional and it forges a fine argument that dominates atmosphere. But in this last novel, multidimensional language creates an atmosphere that dominates the reasoned meaning or argument. In fact, atmosphere, we have seen, often contradicts reasoned meaning. While we are busy analyzing meaning intellectually, all the time we are under the spell of an uncertain or even negative atmosphere that refutes any meaning the novel may assert. These impressions of negativity and uncertainty arise not only from analyzable events and character development as related to theme, and not only from narrative declaration as is so often the case in Forster, but also from the very medium. Word choice and the rhythms they create set up tensions both within the work and between reader and work, tensions not unlike those between a reader and anything he may read, but of more resiliency and emotional effect.

Probably the most prominent and effective tensive relation within the language is that between the two narrative modes, the satiric and the poetic. Since Virginia Woolf said Forster failed to reconcile his poetry and his realism, critics have agreed on one thing about his fiction—that he has two narrative manners or modes, apparently disparate and apparently not integrated with the other elements of his fiction. Some critics, in fact, consider Forster's narrator "intrusive" or "old-fashioned." It may be more productive, however, to stop considering the narrative split as disrupting and to look at it as the producer of a tertium quid, a third unstated fringe of significance that adds reso-
nance to the novel's mystery and depth to its philosophy. The two narrative styles, the satiric and poetic—or the realistic and romantic—correspond in feeling to the Apollonian and Dionysian respectively, and function as further poetic devices that get at the Something More of this novel. These two modes, in fact, act much as the two elements in metaphor act. The role of metaphor in A Passage to India is enormous, as Bradbury says, for all India serves as metaphor of the human condition. Furthermore, various images, that of the Caves especially, carry striking metaphorical import. But Wheelwright makes a distinction between two kinds of metaphorical effect. In actual practice Wheelwright's distinctions serve little purpose, for in most metaphor there is a transference of semantic meaning along with creation of new meaning. But his distinction may prove useful in analyzing the metaphorical effect of the two modes in Forster's novel.

Epiphor, says Wheelwright, corresponds to our usual definition of metaphor—the transference of semantic meaning from one element to another. But Wheelwright finds another effect taking place when two elements of metaphor come together without commentary or any kind of semantic transference. This effect he calls "diaphoric." "The essential possibility of diaphor," he suggests, "lies in the broad ontological fact that new qualities and new meanings can emerge, simply come into being, out of some hitherto ungrouped combination of elements."
He likens diaphor to the process of hydrogen and oxygen coming together to form water. First they exist separately and then they combine, when just the necessary elements come together under exactly the right conditions, to create a new substance. He offers as an example of literary diaphor the following verse, asking us to disregard for the moment questions of taste and worth:

My country 'tis of thee
Sweet land of liberty
Higgeldy piggeldy, my black hen.

Neither element here, the lines from the patriotic anthem or the line from the nursery rhyme, carries the anti-patriotic sentiment engendered by placing the two elements together. Simple juxtaposition of the two has thus created meaning. Similarly, Forster's dissimilar narrative modes generate new qualities when brought together with no semantic link or explanation.

The differences between this diaphoric effect and the effect Wheelwright calls epiphoric may seem more real if we consider his illustration with an Auden poem, which may enlighten us on the different effects of the two narrative modes in the early and late Forster. Wheelwright quotes the last quatrain from Auden's "The Fall of Rome":

Altogether elsewhere, vast
Herds of reindeer move across
Miles and miles of golden moss,
Silently and very fast.

