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**THE ENIGMA ABOUT E.M. FORSTER
AS A HUMANIST
AN ENCOMIUM OF HUMAN VALUES
IN HIS EDWARDIAN NOVELS**

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INTRODUCTION

E.M. Forster is a distinguished British writer whose life extends over a very long period – 1879 to 1970 – marked by rapid social and cultural changes. Still, it is his aesthetic response that makes him a very rare and special writer. Humanism, liberalism, intellectualism, freedom and an acute sensitivity – such are the qualities of the temper of the twentieth century to which Forster has given his allegiance as man and writer. He stood for truth and ordinariness, for the importance of plain individuals and the value of unheroic virtues – tolerance, good temper, sympathy, personal relationships, pleasure, love. These values define both his work and his life. Samuel Hynes in Edwardian Occasions describes the author with these words:

So admirable an old man – so kind, so self-deprecating, so steadily behind the best liberal causes – a man who like King Duncan hath borne his faculties so meek, can scarcely be criticized with that impersonal ruthlessness which we expend on the young and the dead. And so we regard him with affection and respect, as a lingering reminder of perished values, an intelligent, civilized, decent old man (1).

Although intelligence and decency are admirable and adequate human values, they are not enough to make Forster's work of art excellent. The terms describe Forster's personal qualities and qualities in his novels, but as literary values they are not sufficient to describe high merit.

All of his novels except A Passage to India (2) were written in the reign of Edward VII. Thus, they are Edwardian (3). In the following quotation Hynes explains why E.M. Forster is considered as an Edwardian writer:

Forster's novels are Edwardian, not in terms of publication dates alone, but in their atmosphere and in their values; they speak from that curious decade between the death of Victoria and the First World War, a time as remote from our present as the reign of William and Mary, and a good deal more remote than Victoria's age. If we look at Forster's career as an Edwardian one we will, I think, understand much about the novels (4).

Laurance Brander, further asserts in his Critical Study on E.M. Forster that his novels are Edwardian:

Forster's novels are Edwardian, even the Indian one, and they describe a world which existed before the breaking of Europe and which has altogether gone. They have become part of that rich history of our island which has been told for two hundred years in novel form. They are vividly alive because the writing has what he calls "the magic" in it and, because he described things so accurately as well as so amusingly, they are social... history as well as studies of the Edwardian mind (5).

Frederick C. Crews in The Perils of Humanism, as well as Hynes and Brander, goes on to contend that Forster is an Edwardian in point of time, and he is equally so in spirit:

His outlook on the world and his literary manner were already thoroughly developed in that epoch and have passed through the subsequent years of turbulence and cataclysm with remarkably little modification. He is, as he once wrote, "what my age and my upbringing have made me," namely, a kind of lapsed Victorian of the upper middle class, whose intellectual loyalties have remained with the Cambridge he first knew in 1897 (6).

As E.M. Forster, himself, suggests in his Terminal Note to Maurice (written 1913-14), Edwardian fiction such as his own stemmed from a premonition that the coming century meant that England would become a far more industrialized and capitalistic society, which signified the eventual loss of its agrarian tradition (7). Consequently, the Edwardian era marks a period in which its authors mourned the disappearance of received tradition as they anticipated an imminent age of anxiety. Essentially, this era marks a transitional period in which English literature mirrored England's own slow, yet inexorable, transformation from a Victorian society into a modern society.

The Victorian Age may be characterized as an age of constant doubt and collapse of belief in religious matters. Yet, the rationalists and agnostics had their own faith, which formed the basis for a varying moral code, often as strict, narrow or prudish as that of their Christian ethics suggested by the command to "love thy neighbor". While scrupulously rejecting all superhuman sanctions, their teaching was that man should try:

To do as well as possible what we can do best; to work for the improvement of the social organization; to seek earnestly after truth and only accept provisionally opinions one has not enquired into; to regard men as comrades in work and their freedom as a sacred thing; in fact to recognize the enormous and fearful difference between truth and falsehood, right and wrong, and how truth and right are to be got

by free enquiry and the love of our comrades for their own sake and nobody else
(8).

Humanism thus expresses itself in a passionate search for truth, which may be found through the medium of human intercourse and human love.

That which distinguished the great Victorian agnostics from the doubters who attempted to create new systems, or objects of faith to replace the old was their acceptance of uncertainty in religious matters. This acceptance enabled them to live confidently without a clear revelation and without an inclusive knowledge or solution to the problems which their doubts had originally stemmed from. Forster does not add new perspectives to the nineteenth century pattern, rather he is a typical of it. A pious childhood is followed in early in manhood by an unspectacular loss of faith. In his presidential address to the Cambridge Humanists in 1959, Forster discusses this development. He begins with an account of late Victorian family churchgoing and morning prayers. Forster states that he was a pious child and quotes a letter home from his preparatory school, dated Good Friday 1891, to support this statement (9). He admits that it was Cambridge that finally put an end to a faith that had already dwindled somewhat during his public school days, and describes himself at eighteen with devastating sincerity, “ I went on to Cambridge (King’s), immature, uninteresting and unphilosophic”(10). At Cambridge, there seem to have been two factors at work to affect the disappearance of Forster’s religious beliefs: “my friendship with Hugh Meredith” and “the general spirit of questioning that is associated with the name of G.E Moore” (11). Forster goes on to describe the disputes in King’s which arose over the College Mission. The dispute soon led to a split in the Christian ranks, lampooned with zest by their opponents. It was this liveliness on the part of the disbelievers which seems to have attracted Forster finally, for, as he explains, this gaiety “connected disbelief with daily life” (12). That which is important is the relevance of ideal to live as Forster has experienced it.

From his undergraduate days on, Forster remains a self-styled free-thinker, continually challenging established religion, and questioning those aspects of the Christian religion which he finds unacceptable. This tendency is particularly noticeable in his writings on Church history in his history of Alexandria and in some of the essays collected in Pharos and Pharillon (13).

Forster concludes his “Presidential Address” by discussing his attitude to the biblical Christianity and the figure on Christ. “I am,” he writes of the Gospel presentation of Christ, “unsympathetic towards it”. Forster argues, believing as he does in the importance of personal relations, personal contact with an uncongenial person is difficult for him to conceive of: “I don’t desire to meet Christ personally, and, since personal relations mean everything to me, this helped me

to cool off from Christianity” (14). This is, admittedly, a disappointing statement, like so many of Forster’s pronouncements on questions of belief. For Forster, as too for the orthodox Protestant Christian, belief in Christ and biblical Christianity implies a surrender of will and personal initiative – a renunciation which is clearly uncongenial to him. Therefore, Forster states his own particular form of alternative:

What I would like to do is to improve myself and to improve others in the delicate sense that has to be attached to the world improvement, and to be aware of the delicacy of others while they are improving me.

Improve! – such a dull word but includes more sensitiveness, more realization of variety, and more capacity for adventure. He who is enamoured of improvement will never want to resist in the Lord (15).

Here, Forster feels the necessity of redefining “religious” so that it may be made to bear a totally non-dogmatic, non-ecclesiastical and non–theological meaning. Such a view is clearly based upon those aspects of Forster’s fiction, his over-imaginative fantasies and his interest in mysticism.

E.M. Forster's Place in the 19th Century British Fiction

Edward Morgan Forster was born in London on 1 January 1879. His father, Edward Forster, was an architect who died of consumption when the baby was only nine months old. His mother, Alice Clara, was to outlive her husband by some sixty-five years, and Forster remained devoted to her to the very end. The fatherless boy was brought up in a family dominated by women: apart from his mother, his wealthy great-aunt Marianne Thornton, whose biography he later wrote, and his maternal grandmother Louisa Whichelo were of particular importance. Forster was later to say that he had spent his childhood within "a haze of elderly ladies".

Soon after the child's fourth birthday, he and his mother moved to Rooksnest, a pleasant house near Stevenage in Hertfordshire. Stevenage was not then the "new town" it has since become, but was still a small market town surrounded by fields and farms, and in these peaceful rural surroundings Forster seems to have spent a happy and secure childhood. The house itself was later to be portrayed in Howards End. Like many only children whose companions are mainly adults, he was a precocious boy: not only was he composing long stories at the age of five, but at the age of six he took the maids' education in hand, having developed a passion for instructing others. It was a passion that never left him. He and his mother were very close to each other and she was in no hurry to send him to school, but from about the age of eight he was taught at home by a visiting tutor. At about the same time his great-aunt Marianne Thornton died, leaving eight thousand pounds in trust for him - in those days, a substantial sum. The income from this capital was paid for his education and made his career as a writer possible.

By the time he was eleven, the question of his schooling could no longer be postponed, and he was sent to a preparatory school at Eastbourne, where he was unhappy and homesick. Furbank explains that in a letter written to his mother towards the end of the first term, he shows a remarkable capacity for self-analysis and self-expression:

I have never been like it before, but it is not at all nice. It is very much like despondency; I am afraid I shall miss the train in the morning, afraid you will not meet me, afraid I shall lose my tickets; these are instances of the kind of state of mind I am in; ... The worst of school is that you have nothing and nobody to love (16).

Given the circumstances of the boy's first eleven years, with servants to minister to his needs and a loving mother to bestow on him her almost undivided attention, it is not surprising that the rough and tumble, compulsory games and relatively spartan conditions of boarding-school life proved uncongenial. Lily, like most mothers of her generation, had made no attempt to teach him about sex, and oddly enough he seems to have become only imperfectly informed on the subject during his schooldays. Furbank claims that the presentation of women, love, marriage and sexual relationships in his novels needs to be viewed in the context of the early experiences that have been outlined (17).

When he was fourteen, it was time for Forster to proceed to a public school – an almost inevitable step in his class and period – and his mother made the decision to leave Rooksnest and to move to Tonbridge in Kent, so that he could become a day-boy at the public school there. Lily no doubt believed that, by having him live at home, she could keep an eye on his health and happiness, and she must have been keen to do so for her own sake as well. But as a day-boy in what was primarily a boarding-school Forster found himself in an equivocal and uncomfortable position, and his early years at Tonbridge, until he attained a measure of independence as a senior member of the school, were very unhappy. His depiction of the school as "Sawston" in The Longest Journey is unsympathetic, and he acquired a profound and permanent scepticism concerning the values implanted in the English governing class by the public-school system. As he later wrote in his essay "Notes on the English Character" (1920):

Solidity, caution, integrity, efficiency. Lack of imagination, hypocrisy. These qualities characterize the middle class in every country, but in England they are national characteristics also, because only in England have the middle classes been in power for one hundred and fifty years. . . 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. . . . When an Englishman has been led into a course of wrong action, he has nearly always begun by muddling himself. A public-school education does not make for mental clearness, and he possesses to a very high degree the power of confusing his own mind (18).