Wheelwright suggests revising the quatrain by adding "But" before the opening line. Then we can see "how the poetic impact is enfeebled. For whereas in Auden's version the quatrain enters diaphorically, making its point by sheer juxtaposition, the fancied revision sounds almost expository. The contrast becomes explicitly declared instead of being merely
In much the same way, Forster's earlier narrator often becomes "preachy" as he points out hidden meanings and allusions and significances in his presented material. As an example, consider the scene in *A Room with a View* just after Lucy Honeychurch and George Emerson have witnessed a murder in the Piazza Signoria in Florence and are standing together overlooking the rushing River Arno. Their elbows touch the parapet; their arms touch one another's. Instead of merely presenting the scene and noting their positions, the narrative voice comments: "There is at times a magic in identity of position; it is one of the things that have suggested to us eternal comradeship." Similarly, as George first kisses Lucy against the bank of violets growing in profusion over the terrace, the narrator does not simply describe the scene. He adds enough interpretation to underline the symbolism: "this terrace was the well-head, the primal source whence beauty gushed out to water the earth" (*RV*, p. 80). Narrative intervention corresponds to the "But" that Wheelwright would add to Auden's quatrains to illustrate epiphor's effect, an expository extension of meaning through explicit comparison of the things brought together. Similar illustrations abound in most of Forster's work before *A Passage to India*, and there are some in this novel too. But far more often he simply juxtaposes a Dionysian or romantic tone of voice to his satiric or Apollo- nian tone without comment, direct or implied. These juxtapositions then function as diaphoric metaphor, intensifying each other because of contrast, and extending the meaning of each, but also creating new

16 Wheelwright, p. 87.

meaning not actually articulated but inferable from semantic relation. This new meaning is never defined, but it might be something like the impossibility of knowing ultimates, the incomplete nature of all human endeavor.

A fine example in condensed form appears in the Bridge Party scene that is carried almost entirely by the force of the narrator's commentary. There is little dramatic rendering of scene in this episode, a reversal of Forster's usual progression as he revised his manuscript. One of the notable reversals is in this scene; the chapter opens with the narrator telling us, "The Bridge Party was not a success" (p. 38). He points out in satiric tones how Indians British segregate themselves at opposite sides of the garden, how the British denigrate the Indians, and how "European costume had lighted like a leprosy" on the Indian guests. Immediately, in the very next sentence, the narrative satire breaks away to metaphysical musing: "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 here. Beyond the sky must not there be something that overarches all the skies, more impartial even than they? Beyond which again . . ." (pp. 39-40, ellipsis Forster's). The voice then reverts to its sardonic tone. "They spoke of Cousin Kate. . . . Save for this

18 Oliver Stallybrass tells us that Forster more often revised by doing more "showing" to replace "telling." "Forster," he says, "had a general tendency to convert narrative itno dialogue--though occasionally the reverse happens." "Forster's 'Wobblings': The Manuscripts of A Passage to India," in Stallybrass, p. 152.
annual incursion, they left literature alone. . . . Their ignorance of the Arts was notable . . . it was the Public School attitude, flourishing more vigourously than it can yet hope to do in England. If the 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" (p. 40). Clearly, the narrator's comment is even more expository than the "But" for Auden's poem The satiric mode intensifies the poetic mode and each extends the meaning of the other as if the two voices were epiphoric elements in metaphor. But another effect also takes place: the reader, caught up though he may be in the entertaining satire of the fatuous Anglo-Indian and the problem of the prejudice each people holds for the other, has caught a glimpse of something beyond. This something beyond even the kites and the vultures overhead is so impartial as to be disquieting. This uneasiness affects the reader not just because of the verbally articulated thought of the narrator but also from the uneasiness suggested by the clash of narrative modes. Again we sense the inability of human efforts to fathom the inconceivable, and we also respond to another quality created by diaphor—presence. It is the role of epiphor to transfer semantic meaning by comparison of two elements; it is the role of diaphor to create presence. "Serious metaphor," Wheelwright reminds us, "demands both."19

Take another scene where poetic and satiric voices switch places without explanation, where Aziz and the ladies prepare for the Marabar picnic. It is prefaced by a chapter describing in awed poetic tones the incredible antiquity of the Indian continent and followed by the

19 Wheelwright, p. 91.
beautifully mythic description of the Caves' interior. "The high places of Dravidia have been land since land began," intones this voice whose speaker sees geological fact in terms of myth: "No water has ever covered them, and the sun who has watched for countless aeons may still discern in their outlines forms that were his before our globe was torn from his bosom" (p. 123). The reader senses how far removed from his familiar world are these strange circular chambers to which "nothing attaches." Without light and without attributes, they have no significance, claims the narrator. Yet all of life, all of nothingness and all of being, incredible beauty within insanely proportioned outlines, combine in the Caves' image. Their semantic significance can be interpreted by transferring meaning from one image to another or from an image to an abstraction. Rising's explanation of the two match flames as representing the outside world's rationality and the irrational unseen presence in the granite, for example, is possible because of epiphoric function. But it is the diaphoric juxtaposition of one narrative mode to the other that helps to create the presential reality, the felt life, of the Marabar.