The same essay, included in Abinger Harvest, declares that the products of the public schools go forth into the world “with well-developed bodies, fairly developed minds, and undeveloped hearts” and, as has often been pointed out, the theme of the ‘undeveloped heart’ is central to Forster’s fiction.

In the early novels, English conventionality is often held up for contrast with Mediterranean freedom, and Forster’s first taste of continental travel came when he was sixteen, when he and his mother toured Normandy looking at churches during the Easter holidays. But the real turning-point in his early years came in 1897, when he went up to King’s College, Cambridge, to read classics. The physical beauty of Cambridge, the freedom and independence of the undergraduate life, and the sense that here was a society intent upon the disinterested pursuit of truth all made a deep and lasting appeal. Above all, he found that it was a community in which personal relationships mattered; for the rest of his life, friendship was to count more than anything else for Forster. Half a century later, one of his closest friends, Joe Ackerley, noted that when arrangements were being made for a birthday dinner to celebrate Morgan’s seventieth birthday, he was very upset when he learned that among the guests on this special occasion would be one who was not in his inner circle of friends. Ackerley commented in his diary: “As we all know, Morgan has a deep feeling about such matters, an almost mystical feeling, different and more emotional than anything that any of us feel” (19). The religious term “mystical” is significant, since the cult of friendship had helped to fill the vacuum caused by Forster’s loss of the Christian faith in which he had been brought up.

At King’s, friendships were cultivated not only between one undergraduate and another, but between undergraduates and dons, and three men were of particular importance in Forster’s development. Oscar Browning, who taught Forster history, was eccentric and snobbish, even absurd; but he cared passionately and sincerely about friendship, and his enthusiasm and energy were infectious. As P.N. Furbank puts it: “He was not a scholar or thinker; his strength was that, in his sanguine way, he diffused a vision of glory” (20). A different kind of influence was exerted by Nathaniel Wedd, Forster’s classics tutor. As John Colmer says, Wedd “undoubtedly helped to form Forster’s political and social attitudes, especially his distrust of authority, his sympathy for the outsider, particularly of a lower class, and his hostility to notions of good form” (21). A third influence was that of Goldsworthy Lowes Dickinson, whose biographer Forster later became: liberal and agnostic, Dickinson was a tireless writer on political subjects and, like Wedd, an ardent advocate of Greek thought.

In his fourth and last year at King’s, Forster was elected to the exclusive discussion club known as “the Apostles”. This had been founded in the early nineteenth century (Tennyson had been one of the earliest members), and met weekly to hear and discuss papers on a variety of topics; its function had been defined by one of its distinguished members, Henry Sidgwick, as “the pursuit of truth with absolute devotion and unreserve by a group of intimate friends, and the keywords in this statement - truth, devotion, unreserve, friends – are all relevant to Forster’s own lifelong commitments” (22). As Colmer points out, this tone is reflected in Forster’s own writings, with their “characteristic blend of gravity and humour” (23). The opening chapter of The Longest Journey is a fictionalised account of a typical meeting of the Apostles.

When Forster left Cambridge in 1901, he decided to postpone taking up a career. Having read classics and history, he could probably have found employment either in the civil service or in a museum or library, but he already had some thoughts of becoming a writer and his small private income meant that he did not need to start earning a living with any urgency. Instead, he decided to see something more of Europe, and a few months after coming down from Cambridge he set off, accompanied by his mother, on a year's travels, mainly in Italy. Forster seems to have seen his main business as becoming acquainted at first hand with the glories of Italian art: as his mother rather grimly recorded in a letter that they went to churches, pictures and museums daily. They travelled fairly extensively, going as far south as Sicily; but in a sense it was, as Forster later said, "a very timid outing", for they stayed in pensions or small boarding-houses and met mainly middle-class English tourists like themselves. They made no Italian friends and never entered an Italian home.

And yet, for all the narrowness and gentility of this timid tour, Forster was genuinely excited by Italy, and it was there that he received authentic inspiration to write his first short story, and hence to begin his career as a creative writer.

From 1903 he published articles and stories in a new progressive monthly, the Independent Review, founded and edited by some of his Cambridge friends. He still spent a good deal of time in Cambridge: as early as 22 October 1901, he had written to a friend from Milan, "I suppose you are now in Cambridge. How I wish – in many ways – that I was too. It's the one place where I seem able to get to know people and to get on with them without effort" (24). He also remained close to Hugh Meredith, a fellow-Apostle and the most important of the friends of his undergraduate years, and it was apparently during the winter of 1902-3 that Forster and Meredith became lovers. As Furbank says, for Forster the experience was

immense and epoch-making; it was, he felt, as if all the "greatness" of the world had been opened up to him. He counted this as the second grand "discovery" of his youth – his emancipation from Christianity being the first – and for the moment it seemed to him as though all the rest of his existence would not be too long to work out the consequences (25).

This, the first of Forster's homosexual love affairs, was probably very limited as far as physical expression was concerned, but its effect on him was none the less profound and permanent.

The Greek view of life, with its endorsement of male friendships as expounded in Plato's Symposium, had many advocates in the strictly masculine society of King's, and exerted a strong influence upon Forster. His first sight of Greece was during the Easter vacation of 1903 and there his Italian experience repeated itself, for he again came upon a story – one of his best, "The Road from Colonus". As with the exuberant outdoor life of Italy, Forster found in Greece a contrast with, and an escape from, the middle-class, puritan, philistine, inhibited life of England, or at least of that part of English society that he belonged to.

In 1904 his mother, who had moved to Tunbridge Wells in 1898, exchanged one genteel small town for another by moving to Weybridge, where she and Forster were to spend the next twenty years. At this time his creative energies were expanding, and he was at work on early versions of what were later to become three novels. Yet, it was in other respects a very sheltered life, offering a severely restricted view of human existence, and Forster was aware that a sheer lack of knowledge about how people live was a serious handicap to him as an aspiring novelist. The novel is, as D.H. Lawrence was to put it, "the book of life" (26), and it is hardly possible to write a novel – certainly not one in the realistic tradition that Forster practised – without a good deal of information and understanding concerning the way in which people of different kinds live their lives. Never having known a father or brothers and sisters, he had only a partial knowledge of family life; never having pursued a career, he had no detailed knowledge of any form of employment or of relationships with colleagues or clients; as a homosexual, his knowledge of, and indeed his interest in, half the human race was limited to his mother and other middle-class ladies a generation or two older than himself. None of this stopped him

from writing fiction but, these factors inevitably influenced both what he wrote and what he did not write.

In March 1905 he went for a few months to Germany as a tutor to the children of a Prussian landowner who had married an Englishwoman; and it was later in the same year that his first novel was published. Where Angels Fear to Tread was favourably reviewed, and he had no reason not to feel encouraged to persevere with writing fiction. Two other novels followed fairly quickly, at intervals of about eighteen months: The Longest Journey, his Cambridge novel, in 1907, and A Room with a View, his second Italian novel, in 1908. Two years after the latter came Howards End. Its reception was, as Philip Gardner has said, a “solid vote of confidence in Forster’s talents”: though only thirty-one, he found himself now an established novelist with his reputation “consolidated and given clearer definition than before” (27). That the epithet “Forsterian” was used thus early in his career is a clear indication that he had become identified with a recognisable standpoint: liberal, humane, sceptical, unconventional, relentlessly moral without being ponderous, and even, by the standards of his day, daring, for his mother had been deeply shocked when she read Howards End in proof. The appearance of the novel marked, as Furbank says, a turning-point in his career, as it did in his life. For the moment he was a celebrity: friends flattered him, newspapers interviewed him, and letters and invitations poured in (28).

The effect on Forster, however, was to unsettle and disturb him: he disliked popularity, felt curiously guilty and superstitious about his success, and began to fear that his creative talents would dry up. This last was a fear that was to haunt him, not without reason, for many years.

At about this time he seems to have undergone a personal crisis. A few years earlier a second love affair had entered his life, when he met and fell in love with Syed Ross Masood, a young and handsome Indian whom he coached in Latin in preparation for his Oxford entrance. But a major factor in this crisis was his relationship with his mother, who was now well into her fifties and was often depressed and irritable. Summing up the year 1911 in his diary, he described it as a “Terrible year on the whole” and noted that “pleasure of home life has gone. . . . Am only happy away from home” (29). Knowing that, for the sake of his own happiness, he ought to make more of an independent life for himself, he was tormented by guilt at the thought that his mother would have to be more and more excluded from such a life. But his chance to get away, and to have the stimulation of new scenes, was taken in October 1912, when he embarked for India. This was the first of three visits to that country: the second was in 1921, when he went for a short period as a private secretary to a Maharajah, and the third in 1945 when, elderly and famous, he attended a writer’s conference. In India he found the material for his last, and in the opinion of many judges his finest novel, A Passage to India, not completed until much later and published in 1924.

Forster’s first four novels had been written quite rapidly, but the record of the years 1912-14 is of uncertainty and loss of self-confidence. By his own account, he began A Passage to India in 1912, but soon put it aside. Between September 1913 and July 1914 he produced a version of Maurice; the first draft took him only about three months, and before setting to work to revise it he seems to have begun yet another novel, the quickly-abandoned Arctic Summer, which survives only as a fragment (written in the spring of 1914). Maurice, though finished, was not published and indeed was not publishable, since its treatment of a homosexual theme would have been quite unacceptable in that period. During the next fifty years Forster took it up again from time to time; some of his friends read it, and as late as 1960 he made further substantial revisions and added a “terminal note” describing its origins and stating that it was now, in the enlightened post-Chatterley era, publishable at last. But it did not appear until 1971, a short time after his death.

Maurice was sparked off by a visit to Edward Carpenter, who has been called the first modern writer on sex in England. Carpenter’s own voluminous writings are now virtually forgotten, but his influence on various writers, including Forster and D.H. Lawrence, was by no means negligible. Forster acknowledged that he was much influenced by him and, in an essay written after Carpenter’s

death, referred to his “cult of friendship” and his “mingling of the infinite and the whimsical” – phrases that can readily be applied to Forster himself (30).

When war broke out in August 1914, Forster worked for a time cataloguing paintings in the National Gallery, then went to Egypt, where he spent three years working as a volunteer for the Red Cross. When the war ended, once again back in England, he was active as a journalist – in the years 1919-20 he published the impressive total of 88 essays and reviews – and was for a time a literary editor of a left-wing newspaper, the Daily Herald. Then came his second visit to India, already referred to, and on his return in 1922 he resumed work on the half-written Indian novel that had been begun some ten years earlier. Work continued throughout 1923, and A Passage to India was at last published in June 1924. It was hailed as a masterpiece, and assured Forster a prominent place among living English novelists – though no-one could have foreseen that he would not publish another novel in his lifetime. He was then forty-five, or almost exactly halfway through his long life.

Soon afterwards, Forster returned to Cambridge for a time as a fellow of his old college, and in 1927 he delivered a series of lectures on the novel, published as Aspects of the Novel. Though informal in tone, they were to have a wide influence in a period when the theory and criticism of fiction was relatively unsophisticated, and they increased Forster’s reputation as a man of letters.

During the following years, Forster wrote a good deal of journalism, began to broadcast in 1928 (the BBC having received its charter only in the preceding year), and was active in public life, especially in relation to such issues as censorship and the freedom of the individual. In 1934, for instance, he became the first president of the National Council for Civil Liberties. These activities, in conjunction with his reputation as a writer, established him as a public figure whose low-keyed but strongly-felt utterances were listened to with respect. He had a wide circle of friends, but still spent most of his time at his mother’s home in Surrey. And he published no more fiction.

He did not, however, stop writing, and the list of his publications during the last forty or fifty years of his life, mainly non-fictional, is a long one. Among them are three travel books, two sparked off by his sojourn in Egypt (Alexandria: A History and A Guide (1922) and Pharos and Pharillon (1923)) and one about India (The Hill of Devi (1953)); two biographies, one of G.L. Dickinson (1934) and one of Marianne Thornton (1956); and numerous articles and broadcasts, some of which are collected in two volumes, Abinger Harvest (1936) and Two Cheers for Democracy (1951), but many of which remain uncollected. He was much in demand as a reviewer and lecturer: he gave, for instance, the Rede Lecture at Cambridge in 1941, published as “Virginia Woolf” (1942), and the W.P. Ker Memorial Lecture at Glasgow in 1944, published as “The Development of English Prose between 1918 and 1939” (1945); both are reprinted in Two Cheers for Democracy.

Though these constitute, as Crews says, only “footnotes” to Forster’s main achievement as a novelist, they deserve attention, since he had the knack of bringing his personal style and vision to bear upon every task he undertook (31).

Forster’s later years were outwardly uneventful, as indeed his earlier years had largely been, and an account of them can be given quite summarily. When his mother died in 1945, at the age of ninety, he was crushed by the blow, but he remained active and kept his many friendships in good working order, partly by means of a voluminous correspondence.

He travelled quite widely, revisiting India in 1945, America in 1947 and 1949, and the Continent for holidays even in the last decade of his life. From 1946, having lost his home with his mother’s death, he resided at King’s College, Cambridge, where – half a century and more after his own undergraduate years – he befriended undergraduates and became a familiar figure. He was much sought out by visitors to Cambridge, and was, in V.S. Pritchett’s phrase, “a kind of wayward holy man” and, as Furbank notes, “an object of pilgrimage, particularly for visiting Indians” (32). Forster himself noted that “Being an important person is a full time job” (33), but his fame went beyond that of a writer whose books had become classics in his lifetime. Not only was he, on account of his great

age, a survivor from a vanished late-Victorian and Edwardian period that people were beginning to take more and more seriously, but he was venerated as a sage or guru whose convictions, tirelessly enunciated over a long lifetime, were seen as acutely relevant to the nuclear age. When, for example, in a 1957 interview he told Angus Wilson that the world was divided into sheep and goats, and that the goats were marked by a “failure to love”, this was no more than he had been saying in one way and another for more than half a century, but it was also recognised as relevant to a world of embattled superpowers (34). Not just fame but wisdom and even a kind of “holiness” were part of the Forsterian charisma. Furbank sums up the matter when he says that the last twenty years of Forster’s life were “a period of idolization. He had come to be honoured for personal goodness and sanctity, to an extent that perhaps few writers have known” (35).

More superficial kinds of honour were not absent. He declined a knighthood, but accepted the award of higher distinctions, that of a Companion of Honour in 1953 and in 1969 the Order of Merit. Quite late in his life he found a new outlet for his literary activities, and a way of putting his writing to the service of his lifelong love of music, by producing in 1951, with the collaboration of Eric Crozier, a libretto for Benjamin Britten’s opera Billy Budd, based on Melville’s story. A less public kind of literary activity was a return to the short story, with which he had begun his career as a writer so long ago: “The Other Boat”, perhaps the finest short story he ever wrote, was produced in 1957-8, when he was nearly eighty, though it was not published until it appeared, along with other stories unpublished during his lifetime, in the posthumous volume The Life to Come (1972). He also took up Maurice once again at about this time.

Forster died on 7 June 1970, in Coventry, at the home of close friends of long standing. Friends had always been of central importance in his life: for him, friendship was not one of the minor amenities of civilised existence but something to be taken with the utmost seriousness, worked at, kept in good repair, and valued intensely and passionately. For Forster, the agnostic bachelor, his friends had the kind of importance that for many men belong to their wives, their children, or their God. Though he was only a peripheral member of the Bloomsbury Group “he told K.W. Gransden that he did not regard himself as belonging or having belonged to Bloomsbury”(36), he shared their cult of personal relationships, and it is an attitude that permeates almost everything he wrote, fiction and non-fiction alike.

Forster as a Liberal Humanist

The literary and aesthetic concept of liberalism seem to govern Forster's mind and values though its central conception is political. Liberalism politically implies a system of government in accordance with people's will, and this view is linked with the English idea of human progress through the use of science and technology. The liberal idea is also allied with the concepts of tolerance, of dissent and individual freedom.

Forster has a commitment to the liberal tradition of progress, freedom and humanitarianism. His novels, therefore, demonstrate the liberal idea in human and social relationships. His fiction is sensitively shaped by his liberal imagination. Yet, Forster is not always in tune with this liberal tradition. He is primarily an individualist who believes in the individual citizen's freedom in a society left free from excessive governmental pressure or compulsive policies. Receptive to new ideas of social welfare, he believes that an ideal society must show a combination of new economy and old traditional morality. He is also deeply influenced by the creative aspect of liberalism which is related to the writing of fiction.

Crews has suggested that Forster's liberalism is to be seen as an offshoot from the main 19th century tradition, and that it develops particularly out of J.S. Mill's critique of Jeremy Bentham (37). From the beginning of Mill's essay, a clear similarity between Mill's view of Bentham and Forster himself appears. Bentham is described not only as a man of great "moral sensibility" but also as staunchly opposed to fraudulent practices and abuses of authority. In so far as Forster is preoccupied with the preservation of values and the nature of the good, his moral sensibility, and his resolute stand for honest, straightforward dealing and thinking makes him an enemy of fraud and "muddle".

In his essay on Bentham, Mill develops criteria both for the practicing philosopher and moralist, and for the analysis of human behaviour. He begins by warning of the danger of generalities, and makes the very same distinction between detail and complex whole that was to play an important role in Forster's Howards End :

It is a sound maxim, and one which all close thinkers have felt (...) that error lurks in generalities: that the human mind is not capable of embracing a complex whole, until it has surveyed and catalogued the parts of which that whole is made up (38).

Towards the end of his critique, Mill turns his attention to two abstractions which, for Forster, are to be of great importance: imagination and morality. The value which Mill places upon the imagination is most clearly understood against the background of his notorious upbringing. It is that

element which provides the alluring escape from the dull world of fact and utilitarian learning. It is Mill's realization that man needs poetry as a source of inward joy and happiness, without which he would have remained a severe intellectual, that allies him to the artist-moralist Forster:

The Imagination ... that which enables us, by a voluntary effort, to conceive the absent as if it were present, the imaginary as if it were real, and to clothe it in the feelings which, if it were indeed real, it would bring along with it. This is the power by which one human being enters into the mind and circumstances of another (39).

Mill in the last sentence, sees the imagination as that which enables one man to understand and appreciate another. This results in one of the central themes of all Forster's writings: the supremacy of personal relations.

Whereas Forster himself tends to be reticent on direct theoretical questions of morality, a number of critics have made use of the term "Utilitarian" in their accounts of his position, either hinting at his possible attraction to Mill's modification of Utilitarianism, or at his basic similarity to Mill. Later in the Bentham essay, Mill begins his discussion of morality by emphasising the relation between the individual and the society of other individuals in which he lives:

Morality consists of two parts. One of these is self education; the training of the human-being himself, of his affections and will... The other and co-equal part, the regulation of his outward actions, must be altogether halting and imperfect without the first: for how can we judge in what manner many an action will affect even the worldly interests of ourselves or others, unless we take in, as part of the question, its influence on the regulation of our, of their, affections and desires? (40).

The above quotation, with its implied acceptance of the necessity for successful human relationships, emphasizes Forster's own position as a moralist who values the enjoyment of personal relationships. Yet, although elsewhere Mill appears to share much of Forster's insistence on the individual, he seldom divorces individual action and virtue from the total sum of community feeling and communal well-being:

The deeply - rooted conception which every individual even now has of himself as a social being, tends to make him feel it one of his natural wants that there should be harmony between his feelings and aims and those of his fellow creatures (...)
This conviction is the ultimate sanction of the greatest happiness morality (41).

It is questionable to what extent Forster shares Mill's view of man as a social being when Mill discusses this in terms of a harmony of feelings and of aims between man and his fellows. Certainly in "A Letter", Forster affirms his "belief in the individual, and in his duty to create, and to understand, and to contact other individuals" (42). Yet, on the other hand, the way in which this belief is most often stated is as belief in an unavoidable clash of interests between the individual and the community: Thus, Martin explains that, this latter is seen either in the form "public life", or more clearly antithetical to Mill, as a community of non-like-minded people, or "the herd" in "The Ivory Tower" :

We are in a muddle. We veer from one side of human nature to the other:
now we feel that we are individuals, whose duty it is to create a private heaven; and
now we feel we ought to sink our individuality in something larger than ourselves –
something we can only partially like and partially understand.
The conviction that sometimes comes to the solitary individual that his solitude
will give him something finer and greater than he can get when he merges in the
multitude (43).

Consequently, Martin asserts that Forster diverges from Mill in his awareness of an inevitable conflict of interests between the individual and society, but is close to Mill when he focuses on the community organized in the form of State (44).

In his later years, Forster finds himself both an admirer of, and a sympathizer with Arnold. In a 1949 interview Forster couples Arnold with George Elliot as being the most civilized of the Victorians, and , more explicitly, in his broadcast talk on William Arnold in Two Cheers for Democracy, Forster claims affinity with Matthew Arnold:

Matthew Arnold is of all the Victorians most to my taste: a great poet, a civilized citizen, and a prophet who has managed to project himself into our present troubles, so that when we read him now he seems to be in the room (45).

In both statements, one is aware of the emphasis on "civilized", a term which obviously bears a close relation to Arnold's concept of "culture", and indeed, it is probably Arnold's Culture and Anarchy which has the fullest relevance to Forster and the liberal tradition. Concluding his introduction to this book, Arnold writes: "I am a Liberal, yet I am a Liberal tempered by experience, reflection, and renouncement, and I am, above all, a believer in culture" (46).