The movement from satiric to poetic modes occurs several times within the chapter prefacing the Caves incident. It begins with poetic tones marvelling at the incredible antiquity of the Hills and indicates astonishment at the ages-old uncanniness of the Caves and their absolute lack of attributes. Then when the voice next describes Aziz' confusion over preparations for his expedition, its changed tone already suggests the pettiness of such concerns as his guests' cultural preferences for food and drink. What possible importance can such matters have against the backdrop of the immense and ancient continent? Still
more to the point, the presence of a metaphysical reality, or even more awesome, the possibility that beyond the overarching sky there is nothing but the great void, shrinks humanity's trifling preferences to the picayune. The comic, satiric preparation scene is enclosed at both ends by the vaguely ominous and certainly mysterious depiction of the Marabar. One effect of this jolting back and forth is epiphoric—to transfer, by comparison, meaning from one to the other. Another effect is diaphoric—to intensify the sense of presence created by the tension between the two modes. In practice, of course, the two effects merge and Wheelwright's distinctions blur. But his terms help us to identify the processes of reader-response.

This juxtaposition of modes works both ways. As Godbole and Fielding miss the Marabar train and gesticulate wildly from behind the crossing bars, farce breaks loose and the satiric voice takes delight in it: the English ladies travel in purdah, allowing for all sorts of incongruities. Servants poach eggs in the lavatory and "irrupt" bearing the eggs on a tray, the scent of sweet oils mixes with the sound of rolling melons and the sight of piles of rugs and bolsters, and the various servants squabble pettily about their masters' social rankings (pp. 128-33). But the narrative suddenly becomes poetic again; it enhances the eeriness of the Marabar landscape with tones that can be called Dionysian, for the evocation of the Marabar Caves as a mythic reality provides the possibility of a Dionysian comprehension for Mrs. Moore and the reader: first the encounter with chaos that seems alive in the Cave, then an indefinite awareness that beneath the evil writhing metaphorically in the "undying worm itself" lies the rocklike unity of all-being, "all the evanescent life of the granite." The absence of
narrative personality that occurs just after the clash of narrative modes creates a momentary hush. In this hush, meaning arises—indefinite, to be sure, but almost palpable. The presentational reality of the Caves may be partially ascribed to the poetic diction, but the very switch in modes intensifies the presence created by the diction. The poetic awe with which the incredibly antique Marabar Hills are described does not carry the weighty presence by itself that it carries when closely followed by the satirical material describing the farce leading up to the picnic. Nor does the satire alone carry the import that it does when preceded and followed by mythic poetry; the satire deepens because human foibles appear abysmally small when set against the awesome mythic presence of the Marabar. In fact, it almost ceases to be satire and becomes simply a rather sadly cynical commentary on the futility of man's efforts to work out his life by himself. We not only absorb this message intellectually but also feel it from this affective poetic tension between narrative modes.

This same intensifying effect operates in Fielding's epiphanic scene. The Marabar Hills "crept closer," says the authorial persona, making the personification of the Hills seem mythic and serious instead of pathetic and fallacious because it follows hard upon the satire of the club scene, where the lantern of reason has enraged Anglo-India. And vice-versa: the amusing but serious episode illustrating the herd-like behavior of the English and conveyed by satiric voice acquires a smaller place in the scheme of things because it is placed by the awe in the poetic voice just following. This voice is reserved for realities far beyond the minor political and social realities of the Indian subcontinent.
Fielding's movement from inside the hidebound club to the balmy air of the upper verandah is also supported by the shift in narrative tone. This is a poetic function of voice. Outside, the narrator's mythic awe combines with an insightful perception of Fielding's mind to say that even (or perhaps especially) the most logical, most tolerant, most well-intentioned individual like Fielding can miss a major part of life—its spiritual essence. As we feel the living presence of the Hills, their intellectual significance is augmented; the epiphoric transfer of meaning in images like Monsalvat and Walhalla extends meaning. But something deeper, a Dionysian penetration to the essence of things, arises from the conjunction of satire and poetry. This Dionysian realization is more profound than reason and education will allow. Fielding's lifelong values are brought into question, that is, his belief that good will plus culture and intelligence can help people to reach one another. But culture, intelligence, and reason are "up against something," as Adela feels she is up against something. This something immeasurable that Fielding's wife is "onto" comes into the reader's experience partly because of a Dionysian mode of narration that affords him an immediate perception of Dionysian reality. Instead of criticizing Forster adversely for failing to reconcile his poetry and his realism, we should wonder at the finesse with which he conveys this Dionysian reality all the more sharply with the contrast between it and the satiric perspective on reality held in the Apollonian individuating impulse.

It may be worthwhile here to consider how the amorphous suggestion of meaning and presence held in the disparate narrative modes has bearing on the novel's meaning. Jean Kennard says that the major areas of
critical disagreement about *A Passage to India* remain Forster's attitude toward Hinduism and the structure of the novel. Does this novel assert Hinduism as the best answer to the world's problems? Kennard's answer is yes, and she draws it from the parallels in *Passage* to the explanation given by a holy man at Benares to G. Lowes Dickinson. But other answers may be drawn from other symbolic emphases or from the structure of events. Take, for example, Crews' claim that after the dumping of the Europeans together with Aziz into the tank waters at Mau, we are not sure whether they have been drenched with the waters of baptism or simply drenched. We are uncertain because events contradict impression. Fielding and Aziz draw apart and the earth and sky say "Not yet, not there." The awareness of the Unseen that is inculcated in the reader by poetic means is also contradictory. The Unseen presence is ominous as it destroys Mrs. Moore's Christian faith, beneficent as it seems to move toward Fielding like a queen, unifying and congenial to Stella and Ralph, ultimately acceptable in all its mystery to Godbole. Whatever its aspect, it suggests inarticulately the Hindu belief in Something More beyond what we can see or even conceptualize. Forster's interest in the Unseen is related to his interest in Hinduism. In fact, says Rising, "Forster's interest in Hinduism hinges, it seems to me, on the importance it gives to the unseen." Yet the gentle satire of Hindu forms expressed by the Western narrator of the Hindu festival lessens any impulse to assign Forster's total allegiance in *A Passage to India* to Hinduism. As Crews finds, "For-
ter's opinion of Hinduism is clearly a dual one: he finds Hindu ritual absurd but Hindu theology relatively attractive." Critics of Forster's investment in Hinduism come to their conclusions by aligning the author's private statements of belief with the evidence planted in the novel, or by interpreting logically the novel's events and images to coincide with verbal hints in the text. The most complex answers are the most successful, because they avoid simplistic conviction. An example is Rising's "Godbole's Hinduism is almost an answer." These answers that give considerable weight to Hinduism as an answer but not the only one find intangible but consistent support in the novel's poetic devices—not a simple yes or no, but a suggestion that man may not be able to know ultimate answers and cannot express them in creeds.

Not that Forster held no conviction on the matter of creeds. Far from it. "I do not believe in Belief," he asserts in "What I Believe." and typically disclaims dogmatic faith. Calling on Erasmus and Montaigne as his personal lawgivers, and saying "Tolerance, good temper and sympathy—they are what matter really," Forster refuses to subscribe to any religious or social doctrine. In his artistic creations, however, we read another message. My point is not that Forster was caught up in any anti-creed cause, but that his style—his use of language—remains straightforwardly or satirically sure when he writes of matters on which his own conviction is unquestioned. When it comes to satirizing the British or any people bound by convention, Forster's style shows his

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22 Crews, p. 152.

own sureness about his subject. He castigates the imperialist British with caustic assurance just as he cuts through all unthinking belief in creeds of all sorts. When it comes to theological or metaphysical questions that have some value for him, however, uncertainty enters the style, though often ironically so that the uncertainty seems to stem from a character instead of from the author. Consider the discussion by or about the Christian missionaries in Chandrapore as an example of Forster's surefooted satire (he is certain in his own mind that Christianity is closed-minded):

In our Father's house are many mansions, they taught, and there alone will the incompatible multitudes of mankind be welcomed and soothed. Not one shall be turned away by the servants on that verandah, be he black or white, 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 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 something from our gathering, or we shall be left with nothing.