From this modified standpoint, Arnold goes on to develop his particular conception of “culture” and its relation to the society and social systems of his own day. Although in many respects similar in tone and premise to much of Forster’s thinking, Arnold’s basic concept is alien to the humanist side of Forster’s views. Arnold bases his entire argument upon the premise of man’s perfectibility, seeing culture both as a means to perfection and as “a study of perfection”. To this, he adds the motto under which culture is to take up its task, “To make reason and will of God prevail” (47). This has led Prof. Trilling to characterize Arnold’s concept as “religion with the critical intellect superadded” (48). Forster, on the other hand, uses the term “art” more often than culture and sees art as having to do with order, and thus revealing a possible better world, and so having a definitely humanizing influence.

In Culture and Anarchy, Arnold, insisting on the non materialistic nature of culture and its emphasis upon the spread of reason, demonstrates his “democratic insight”; that is, his own very personal view of a democracy firmly based on the universalization of culture:

Those are happy moments of humanity, ... those are the marking epochs of a people’s life, ...those are the flowering times for literature and art and all the creative power of genius, when there is a national glow of life and thought, when the whole of society is in the fullest measure permeated by thought, sensible to beauty, intelligent and alive (49).

For Arnold, that is, culture defined as a combination of lively intelligence, intellectual curiosity, and aesthetic sensibility, is independent of the class distinctions and thus a democratizing principle. In Two Cheers for Democracy, Forster made a similar broadcast talk during the first year of the Second World War: “When a culture is genuinely national, it is capable, when the hour strikes, of becoming super-national, and contributing to the general good of humanity” (50).

While placing a high price and high hopes upon culture, Arnold, in his essay “Democracy” like Forster after him, is fully aware that that class of society which, by virtue of its growing power and expansion, is destined to be the leader of society and thus, too, the potential exponent and propagator of culture, the middle class, is itself in dire need of inner reform:

The middle classes, remaining as they are now, with their narrow, harsh, unintelligent spirit and culture, will almost certainly fail to mould or assimilate the masses below them, whose sympathies are the present moment actually wider and more liberal than theirs (51).

In Abinger Harrest, Forster asserts his adherence to the middle class: “I am actually what my age and my upbringing have made me – a bourgeois” (52). For him, the typical qualities of the intelligent, Victorian middle class are contained in his characterization of the Thornton family: “pious, benevolent, industrious, serious, wealthy, shrewd” (53), and in his other remarks on his own class position, Forster always acknowledges his place within this nineteenth century tradition. It is, however, from this very position of belonging, that Forster begins his career as a novelist, and in his early novels English middle-class life forms the setting of the action, and provides the characters and their attitudes. Moreover, although it becomes clear that within the limits provided by Forster’s first three novels he is working out a critique of the middle class, his sympathies remain within that class, or at least with its best representatives.

As a consequence of the above discussions, Martin concludes that Arnold and Forster share the belief that the middle classes are the holders of promise for the future and this belief, coupled as it is with the qualification “intelligent middle class”, gives them cause to criticise the state of affairs within this class in their own time. And yet in the forty years which separated Arnold’s Culture and Anarchy (1869) and Forster’s Room with a View (1908), the Liberal ideal would appear to have had little impact upon the class it was aiming to educate up to its own utopian view of the future (54).

A further concept, Martin adds, which Arnold and Forster share, as in Arnold’s words in the “Future of Liberalism”, “the humanization of man in society” (55). This concept pervades much of Forster’s work, culminating in the well known definition in “What I Believe”, where civilization, being creative actions, all the decent human relations, occur during the intervals when force has not managed to come to the front. “These intervals are what matter... I call them ‘civilization’!” (55). It is this common view of civilization having to do, not with material progress and well being, but with human intercourse and culture, that emphasizes Forster’s adherence to a solid tradition and leads critics to see in his works a sense of the continuity of Europe’s history and heritage – an impression of civilization in the best sense, as an enquiring rather than a positing civilization.

All in all, from the beginning of his literary career, Forster espoused those aspects of liberalism which most suited his own temperament and stage of intellectual development: the belief in the beneficial effects of culture, in reason and in human affection. But his allegiance was at the same time divided between inherited liberal rationalism and those aspects of human life and experience which are often beyond the immediate grasp of conventional liberal mind. That is to say that Forster, from the very beginning, takes up the position of sceptic and critic from within. As with his relation to his own class, so too with his relation to their beliefs, Forster is both adherent and critic.

At the very hearth of Forster's liberalism is his belief in the importance of the individual, and his emphasis on personal relations, characterising himself as an individualist, Forster stresses the value he attaches to the individual rather than to a group, community, race or nation. However, what becomes central to much of what Forster writes is his conviction that the individual, in so far as he is cultivated, sensitive and libera-minded, is essentially at disharmony with organized society and, in fact, threatened by it. This feeling of the insecurity of the individual underlies much of the social comedy of the novels and reaches its climax in A Passage to India.

Forster's stand on the question of the relation between the State or society, and the individual is based not only on his inherent belief in the individual, but also on his position as a writer. For Forster, the artist is someone who must both express his own personality, and one who believes in the development of human sensitivity in directions away from the average citizen. Society, on the other hand, can only represent a fragment of the human spirit and thus there is an inevitable conflict between artist and authority, between the writer and the State. From this point, it becomes clear that Forster can only follow Mill in his opposition to the State's stifling of individual initiative and liberty in Aspects of the Novel:

If human nature does alter, it will be because individuals manage to look at themselves in a new way... Every institution and vested interest is against such a search: organised religion, the State, the family in its economic aspect, have nothing to gain, and it is only when outward prohibitions weaken that it can proceed (56).

In addition, like Mill and unlike Arnold, Forster insists on the necessity of freedom to the individual so that it may criticise authority and abuses of power. In his essay, "English Freedom", Forster's extreme distrust of the State, both as abstract concept and as repressive reality, becomes clear:

It seems indeed likely that in immediate future Englishmen will have to put up with less liberty of action. But all the more reason that they should jealously guard their liberty of thought and speech and while enduring the power of the State should never adore it. The State is like death. It has to be. And some civilizations have worshipped death (57).

It is this particular view of the State as actively opposed to the interests of the individual that is a main preoccupation in much of Forster's writings during the ominous years of the nineteen- thirties.

The characters in Forster's novels, rather than revolting against the inhibitions of society, tend to adapt themselves to conditions which, at first, seemed intolerable. For Forster individual conversion precedes social evolution. In fact, Forster has himself pointed, somewhat wistfully, to a third possibility: a form of tolerant compromise between society and those individuals who feel the need to opt out. Still, in "The Ivory Tower", he is aware that such a time can never come.

When the public and private can be combined, and place can be found in the industrial and political landscapes for those symbols of personal retreat, Ivory Towers, the foundation of a New Humanity will have been laid (58).

The Influence of the Ethical Concepts of G.E. Moore and the Bloomsbury Group on Forster's Fiction

In 1901, during his fourth and final year at Cambridge University, the Cambridge Conversazione Society, informally known as “the Apostles” since only twelve men could be active members at one time, elected Forster into its membership. The most exclusive of the Cambridge clubs, the Apostles, under the direction of G.E. Moore, were especially noted for their lively discussions about humanism (59). Moore, in both his lectures and books, offered his own solution to the uncertainties of the modern world by contending that an awareness of subtle bonds connecting individuals to their neighbors would not only give people a sense of stability in an age of anxiety but would also help lead to a future reconciliation between members of different genders and social classes.

Forster, one of Moore's most enthusiastic admirers, embraced his system of ethics as fervently as the most ardent of Christians cling to their religion. In a diary entry from 1911, for example, after alluding to Moore's ideas about spiritual love between people, Forster remarks that he feels “more sense of religion now than in the days of orthodox Christianity” (60). Although he later denied ever reading Moore's philosophical treatise Principia Ethica (1903), Forster listened intently during the Saturday evening debates as Moore – revered by the Apostles for the “pure and passionate integrity of his mind and character” – outlined the ideas which later formed the central tenets of Principia Ethica (61).

Moore by asserting that written laws regarding human behavior are not essential for people to lead a moral life, intended to prove through his philosophy that people should be free to use their own reason to distinguish between good and evil. As he argues in Principia, “Instead of following rules ... the individual should rather guide his choice by the direct consideration of the intrinsic value or vileness of the effects which action may produce” (62). In other words, Moore believed it incumbent upon all individuals to use their reasoning abilities to judge the morality of their actions. Ever optimistic, he assumed that individuals, if they used what he called “common sense”, would make the correct ethical choice in any given situation since people typically desire to act responsibly.

As Jim Mc Williams explains in The Muted Groups in E.M. Forster's Edwardian Novels, in particular, two of Moore's ideas about human nature influenced Forster and other Apostles: First, Moore postulated the existence of “organic unities,” wholes whose values have “no regular proportion to the sum of the values of ... [their] parts”(63). Essentially, Moore's contention is that a sum is greater than its individual parts, just as a painting that is cut into pieces loses its value even if those

individual pieces are beautiful in themselves (64). Rose uses a unique analogy to illustrate how Moore's thesis about "organic unity" could apply to people:

According to this principle, an aesthete and a Grecian urn, each in isolation, are nothing more than an aesthete and a Grecian urn, a simple sum of parts. But an aesthete appreciating a Grecian urn is something far more valuable, and two aesthetes appreciating each other are more valuable still, by virtue of the intimate reciprocal connection between the two (65).

Moore's point, according to Rose, is that two people may connect if they each recognize that an "intimate reciprocal connection" exists between them (66). A person with no sense of this subtle bond, however, cannot connect with another person – any more than an inanimate object like a Grecian urn may connect with an aesthete. This "intimate reciprocal connection" takes different forms, but the one easiest to discern is the capacity to show empathy toward a fellow human being.

Moore's second point, closely related to his first since it, too, relies upon "intimate reciprocal connections," argues that love should be "the aim of life" (67). Moore adds a caveat, however, in stressing that perfect love would remain platonic. The exemplary union, as he explains in his Principia, would be between two people who, sharing a "feeling of contemplation of all that is true and beautiful and good," would remain faithful to each other's ideas without ever engaging in sexual intercourse. This ideal union, Moore adds, would foster close personal relations between individuals, regardless of their respective economic or social classes (69).

The younger Apostles, especially Leonard Woolf and Lytton Strachey, responded enthusiastically to Moore's ideas. Woolf, in particular, championed Moore after the publication of Principia Ethica:

The tremendous influence of Moore and his book upon us came from the fact that they suddenly removed from our eyes an obscuring accumulation of scales, cobwebs, and curtains, revealing for the first time to us ... the nature of truth and reality, of good and evil and character and conduct ... (70).

Although they soon surrendered in their attempts to refrain from sexual intercourse, Woolf and the other Apostles never failed to stress Moore's goal of close personal relations between people, which, once attained, they believed could help connect people from different economic or social classes. These Apostles, including Forster, also credited their university, Cambridge with fostering their belief that men should be connected through close personal relations. These ideals of the Apostles were later

adopted by the Bloomsbury Group, which included many former Apostles – most notably Leonard Woolf, Lytton Strachey, and John Maynard Keynes.

As Williams notes, Bloomsbury had its start when the four children of the noted Victorian scholar Leslie Stephen moved in 1905 from their family residence in Hyde Park Gate, Kensington, to 46 Gordon Square, located in a bohemian neighborhood called Bloomsbury near the British Museum (71). As Ulysses L. D'Aquila further explains that, "They [the Stephen children] determined to make their new home...a place where their friends could easily meet and talk at all hours, and where the Apostolic code of candor would be the rule" (72). Before long, two members of the family, the sisters Vanessa and Virginia, had decided to become artists: Vanessa painted, while her younger sister wrote. In his own 1929 note on Bloomsbury, Forster characterises its members as:

Essentially gentlefolks. Might occasionally open other people's letters, but wouldn't steal, bully, slander, blackmail, or resent generosity as some of their critics would, and have required a culture in harmony with their social position... Academic background, independent income... They are in the English tradition (73).

The Stephen household subsequently became a location for men and women with an interest in aesthetics to exchange ideas. Although their discussions typically revolved around art and literature, they also debated psychology, sexuality, politics, philosophy, and religion. As a group, they came to embrace the necessity of syntheses between opposites, underscoring Moore's idea that an "organic whole" can be stronger than its constituent parts (74). Bloomsbury art, whether it took the form of literature or painting, usually reflected a belief in the importance of unity. As Finkelstein points out, the Bloomsbury authors even thought that androgyny would be ideal since it might unify the foremost qualities of both genders (75). They agreed with the social critic Edward Carpenter that the two sexes should not "form two groups helplessly isolated in habit and feeling from each other", but should instead "represent the two poles of one group – which is the human race" (76). Moreover, the members of the Bloomsbury Group stressed the importance of close personal relations between people, an importance they exemplified through their intimate friendships with each other.

Although he did not join the Bloomsbury Group during its initial formation from 1905-1910, Forster maintained friendships with many of its members and certainly agreed with their convictions. As S.P. Rosenbaum emphasizes in his literary history of Bloomsbury:

For purposes of literary if not personal history, E.M. Forster is crucial to Bloomsbury. His novels and essays influentially embodied Bloomsbury values, and

his achievements during the Edwardian era were of considerable significance for Virginia and Leonard Woolf as well as for Lytton Strachey and Desmond MacCarthy (77).

In turn, the Bloomsbury artists and their works influenced Forster through their reaffirmations of what Moore and the Apostles had taught him at Cambridge.

Consequently, if Moore's ideals "the pleasures of human intercourse and enjoyment of beautiful objects" – as a belief in love and personal relationships, and a belief in the value of art are rephrased, considerable support in Forster's writings for the wider implications of Moore's ideals may be found.

The importance Forster attaches to love as an ideal has been subject to a considerable amount of strain and change. His fundamental position is contained in such statements as the following, from his History of Alexandria, where, referring to that city, he writes: "She did cling to the idea of love, and much... must be pardoned to those who maintain that the best thing on earth is likely to be the best in heaven"(78). Or more clearly, in his article "A Clash of Authority",

I myself am a sentimentalist who believes in the importance of love... I only believe that it is important in itself and that the desire to love and the desire to be loved are twin anchor ropes which keep the human race human (79).

Here the echo of Moore in the italicised phrase is clear. But for Forster love is too high and too flexible an ideal and, from early twenties on, it fades into the background to be supplanted by tolerance and affection. That which endures is personal relations. His belief in personal relations becomes almost the most constant element in his credo, together with his belief in liberty and his trust in the individual.

Yet, as Forster grows older and the world he once knew disappears more and more into the oblivion of history, his assertions of belief in personal relationships and human intercourse take on a resigned note. In his essay, "Tourism v. Thuggism", expatiating sadly on the ugliness of tourism, Forster regrets the passing of "the personal approach, the individual adventure, the precious possibilities of friendship between visitor and visited" (80). Even so, the belief is reaffirmed, albeit in that particular prophetic tone that implies the distance of a possible time when prophecy may come true:

It is only when personal contacts are established that the axis of our sad planet shifts and the stars shine through the ground-fog. And contacts are not easy to establish in a world dominated by far worse-isms than the touristic (81).

As the above-mentioned quotation clarifies, Forster's remarks here make one aware of the pessimism which manifests itself increasingly in much of the writing of his last forty years. It is the pessimism of someone who has been granted a vision of ideal, and a comprehension of the conditions under which the ideal may be realised, and then sees the promised time of realisation moving further out of his grasp and sight. Yet, beyond the immediate pessimism there is still a note of hope.

Professor Kermode has written that "perhaps the Principia are never realizable except in novels" (82), a remark which both points to the possible inevitability of Forster's pessimism, and, secondly, suggests ways in which the already noticed affinity between Moore and Forster found its expression in the works of the novelist. Howards End truly celebrates the ideal of personal relations; celebrates them for "personal intercourse, and that alone... ever hints at a personality beyond our daily vision" (83). That is, personal relations become the means Forster sees as ideal in his constant search for the ultimate reality. It is only apt that it is Helen, the more impulsive, less rationally cautious of the two Schegel sisters, who repeatedly insists on the reality of personal relations in comparison to the sham reality of the outer world: "I know that personal relations are the real life, for ever and ever" (84). Still, comments on human intercourse appear in his lectures on the novel, where Forster, going beyond the bounds of fiction and narrative technique, writes: "All history, all our experience, teaches us that no human relationship is constant, it is as unstable as the living beings who compose it...; if it is constant it is no longer a human relationship but a social habit" (85).

Seen within the context of Forster's earlier implicit trust in personal relations, this comment is characteristic of the new doubt, and can be seen as an attempt to find rational explanations for a failure which has been apprehended most strongly by the emotions. The attempt fails. Chapter 3 of Aspects of the Novel ends on the gloomy note of: "We cannot understand each other, except in a rough and ready way; we cannot reveal ourselves, even when we want to; what we call intimacy is only a makeshift; perfect knowledge is an illusion" (86). In a letter to T.E Lawrence, dated 16th December 1929, he writes:

I think of a remark of mine which you once approved and which has become yours in my mind. It was about love, how over-rated and over-written it is, and how the relation one would like between people is a mixture of friendliness and lust.

$F+L = \frac{L}{X}$ is the sort of thing I want you to work out, but of course have put the

equation wrong. I think love has an absurd réclame : but this again may be my age. There's so much new to be said about human relationships now that the sac (sic) of lust has been dissected and been discovered to be such a small and innocuous reservoir (87).

It is clear that Forster knew all too well, that personal relations were often obscured by a hierarchical social system, such as the one entrenched in Edwardian England. In other words, he knew that members of the dominant social class of English society – heterosexual, middle-or upper-class males – usually refused to connect with the minority classes; Forster consequently believed that women and homosexual were unjustly dominated by the majority.

Furthermore, English society – with its overt prejudices against homosexuals – eventually suppressed Forster himself since he could not write openly about homosexual characters or homoerotic themes. Late in his life, in fact, Forster told his authorized biographer, P. N. Furbank, that he had stopped writing novels because he no longer wanted to write fiction which explored heterosexual relationships (88). Forster knew very well, however, that he could not publish the sort of fiction – like Maurice (completed in 1914 but not published until after his death in 1971) – that he would prefer to write. Consequently, with the exception of a half-dozen homoerotic short stories, which, like Maurice, were published posthumously, Forster relinquished his career as a writer of fiction and wrote only familiar essays, biography, social commentary, and book reviews during the last forty-five years of his life.

Although a few of his critics have contended that Forster's repressed homosexuality weakened his published novels since he could not give free rein to the themes he wanted to explore, Hynes suggests just the opposite:

One could more readily argue that in fact a creative tension existed between the impulse and the work, and that the effort to transform homosexuality into socially acceptable forms was an ordering force, that determined both his characteristic vision and his characteristic tone (89).

Hynes adds that this “tension” led Forster to view English society with increasing irony since he felt determined to “preserve his place in the society that would ostracize him” if it discovered his homosexuality (90). Tariq Rahman agrees with Hynes's theory that Forster's repressed homosexuality added “an ordering force” to his fiction by arguing that Forster depicts symbolically the acceptance of his own homosexuality when he shows characters who must search for their authentic selves before coming to a realization of who they really are. Whether it is Philip Herriton in Where Angels Fear to

Tread, Rickie Elliot in The Longest Journey, or Lucy Honeychurch in A Room with a View, Rahman claims that their personal searches for identity show that a character's "quest" should be read as a reflection of the

progress from the homosexual's state of self-alienation to integration; isolation to communication; separation to union and unhappiness to happiness. The main line of argument will be that Forster transferred the inherent difficulties of a homosexual relationship to a heterosexual one and this provides the under-plot which... runs parallel to the surface one and not counter to it (91).

As Williams concludes, Forster, when writing about individuals suppressed by the conventions of Edwardian society, chose to write about them as an oblique way to describe the oppression that he felt as a homosexual, what Hynes and Rahman argue cannot be proven conclusively (92). Without question, however, Forster's Edwardian novels do portray characters who are oppressed by English society. While some of these characters (e.g., Rickie Elliot) surrender to the dominant class's expectations of them, thus lapsing hopelessly into the self-alienation described by Rahman, others – inspired through an intimate connection with another character – persevere and eventually overcome society's constraints upon their personal freedom. When these characters do surmount the social forces that would keep them oppressed, they become individuals, rather than remaining stereotypes of a particular gender, sexuality, or economic class. As Finkelstein notes,

Forster's heroes [those who refuse to be stereotyped] go beyond the superiority or inferiority of one sex or class; they strive to reach the personal, where each person is only an individual and can therefore connect with any other individual (93).

The objective of this doctoral dissertation has been an attempt to examine the struggle of the characters in Forster's Edwardian novels who rebel against the social forces which would keep them suppressed. In the first chapter, the weaknesses of two female characters in Where Angels Fear to Tread, will be examined. The development of Forster's first strong female character, Lucy Honeychurch in A Room a View, will therefore be analyzed in the second chapter. In this chapter, Lucy's maturation into a person who comes to rely upon her own instincts rather than what society dictates as morally correct can particularly be observed. The third chapter will demonstrate how Forster develops another strong female character, Howard End's Margaret Schlegel, who like Lucy, goes beyond the superiority or inferiority of one sex or class and strives to be an individual. The fourth chapter, will analyze the failure of The Longest Journey's Rickie Elliot who is unable to accept Agnes or his knowledge of true brotherhood. His insistence on idealizing and labeling people rather than

seeing them as individuals finally destroys him. The fifth chapter will contrast Rickie with the protagonist of Maurice, Maurice Hall, who finally realizes that people are and should be allowed to be individuals through their repudiation of Edwardian values.