(pp. 37-38)

Here Forster, or the implied author—the narrative persona—seems sardonically sure of his own position; the missionaries have golden intentions but their logic is limited by Christian belief which can never include comfortably, as Hinduism does, love and salvation for all things from human souls to bacteria. It is the missionaries who seem confused on this point, not the authorial persona. As he conveys the inner life of
characters with whom he has more sympathy, however, satire disappears. Mrs. Moore, for example, muses on India's effect on her own Christian attitude and feels uneasy:

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 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. (p. 52)

Mrs. Moore's vague disquietude transmits itself through the narrator's tone. Here he is not so removed, not totally objective, and not at all scornful as he is of the missionaries. Instead his attitude might be called concerned though not alarmed. At the Bridge Party this concern deepens into malaise; it is the narrative persona who questions the presence on nonpresence beyond the arches of the sky. The uncertainty resides in his tone of voice, not in Mrs. Moore's: "Beyond the sky must not there be something that overarches all the skies, more impartial even than they? Beyond which again . . ." (p. 40). The ellipsis, as I have pointed out, is Forster's. It allows the speculating to trail off, asserting no answer at all, not even posing a definite question. His punctuation represents on paper the diffuseness of his "theology," his lack of sureness when it comes to metaphysical speculation. F. R. Leavis calls this seeming uncertainty, miniaturized in the following remark, a sign of Forster's "curious lack of grasp," of "something unsatisfactory in the novelist's art."24 Fielding and Hamidullah are

24 F. R. Leavis, "E. M. Forster," in Bradbury, Collection, p. 43.
speaking of Mrs. Moore's death at sea:

They both regretted the death, but they were middle-aged men, who had invested their emotions elsewhere, and outbursts of grief could not be expected from them over a slight acquaintance. It's only one's own dead who matter. If for a moment the sense of communion in sorrow came to them it passed. How indeed is it possible for one human being to be sorry for all the sadness that meets him on the face of the earth, for the pain that is endured not only by men, but by animals and plants, and perhaps by the stones?

(p. 247)

Leavis comments that "the touch seems sure in the first three sentences --in fact, but for one phrase, in the whole passage."25 "The lapse," it seems to Leavis, "comes in that close of the penultimate sentence: '. . . plants, and perhaps by the stones.' Once one's critical notice has fastened on it . . . can one do anything but reflect how extraordinary it is that so fine a writer should be able . . . to be so little certain just how serious he is?"26 This "lapse" is typical of Forster's style, says Leavis, and it is his style that "betrays" him into lapses like the above. This style, he says, records Forster's "lack of force or robustness of intelligence" and "a general lack of vitality." These weaknesses are disconcerting, he claims, "because they exhibit a lively critical mind accepting, it seems, uncritically the very inferior social-intellectual milieu in which it has developed . . . Bloomsbury."27 The "weakness of liberal culture" that Leavis derives, the "spinsterish inadequacy" he finds in Forster, is all reflected for him in the style so highly characterized by "perhapses," question marks, and ellipses.

25 Leavis, p. 44.
26 Ibid., p. 45.
27 Ibid., p. 46.
But these same choices produce a querulous or uncertain tone that is the very essence of the indefiniteness Forster purposefully achieves in this symbolist novel. Of course his purpose may have been so simple as to indicate how Fielding and Hamidullah, both logical rationalists, could look at the matter. And Rising effectively refutes Leavis' argument on logical grounds, showing that Forster may very well have intended to say that the stones may indeed feel sorrow, as part of the spiritual Hindu view that Mrs. Moore has assimilated in her personal aufheben. But there is a more symbolist explanation. Arnold Kettle defines Forster's seeming uncertainty as having a purpose: "The 'perhapses' that lie at the core of his novels, constantly pricking the facile generalization, hinting at the unpredictable element in the most fully analyzed relationship, cannot be brushed aside as mere liberal pusillanimity." They reflect instead a "toughminded scrupulous intelligence." Shusterman also considers the style true to Forster's intention: "it is an indication of Forster's fundamental scepticism, which cannot see any solution in human affairs as easy." But the perhapses do even more than reflect Forster's philosophical stance; they also help to accomplish his artistic aim, to surround the novel's message with a fringe of indefiniteness so that its design leads one to further speculating. Forster seems to have concluded by the time of writing A Passage to India that indefiniteness and