NOTES TO INTRODUCTION

- (1) Samuel Hynes, Edwardian Occasions: Essays on English Writing in the Early Twentieth Century 104.
- (2) Forster's greatest novel, A Passage to India (1924), must be considered separately from his first five novels for a number of reasons: the bulk of it was written after the Edwardian period and it is not set in England.
- (3) Jim Mc Williams, Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 1,3. While a few historians and literary critics simply use the reign of King Edward VII (1901-10) to mark the years known today as the "Edwardian Age," most scholars of the period have debated when Edwardianism began and ended. Jonathan Rose, for example, contends that what came to be called "Edwardianism" actually originated in 1895 with Oscar Wilde's trials and concluded in 1919, a year after World War I had ended (viii-ix). Rose selects the former year because the destruction of Wilde represented the rejection of Decadence and the subsequent need for aesthetic, while he chooses the latter year since he believes that the "intellectual trends" of Edwardianism – e.g., an acceptance of alternatives to orthodox Christianity and the rise of socialism – did not gain a wide currency until after the Armistice. Samuel Hynes, on the other hand, argues that the Edwardian period began in 1900 with the advent of a new century and probably ended in December 1910 with Edward's death when, in Virginia Woolf's opinion, "human character changed" because the king's passing broke all links to the Victorian era (4). Hynes concedes, however, that a case may be made for the latter date to be July 1914 and the first issue of Blast since Whydam Lewis had intended for his journal to celebrate the termination of established tradition (10). Richard Ellmann also votes for 1900 to be the beginning of the period since nearly all British writers felt a distinct pressure upon them to produce an innovative type of literature for the new century. Ellmann adds, however that he cannot decide for certain when Edwardianism ended and modernism began ("Two Faces" 151). By saying that the Edwardian period is "muzzy at the edges," John Batchelor refuses to pick a side in the debate and, instead, provides three discrete sets of dates – the reign of Edward, the two decades between the Wilde trials and the first issue of Blast, and the years between conclusion of the Boer War and the beginning of World War I – that can be used to frame the period, arguing that each set of dates

is equally logical (1-3). He adds that the latter years (i.e., 1902-14 offer “an intelligible frame” since the “myth of Empire was dented beyond repair by the first [war] , the incredibility of the English upper class – with much else – was drastically eroded by the second” (2). Although Rose, Hynes, Ellmann and Batchelor disagree about when precisely Edwardianism commenced and ended, all four scholars concur that most of the British writers who came of age in the first decade of the twentieth century faced the disturbing realization that life in England would soon become significantly different from what it had been in the previous century. Even though their approaches to this realization differed, “the essential Edwardian mood is somber – a feeling of nostalgia for what is gone, and of a feeling of apprehension to come ...” (Hynes 2).

- (4) Hynes. Edwardian Occasions: Essays on English Writing in the Early Twentieth Century 105.
- (5) Laurance Brander, E.M. Forster: A Critical Study 11.
- (6) Frederick C. Crews, E.M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism 3.
- (7) E.M. Forster, Terminal Note to Maurice 254.
- (8) Richard Martin, Ideal and Reality in the Writings of E.M. Forster 47.
- (9) Ibid., p.48.
- (10) Ibid., p.48.
- (11) Ibid., p.48.
- (12) Ibid., p.48.
- (13) Ibid., p.49.
- (14) Ibid., p.49.
- (15) Ibid., p.49
- (16) P.N. Furbank, E.M. Forster: A Life I 34.
- (17) Ibid., p.36.
- (18) Norman Page, Modern Novelists: E.M. Forster 4.
- (19) Ibid., p.4.
- (20) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life I 5.
- (21) John Colmer, E.M. Forster: The Personal Voice 7.
- (22) Page. E.M. Forster 5.
- (23) Colmer. E.M. Forster: The Personal Voice 8.
- (24) Page. E.M. Forster 7.
- (25) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life I 98.

- (26) Page. E.M. Forster 8.
- (27) Philip Gardner, E.M. Forster : The Critical Heritage 12, 14.
- (28) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life I 190.
- (29) Ibid., p.204.
- (30) Page. E.M. Forster 10.
- (31) Ibid., p.14.
- (32) Ibid., p.15.
- (33) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life II 132.
- (34) Page. E.M. Forster 15.
- (35) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life II 309.
- (36) Page. E.M. Forster 16.
- (37) Crews. E.M. Forster : The Perils of Humanism 24, 5.
- (38) Martin. Ideal and Reality in the Writings of E.M. Forster 21.
- (39) Ibid., p.22.
- (40) Ibid., pp.22, 23.
- (41) Ibid., p.23.
- (42) Ibid., p.23.
- (43) Ibid., pp.23, 24.
- (44) Ibid., p.24.
- (45) Ibid., p.25.
- (46) Ibid., p.25.
- (47) Ibid., p.26.
- (48) Lionel Trilling, E.M. Forster 266.
- (49) Martin. Ideal and Reality in the Writings of E.M. Forster 26.
- (50) Ibid., p.26.
- (51) Ibid., p.27.
- (52) Ibid., p.27.
- (53) Ibid., p.27.
- (54) Ibid., p.28.
- (55) Ibid., p.28.
- (56) Ibid., p.33.
- (57) Ibid., p.34.
- (58) Ibid., p.35.
- (59) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life I 75, 76.

- (60) Jonathan Rose, The Edwardian Temperament, 1895-1919 44.
- (61) S.P. Rosenbaum, Victorian Bloomsbury 216.
- (62) Ulysses L. D' Aquila, Bloomsbury and Modernism 29.
- (63) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M. Forster's Edwardian Novels 13.
- (64) Tom Regan, Bloomsbury's Prophet: G.E. Moore and the Development of His Moral Philosophy 130.
- (65) Rose. The Edwardian Temperament 41.
- (66) Ibid., p.41.
- (67) Rosenbaum. Victorian Bloomsbury 232.
- (68) Ibid., p.232.
- (69) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 14.
- (70) Regan. Bloomsbury's Prophet: G.E. Moore and the Development of His Moral Philosophy 17.
- (71) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 15, 16.
- (72) D' Aquila. Bloomsbury and Modernism 6.
- (73) Martin. Ideal and Reality in the Writings of E.M. Forster 44.
- (74) Rosenbaum. Victorian Bloomsbury 7.
- (75) Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein, Forster's Women: Eternal Differences viii.
- (76) Tony Brown, Edward Carpenter and the Evolution of A Room with a View 291.
- (77) Rosenbaum. Edwardian Bloomsbury: The Early Literary History of the Bloomsbury Group 5.
- (78) Ibid., p.39.
- (79) Ibid., p.40.
- (80) Ibid., p.40.
- (81) Ibid., p.40.
- (82) Ibid., p.40.
- (83) Ibid., p.41.
- (84) Ibid., p.41.
- (85) Ibid., p.45.
- (86) Forster. Aspects of the Novel 62.
- (87) Martin. Ideal and Reality in the Writings of E.M. Forster 43.
- (88) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life II 132.
- (89) Hynes. Edwardian Occasions: Essays on English Writing in the Early Twentieth century 119.

- (90) Ibid., p.119.
- (91) Tariq Rahman, Double Plot in Forster's A Room with a View 43, 44.
- (92) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 18, 19.
- (93) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 89.

CHAPTER I

WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD

Forster's first published novel, Where Angels Fear to Tread (1905) depicts a woman who has been suppressed by a dictatorial man. Although Lilia is already a widow when the novel opens, the reader soon learns that Lilia's husband, Charles Herriton, had treated her with condescension as he trained her to become the dutiful wife of a respectable, upper-middle-class husband. Even after Charles dies, her mother-in-law, Mrs. Herriton continues to try to conventionalize and to tame Lilia, to teach her "the duties of widowhood and motherhood" (1). Lilia flees England because of her life at Sawston, where she exists only as "Mrs. Charles" (2). After Charles's death, her role as widow is even more restrictive than her role as wife, and she is "continually subject to the refining influence of her late husband's family" (3). She does not even choose her own house; one is taken for her, and then she is criticized for not taking care of it properly: "She was a bad housekeeper, always in the throes of some domestic crisis, which Mrs. Herriton, who kept her servants for years, had to step across and adjust" (4). Then, as now, keeping house was seen as woman's primary job, although supervising servants hardly seems to do a full-time, fulfilling occupation.

Mrs. Herriton tolerates her son – Philip's whims in order to get what she wants. She is aware of what she is doing, and articulates her strategy to Harriet in "the memorable words, 'Let Philip say what he likes, and he will let us do what we like'" (5). Eventually Philip also becomes aware of her calculated manipulation of him:

He was sure that she was not impulsive, but did not dare to say so. Her ability frightened him. All his life he had been her puppet. She let him worship Italy, and reform Sawston—just as she had let Harriet be Low Church. She had let him talk as much as he liked. But when she wanted a thing she always got it (6).

Mrs. Herriton's manipulation is all indirect. When she is upset because Caroline is going to Italy to get the baby, her first reaction is to send Philip. Her second reaction is to send Harriet, too. It never occurs to her to go herself, for indirection is an integral part of her approach to life. Women are not allowed to do most things directly: Mrs. Herriton does nothing directly. The whole affair is totally hypocritical on her part; she doesn't care about the child at all. It is considered proper for women, especially mothers, to use other people, especially their children, to affect what they want, and Mrs. Herriton is nothing if not proper. She considers her daughter a failure because she lacks the flexibility and deviousness which are necessary to manipulate others: "Though pious and patriotic, and a great moral asset for the house, she lacked that pliancy and tact which her mother so much valued, and had

expected her to pick up for herself” (7). Harriet herself does not manipulate, but she agrees to the manipulation and goes to Italy to see that Philip does his duty as a puppet, which upsets him considerably. Philip’s only source of self-respect is his amused-observer status, his understanding of what is going on: “Harriet, worked by her mother; Mrs. Herriton, worked by Miss Abbott; Gino, worked by a cheque—what better entertainment could he desire? . . . He might be a puppet’s puppet, but he knew exactly the disposition of the strings” (8).

Finally, to her relief, her brother-in-law, Philip, suggests to his mother that Lilia might settle down to her widowhood following a vacation in Italy. Mrs. Herriton readily agrees, and Lilia feels pleased to escape from Sawston for an extended tour of Italy in the company of a chaperon, Miss Abbott. While visiting Monteriano, she impulsively falls in love with a handsome Italian peasant, Gino Carella. Unfortunately, the relationship based on domestic imperialism, so well depicted between Philip and his mother, is reflected in the marriage between Lilia and Gino. Lilia is twelve years older than Gino and in many ways attempts to use him as Mrs. Herriton uses Philip. She always treats Gino “as a boy which he was, and as a fool, which he was not, thinking herself so immeasurably superior to him that she neglected opportunity after opportunity of establishing her rule” (9). Even Caroline Abbott refers to Lilia’s “managing” Gino, or more precisely to her failure to do so: “Lilia . . . must have been cowardly. He was only a boy — just going to turn into something fine, I thought — and she must have mismanaged him” (10). Gino also sees marriage in this way and asserts that “there should be one master in that house — himself” (11).

Significantly, there is no verbal communication between Lilia and Gino: “she speaks no Italian, he no English” (12). As Finkelstein emphasizes, Forster here stresses not only the deep differences between those two cultures, but also the lack of any real communication between men and women, husbands and wives. Lilia and Gino seem to communicate better at the beginning of their relationship, when still separated by language, than they do later after language has ceased to be a difficulty (13).

When Lilia realizes that her marriage is a failure, she becomes “as unhappy as it was possible for her nature to be” (14). She becomes possessive, which Gino resents (15) — a common situation with men whose wives have nothing to do and nowhere to go. “She had no unkind treatment, and few unkind words, from her husband. He simply left her alone” (16).

Gino, a man, succeeds where Mrs. Herriton, a woman, fails, in dominating Lilia: “in the most gentle way, which Mrs. Herriton might have envied, Gino made her do what he wanted” (17). Lilia is frightened at Gino’s brutality: when she asks for a tiny bit of freedom, to go for a walk alone, he forbids her; when she threatens to cut off his money, he terrifies her into submission (18). Lilia

realizes that he married her for her money, but her realization does no good; “he had tamed her, and she never threatened to cut off supplies again” (19).

Her last remnant of happiness disappears when she discovers Gino’s infidelity; she “broke down utterly and sobbed” (20). She feels terribly alone and has no options left:

She had given up everything for him— her daughter, her relatives, her friends, all the little comforts and luxuries of a civilized life— and even if she had the courage to break away, there was no one who would receive her now (21).

At first she is afraid to accuse him and decides that it is “better to live on humbly, trying not to feel, endeavouring by a cheerful demeanour to put things right” (22). Totally cowed, she accepts whatever Gino does. “He was particularly kind to her when he hardly ever saw her, and she accepted his kindness without resentment, even with gratitude, so docile had she become” (23).

Unfortunately, Lilia dies giving birth to a son. So, Mrs. Herriton orders Philip to Italy again, to “rescue” the baby, and with him she sends his sister Harriet. In Italy they meet Miss Abbott, who also feels responsible for the child; when Philip asks her whether she has come as traitor or spy, she takes no offense at the offensive words and admits she is there as a spy. She says that Mrs. Herriton, who cares nothing about the baby has behaved dishonorably; if her son and daughter really want to get it, however, Caroline will help, and if they want to fail, she will take the child. Later she withdraws altogether, telling Philip that if the little boy stays in Italy, with his loving father, he will be brought up badly, and that if he goes to England he will be brought up well, although nobody there loves him.

Gino in any event is not selling: he expects to marry a woman he does not love, but she has a little money and will be a mother to Lilia’s baby. When Harriet grimly steals the child, she deepens the wrong by leading Philip to believe that she has bought him. Here, Philip the barrister proves to be poor at cross-examination, although the circumstances are admittedly against him, since he and Harriet are hurrying to the railway station in a carriage on a rain-swept night, and the baby is obviously ill. The carriage overturns, killing the child. Philip, with a broken elbow, goes to tell the news to Gino, who savagely twists Philip’s fractured arm and begins to strangle him. He is saved only by the timely appearance of Caroline Abbott, who restores Gino to common sense and even a manifestation of friendship for Philip. In Williams’s opinion, throughout the first two-thirds of the novel, Caroline is consistently portrayed as weak; she never acts decisively and often seems on the verge of tears. Following this encounter with Gino and his son, however, Caroline becomes a stronger person, one who can see all sides of an issue and can act as a mediator in the dispute about who should raise Lilia and Gino’s infant son, the Herriton’s or Gino himself (24).

On the way back to England, he is in love with her—oddly enough, these two old friends still address each other as Mr. Herriton and Miss Abbott—but she forestalls him by confessing that she is in love with Gino, “crudely” though profoundly. She will keep him in her memory forever. At the end of the story, as their train is about to enter the Saint Gotthard Tunnel, Philip takes his last look at the campanile of Airolo, which in the first chapter he had told Lilia to watch for (it was the beginning of beauty, the promise of the future). But as Philip tries to catch a glimpse of the campanile just before the train plunges into the darkness of the tunnel, he sees “instead the fair myth of Endymion”. Thus, in Moore’s view, Caroline Abbott remained a goddess to the last, for to her no love was degrading, since she stood beyond degradation. She lifted him to so great a height that he could tell her that he was her worshiper, like Gino, who also thought her a goddess. “But what was the use of telling her? For all the wonderful things had happened” (25).

By the end of the novel, she has become the ideal woman, a saint whose sole function in Where Angels Fear to Tread is to reconcile the quarrelling men, Philip and Gino, so that they may recognize their fraternity. Although she plays an important role, Caroline never seems real because she never expresses any desires or aspirations of her own; instead, she dedicates herself to helping others. When Philip tells her “You are wonderful” and thinks “This woman is a goddess to the end” (26), he shows that he idealizes her rather than accepting her as a real person.

As for Philip, as Moore maintains, the experiences he has gone through with Caroline have restored his sense of beauty and presumably will restore his sense of humor (27). By the end of the novel, he has decided to leave Sawston, for London. He would probably choose Monteriano if he could, but he has to make his living in London. At least he is abandoning Sawston and the values represented by his mother and sister. He tells Caroline Abbott that he is nothing more than a spectator and possibly, at necessary times, a participant.

NOTES TO CHAPTER I

- (1) E.M. Forster, Where Angels Fear to Tread 10.
- (2) Ibid., p.5.
- (3) Ibid., p.9.
- (4) Ibid., p.10.
- (5) Ibid., p.14.
- (6) Ibid., p.86.
- (7) Ibid., p.13.
- (8) Ibid., p.94.
- (9) Ibid., p.43.
- (10) Ibid., p.77.
- (11) Ibid., p.42.
- (12) Ibid., p.31.
- (13) Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein, Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 13.
- (14) Forster. Where Angels Fear to Tread 55.
- (15) Ibid., p.53.
- (16) Ibid., p.55.
- (17) Ibid., p.57.
- (18) Ibid., pp.58, 59.
- (19) Ibid., p.59.
- (20) Ibid., p.60.
- (21) Ibid., p.60.
- (22) Ibid., p.61.
- (23) Ibid., p.61.
- (24) Jim Mc Williams, Muted Groups in E.M. Forster's Edwardian Novels 32.
- (25) Harry T. Moore, E.M. Forster 239, 240.
- (26) Forster. Where Angels Fear to Tread 184.
- (27) Moore. E.M. Forster 241.

CHAPTER II

A ROOM WITH A VIEW

Lucy Honeychurch, the next young woman to undergo a dramatic change in a Forster novel, is a much more believable character than Caroline since A Room with a View (1908) remains focused on her. The story opens in a pension in Florence. Lucy, a young and pretty girl, is staying with her chaperon and paid companion, Charlotte Bartlett, a middle-aged woman who is also her cousin. Having been given rooms over the courtyard instead of more pleasant rooms that have views is at first a real disappointment both for Lucy and her cousin Charlotte who have just come to Italy. In the dining room, an old man called Mr. Emerson, overhearing their complaint, offers to swap his and his son's rooms with views for the ladies'. In this instance, as he does throughout the novel, Mr. Emerson acts impulsively yet sensibly, relying upon his instincts rather than social propriety to determine his speech and behavior. According to the Edwardian convention, it is rude of him to speak without being introduced. At first, Miss Bartlett "skilled in the delicacies of conversation, but powerless in the presence of brutality" (1) refuses to accept this offer because she doesn't want to put Lucy under an obligation to people whom they know nothing of.

However, Lucy is perplexed rather than shocked by this awkward discussion about changing rooms with the Emersons. "She had an odd feeling that whenever these ill-bred tourists spoke, the contest widened and deepened till it dealt, not with rooms and views, but – well, with something quite different, whose existence she had not realized before" (2). Instinctively, Lucy realizes the significance of the Emersons and their room with a view. Here, Martin argues that "Lucy, has no experience of love and little of reality, and it is these concepts whose existence is strange and new to her. It is the direct encounter with the unconventional and somewhat unlikely Emersons that brings Lucy to self-knowledge" (3).

When at last they swap the rooms, Miss. Bartlett, with a chaperon's compulsion for propriety, insists on taking the larger room. "Naturally, of course, I should have given it to you but I happen to know that it belongs to the young man, and I was sure your mother would not like it... I am a woman of the world, in my small way, and I know where these things lead to" (4). Apparently, Miss Bartlett's rigid character under Edwardian sexual repression shows itself in her rain of reminders to Lucy.

Paradoxically, Lucy wonders whether the acceptance of the rooms "might not have been less delicate and more beautiful" (5) but Charlotte thinks that they are synonyms. According to the Edwardian codes of social world, beauty and delicacy are two qualities that have the same meaning. Beauty is found in the proprieties, namely, the details of correct social behavior. Therefore, in Mr. Emerson's generous offer, there isn't beauty. Yet, Lucy feels sympathy towards him because what is

important to her is the sincerity of this offer. On the other hand, it is very likely that the relationship between Miss Bartlett and Lucy is rather deceptive. As they part for the first night, the lie she is teaching Lucy to live is symbolically shown:

Miss Bartlett...enveloped her in a protecting embrace as she wished her good night. It gave Lucy the sensation of a fog, and when she reached her room she opened the window and breathed the clean night air, thinking of the kind old man who had enabled her to see the lights dancing in the Arno...

Miss Bartlett, in her room, fastened the window-shutters and locked the door, and then made a tour of the apartment to see where the cupboards led, and whether there were any obliettes or secret entrances (6).

Then, Charlotte finds a piece of paper “pinned up over the washstand” (7) with only a question mark drawn on it. This “note of interrogation” (8) apparently serves as a reminder to George that life seems to be pointless most of the time, that very often people “come from the winds, and shall return to them” without gaining any knowledge of themselves or the world (9). As Trilling suggests, George’s problem is that he suffers from “a deep, neurotic fin de siècle pessimism”, which keeps him isolated from the other tourists (10).

Similarly, Lucy is imprisoned not by a kind of lethargy but by “her inability to connect theory and practice” (11). Symbolically, this is presented in her playing the piano. Lucy has a great love for playing. She is no genius, but she is talented and passionate.