28 Rising, Ch. VI, pp. 328-40 especially.

29 Kettle, p. 163.

30 Shusterman, in Shahane, p. 95, n. 14.
and split impulses cannot be avoided if one is to remain an artist of integrity. Both Apollonian and Dionysian impulses are essential in any organic creation of humankind, he implies. Forster's split, then, so obvious in his dual narrative modes, far from being artistically confusing, provides a clear reflection of the author's divided approach to experience. To rationalize his double vision into a single view is to neglect the clues he has given us—clues of style as well as of substance—to indicate that singleness of purpose may well result from a double perspective. Forster's singleness of purpose fashions an artistic emblem of complex reality.
CONCLUSION
THE SPLIT AND FORSTER'S PLACE IN LITERARY HISTORY

. . . Wherefore unsatisfied soul? and Whither O mocking life?
     --Walt Whitman, "Passage to India"

Virginia Woolf was right--Forster does not reconcile his poetry and his realism. His declining to do so, however, is not a failure but a refusal to pretend that his visions of the world merge. They do not merge, they do not blur, they co-exist. His persistent dual perspective, instead of showing that Forster is a flawed writer, shows instead his very modern cast of mind. Forster has in fact what Daniel Schneider has called "the typically symbolist Manichean vision."¹

Forster's Manicheanism is evident in his two very different kinds of writing that remain disparate even as they appear in the same work. The writer of comedy of manners gently or sharply satirizes the human world; the visionary poet "sings" of the symbolic world beyond the everyday one. Writers of the Manichean perspective always see multiple aspects of reality: "Their sense of the paradoxical character of experiences indeed necessitates their employment of the antimonies--their insistence upon the admixture of opposites."² The gap between Forster's ironic realism and his mythic poetry, modes demonstrating his Manichean insistence on the admixture of opposites, remains as wide in the late work

² Ibid., p. 10.
as in the early, but in *A Passage to India* the mundane is rendered with such verisimilitude that the mythic is sensed as infused into everyday life from beyond. This presentness in everyday life makes it all the more powerful in inducing unease and restlessness, both of which lead the reader to ponder further the novel's myriad implications.

Schneider traces the Manichean world view to the doubting frame of mind prevalent in the nineteenth century as thinking men began to question whether science had explained the mysterious universe so clearly after all. That Forster participated in such a doubt, that he rejected orthodox religious belief, that he recognized the accomplishments of science yet felt the need for liberating man's nonlogical faculties—all this is evident in his writing, including his nonfiction. It is this sort of growing doubt that gives rise, says Schneider, to "the most interesting and artistically the most significant development of symbolist writing. . . . when doubt intervenes—when the question arises whether one can, simply by taking thought, grasp anything more than *thought* . . . there is no recourse for the poet . . . but to develop a technique that confesses the doubt, the disbelief, in every line: no alternative, finally, to what Melville calls 'the ambiguities.'"  

Forster made just such a progression. His last work, the symbolist novel *A Passage to India*, is firm evidence of the split in his vision: it it written with techniques that confess the ambiguities.

Forster's two narrative manners emphatically reflect his double vision. Both modes, moreover, have a tone more detached and compassionate than that of the narrator's tone in earlier work, which indicates

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3 Schneider, p. 4.
something about his philosophic development. In the kind of evolution the Forsterian narrators' values have undergone—from dogma and certitude in the early work, however emancipated and liberal such dogma may be, to a many-faceted, omnitolerant, sagacious yet unpresumptuous view of a complex world—Forster represents twentieth-century intellectual trends: away from dogma, certitude, fixity, and all absolutes. The modern novel has played a vital role in this general movement, say Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg, "particularly in calling into question categorical imperatives."\(^4\) The categorical imperatives of the nineteenth century as illustrated by the values of Forster's early narrator have given way in *A Passage to India* to the nonabsolutes of the twentieth, as illustrated by a changed narrator's persistently dual vision. Never one to experiment boldly or flamboyantly with technique, Forster eschews the stream-of-consciousness technique as Proust, Joyce, or Woolf uses it. Instead, he calls into the reader's experience through his essentially traditional narrative method traditional backgrounds and a reliance on permanence and order. Yet the narrator's unfixed position, his clearly dual perspective with both realistic and mythic outlooks, indicates Forster's aptitude for modernism and all that it implies. Forster retains in his ironic mode much that modernism transcends, yet explores in his mythic mode the hope for transcendence, and it is his narrator who voices both modes. In this way Forster remains the balancer of two worlds, but moves toward the frankly paradoxical mythopoeic attitude that makes the modern consciousness both primitive and contemporary.

In many ways Forster is ahead of his time. His grasp of a primitive, elementally mythic reality makes him less "civilized" but more advanced than mythopoeic poets who allude to pagan and classical mythologies, and also more optimistic than a contemporary existentialist because he senses man's affinity with that natural, mythic world. Yet he exhibits in A Passage to India a sad cynicism regarding man's ability to recognize that affinity and let it help him. He also allows a more basic doubt to creep in—-is there anything but a great void beyond the sky's arches? Probably the most disquieting question of the book is held in the silence of the space beyond the sky.

This silence may register simply the contemporary loss of conviction about the traditional Platonic/Christian dualism, but many critics take it to mean a profound pessimism about the existence of God. Perhaps, says this silence, the Unseen in unseen because it is not. Add to this silence the devastating disillusionment felt by Mrs. Moore when she confronts the undying worm itself, the indifference or downright hostility of the Indian earth to man, and the menacing presence evoked in the Marabar Caves. We then find little that is comforting in the metaphysical implications of this novel. Still, even though Forster takes the view of Joyce and Eliot that the modern cultural scene is a wasteland, and even though his ironic vision looks sadly and skeptically at man and his efforts, there remains in his outlook something that retains a sense of order. A hint of this sense of order is in his bearing that displays some of the nineteenth century's quaint manner, which gives him an "old-fashioned" "Victorian" posture. Yet he reaches toward a much more archaic order. His mythopoeic attitude commits him to an ultimately promising suggestion: that man and nature are all parts of a Dionysian, universal
Oneness. The "No, not now" and "No, not there" with which the novel closes are not, after all, "Never." Forster's final fictional design, the yantralike A Passage to India, leads us to continuing contemplation of the very disturbing questions he raises.

During the twenties when Forster was finishing A Passage to India, science had made recent great strides. Man had learned to fly, to sail beneath the sea, to make sound movies, to psychoanalyze the human psyche. Technology was forging in the minds of men a confidence in his ability to accomplish very nearly anything he set his mind to. Yet artists had come to see reality as fractured and chaotic, as surrealism and cubism in painting show most clearly. We now realize that at the same time we were gaining confidence in our technological genius we were losing conviction that we could handle ethical, social, or metaphysical questions. God was already said to be dead; man's inhumanity to man was evident in World War I, in crushing working conditions, in slums and ghettos and in mushrooming crime; religion had become social action instead of spiritual benefice. When Forster's novel came out in 1924 it was taken to be primarily a criticism of British imperialist policies, a response that indicates the prevailing mind of the times. It is an attitude we see today in alarm at human action going awry and then assurance that by changing our social and political arrangements we can set things right. Forster's novel shows no such assurance. It is a probing of our metaphysical as well as of our human problems, with no prescription of a systematic way to overcome these problems. Like Eliot's The Waste Land, it questions our entire value system and does so at a level beyond the social and political. (In some ways Forster's doubt is less hopeful than Eliot's post-Waste Land turn toward orthodox
religious order, or than Joyce's retention of Christian hope even as he seems to reject it.) Forster, in fact, asks the ultimate question of our time: is there any ultimate? That he asks the question is almost as disheartening as his implied answer.

If we ask this same question today, or derivatives of it, we find the same responses Forster's 1924 novel offers. Can we manage technology to benefit rather than harm mankind? Is there a real chance for peace among men? Is there a spiritual actuality anywhere in the universe? The evidence is not all in; the answers are by no means certain. We cannot claim ultimate knowledge. Forster's last novel admits uncertainty in all answers, admits the split in his vision, making it a novel for our own decade. It has surpassed other more typically pessimistic literature of the twenties by moving ahead to an ambiguous look at the possibilities even as it moves backward toward primitive myth. Forster has not, like Eliot, turned to orthodoxy, nor has he remained, like Joyce, defensive about man's and the Church's ability to cope with modern life. Nor has he narrowed his vision to the human arena as another near-contemporary, Henry James, has done. James's limiting of his scope to human psychological reality makes his outlook more disheartening than Forster's, which focuses on human potential but also allows the possibility of metaphysical force. This split in Forster's vision, certainly evident in his fictional techniques, is what makes him a unique thinker and writer—one who can accurately be called old-fashioned and Victorian in the traditional sense, but who may also be called pessimistic about the old order and man's talent for living in a world deprived of traditional order.
Like his friend Dickinson, who lost faith that there must be some way of reaching ultimate truth, Forster subscribes to the sentiment Dickinson expressed in a letter shortly before he died: "... we are all very ignorant and quite incredibly and unimaginably inadequate to deal with the kind of questions we ask about ultimate things." Forster's open ending for *A Passage to India*, his tentative style and split modes of narrating that novel, his commitment in it on the one hand to myth and on the other hand to irony—all of these components of his fiction indicate that he had absorbed such a thought into his own. But his skepticism about the possibility of knowing ultimates does not preclude a faith in the value and significance of life in this world. The fact that his writing shows no tendency toward misanthropy, no bitterness like Swift's, for example, suggests that he has also incorporated into his consciousness Dickinson's two final hopes, human and metaphysical: that "man stands upon only one step of an infinite ascent," and that "the universe is not without significance." Forster's double vision has created in *A Passage to India* the artistic best of two possible worlds, and it leaves those worlds for the reader to ponder.

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6 Ibid., p. 237 and p. 231, this last in a letter to Virginia Woolf a few months before he died in 1932.


BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Jo M. Turk was born on September 25, 1925 in Oak Park, Illinois, attended high school in West Chicago, Illinois, and moved with her family during World War II to California. There she met and married her dentist-husband, Dr. Tully R. Turk, in 1944. While he was overseas in 1945 she attended Auburn University in Alabama, majoring in architecture. Her next twenty years were spent rearing their five children and taking part in community life in Palm Beach, Florida, where they settled in 1946. In 1966 as her oldest son began his freshman year at Williams College, she took up academic study again, this time majoring in English, at Palm Beach Junior College part-time, then full-time at the recently opened Florida Atlantic University in Boca Raton. There she finished her Bachelor of Arts degree in 1969, took her Master of Arts degree in 1971, and taught as an adjunct, in which capacity she is presently teaching. In 1972 as her third son began his freshman year at the University of Florida, she began her doctoral study there, commuting weekly for a year from her home nearly three hundred miles away. She receives her doctoral degree in 1977, the same year that her oldest son receives his doctoral degree in marine biology from San Diego State College and her third son graduates from University of Florida. In the meantime her two daughters have become students at Gainesville, making that city the center of academic interest for the Turk family.

Her academic career has included teaching at Palm Beach Junior College and Marymount College in Boca Raton, the publication of an
article on the narrative method of E. M. Forster, and acting as a panel member for a seminar at the Modern Language Association meeting in San Francisco in December, 1975.
I certify that I have read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Gordon E. Bigelow  Chairman  Professor of English

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Alistair Duckworth  Associate Professor of English

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Theodore Landsman  Professor of Counselor Education

This dissertation was submitted to the Graduate faculty of the Department of English in the College of Arts and Sciences and to the Graduate Council, and was accepted as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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