She was no dazzling *exécutante*; her runs were not at all like strings of pearls, and she struck no more right tones than was suitable for one of her age and situation. Nor was she the passionate young lady, who performs so tragically on a summer’s evening with the window open. Passion was there, but it could not be easily labelled; it slipped between love and hatred and jealousy, and all the furniture of the pictorial style. And she was tragical only in the sense that she was great, for she loved to play on the side of Victory (12).

Mr. Beebe, a vacationing clergyman, happens to hear her play the piano with uncommon emotion. He believes that underneath Lucy’s seemingly shallow personality resides a passion suspected by no one, including Lucy herself. He recalls the first time he heard her play, back in England, at Tunbridge Wells. She chose an unusual and intense piece by Beethoven. Although she appeared to be “only a young lady with a quantity of dark hair and a very pretty, pale, undeveloped

face” (13), Lucy’s playing led him to remark to his vicar that “If Miss Honeychurch ever takes to live as she plays, it will be very exciting – both for us and for her” (14). Now, Mr. Beebe makes the same remark to Lucy directly. Lucy replies by repeating a remark her mother has made on hearing a similar comment: “She trusted I should never live a duet” (15). It is clear that Lucy’s problem is the same as Caroline Abbott’s. Both of them are trying to find a means of reconciling ideal and everyday life.

Unfortunately, Lucy has never attempted to live with the same emotion that she puts into her music, so when she comes to Florence, her personality has remained as “undeveloped” as her face. Although Lucy feels her emotions most passionately and deeply after she plays the piano and wants to be more free and adventurous in practice, she has never questioned the constraints on her gender. Quite early in the novel when Lucy asks why most of the big things are unladylike, she finds Charlotte’s answer annoyingly unsatisfactory:

It was not that ladies were inferior to men; it was that they were different. Their mission was to inspire others to achievement rather than to achieve themselves. Indirectly, by means of tact and a spotless name, a lady could accomplish much. But if she rushed into the fray herself she would be first censured, then despised, and finally ignored. Poems have been written to illustrate this point (16).

The ideal to which Lucy is taught to aspire is that of the “medieval lady” and Forster explicitly contrasts the quality of life allowed to “medieval” women to that offered to men :

Men, declaring that she inspires them to it, move joyfully over the surface, having the most delightful meetings with other men, happy, not because they are masculine, but because they are alive. Before the show breaks up she would like to drop the august title of the Eternal Woman, and go there as her transitory self (17).

Forster recognizes that women are not allowed to live full lives, that “masculine” does not equal “alive” but it is rather, in this society, a necessary precondition to it.

Finkelstein points out that “By denying transitory selfness to women and by forcing them into the chivalric, medieval, “eternal” mold, society destroys their individuality and their ability to live unique, whole, participatory lives” (18).

Consequently, Lucy trusts Miss Bartlett's judgement and never acts in a way that might be interpreted as a revolt against the roles Edwardian society had decided women should play. Essentially, by agreeing to conform to Miss Bartlett's ideal of how a young lady should act, Lucy voluntarily represses her individuality.

Florence, however, soon begins to work its "pernicious charm" (19) on Lucy and George. Lucy goes out in the company of Eleanor Lavish, a writer who prides herself on being original and unconventional. The two women have a lively conversation about politics and people they know in England. But, Lucy is soon separated from Miss Lavish and left alone in Santa Croce without even her Baedeker to guide her.

The church is cold, and without her Baedeker travel guide Lucy feels unable to view the many famous works of art there. She sees a child hurt his foot on a tomb sculpture and rushes to help him. She then finds herself side-by-side with Mr. Emerson who is also helping the child. The child's mother appears and sets the boy on his way. Lucy feels determined to be good to the Emersons despite the disapproval of the other pension guests. But, when Mr. Emerson and George invite her to join them in their little tour of the church, she knows that she should be offended by such an invitation. She tries to seem offended, but Mr. Emerson sees immediately that she is trying to behave as she has seen others behave, and tells her so. Strangely, Lucy is not angry about his forwardness but is instead somewhat impressed. She asks to be taken to look at the Giotto frescoes.

The two comes across a tour group which, includes some tourists from pension, led by a clergyman named Mr. Eager. Mr. Eager spews commentary on the frescoes, which Mr. Emerson strongly disagrees with; he is skeptical of the praise and romanticizing with the past. The clergyman icily leads the group away. Mr. Emerson, worried that he has offended them, rushes off to apologize. George confides in Lucy that his father always has that effect on people. His earnestness and bluntness are repellent to others. George describes his father: "He is kind to people because he loves them, and they find him out and are offended, or frightened" (20). Here, Martin asserts that "Forster already hints that reactions to the discovery of love and being loved are going to be a measure of the value of the characters confronted by the phenomenon" (21).

Mr. Emerson and Lucy go off to see other works. Mr Emerson, sincere and earnest, shares his concerns for his son. George is unhappy. Lucy is not sure how to react to this direct and honest talk. Mr. Emerson asks her to befriend his son. She is close to his age and Mr. Emerson senses much that is good in the girl. He hopes that these two young people can learn from each other. George is deeply saddened by life itself and the transience of hurried existence. Still, this cerebral sorrow seems very

strange to Lucy. Suddenly, Mr. Emerson gives a piece of advice to Lucy that she initially ignores but later comes to accept as the guiding principle of her life. Mr. Emerson says :

Now don't be stupid over this. I don't require you to fall in love with my boy, but I do think you might try and understand him. You are nearer his age, and if you let yourself go I am sure you are sensible. You might help me. He has known so few women, and you have the time. You stop here for several weeks, I suppose? But let yourself go. You are inclined to get muddled, if I may judge from last night. Let yourself go. Pull out from the depths those thoughts that you do not understand, and spread them out in the sunlight and know the meaning of them. By understanding George you may learn to understand yourself. It will be good for both of you (22).

Jim Mc Williams asserts that Mr. Emerson, undoubtedly, reveals to Lucy that through love, affection, and the attempt to understand another human being, one may hope to find one's own salvation. Lucy, by suggesting to him that his son needs a hobby such as stamp collecting to end his melancholia, refuses to acknowledge the truth of Mr. Emerson's ideas. She denies to herself that he understands her dissatisfaction with her own life, as well as his claim that she could be the cure for George's pessimism. Lucy thus begins her long descent toward self-alienation through her refusal to accept reality. But before her conversation with Mr. Emerson continues, George suddenly approaches them, to tell Lucy that Miss. Bartlett is here. Lucy realizes that one of the old women in the tour group must have told Charlotte that Lucy was with the Emersons. When she seems distressed, Mr. Emerson expresses sympathy for her and says, "Poor girl! Poor girl!" (24). Lucy becomes cold, and she informs him that she has no need for his pity. She goes to join her cousin.

Lucy goes out longing for adventure, hoping for something great. She buys some photographs of great artworks at a junk shop, but remains unsatisfied. Wishing that something would happen to her, Lucy enters the Piazza Signoria and as Finkelstein maintains, "discovers sexuality in the image of a tower" as a result of her unfulfilled long-repressed desires (25):

She fixed her eyes wistfully on the tower of the palace, which rose out of the lower darkness like a pillar of roughened gold. It seemed no longer a tower, no longer supported by earth, but some unattainable treasure throbbing in the tranquil sky.... Then something did happen (26).

A man is stabbed and Lucy faints into George Emerson's arms. When she comes to herself, she thanks George and asks him to fetch her photographs, which she dropped in the square. After George

comes back, they talk about the murder. After they have reflected upon the experience, George comprehends that the event has changed him, even if Lucy refuses to acknowledge its significance. “ ‘For something tremendous has happened,’ ” George argues, adding a minute later that he now understands that he “ ‘shall want to live’ ” (27). Although she professes ambivalence about the murder and its consequences, Lucy also feels changed, if only because she is no longer a naive child (28). This moment is significant for them, Trilling argues, since

[b]oth George and Lucy are young people imprisoned, Lucy by her respectability, George by a deep, neurotic *fin de siècle* pessimism. But the scene of death on the Piazza has not been lost on them. It begins, indeed, the destruction of their prisons. George has held Lucy in his arms and now wants to live. Lucy’s dull propriety begins to give way before the possibility of passion (29).

But Lucy later refuses to describe the murder for Miss Lavish and Miss Bartlett (30), as though by denying its reality to them she can also deny its implications to herself. Williams maintains that by her refusal to describe the murder, or how it has affected her, Lucy continues her slide into self-alienation (31).

Another shock, however, is one which Lucy cannot readily deny, and so it causes her to repress her passion altogether and to leave Florence immediately. She becomes wholly self-alienated since she represses an essential part of her being through her flight from George. The day after her experience in the plaza, Lucy goes on the carriage drive and finds herself envying the Italian lovers’ embrace. The tourists have descended from their carriages and broken into groups to see the view from the hillside. Lucy and George accidentally meet in a profusion of flowers:

‘Courage!’ cried her companion, now standing some six feet above. ‘Courage and love.’ She did not answer. From her feet the ground sloped sharply into the view, and violets ran down in rivulets and streams and cataracts, irrigating the hill-side with blue, eddying round the tree stems, collecting into pools in the hollows, covering the grass with spots of azure foam. But never again were they in such profusion; this terrace was the well-head, the primal source whence beauty gushed out to water the earth. Standing at its brink, like a swimmer who prepares, was the good man. But he was not the good man that she had expected, and he was alone. George had turned at the sound of her arrival. For a moment he contemplated her, as one who had fallen out of heaven. He saw radiant joy in her face, he saw the flowers beat against her dress in blue waves. The bushes above them closed. He stepped quickly forward and kissed her. Before she could speak, almost before she

could feel, a voice called, 'Lucy! Lucy! Lucy!' the silence of life had been broken by Miss Bartlett, who stood brown against the view (32).

In the rest of the novel, Lucy is caught in a conflict between the forces of middle-class repression – represented here by Miss Bartlett – and the force of her own passionate self, which Italy and the Emersons have made her begin to see. Miss Bartlett, with very little resistance from Lucy, then takes firm command of the situation by bribing the Italian driver to keep quiet about the kiss (33), by convincing Lucy that George's kiss is only an "exploit" about which he will boast to other young men (34), by dismissing George without allowing Lucy to speak to him (35), by persuading Lucy to keep the brief affair a secret from her mother (36), and, finally, by whisking her charge from Florence to Rome (37). Although she feels as though Miss Bartlett has been too harsh in her treatment of George, Lucy agrees that a change in scenery is necessary.

Rather than reflecting upon the significance of George's kiss (about which, she admits to Miss Bartlett, she does not know how she would have reacted if they had not been interrupted), Lucy agrees to act according to convention, which means that she must lie and pretend that she has been assaulted by a "cad" (38). In short, she must deceive herself by denying that George's kiss could have been sincere and that she wanted to reciprocate. This self-deception causes her to disavow her feelings, both to Miss Bartlett and, more significantly, to herself. Rahman argues that, she resists "self-discovery" and thus lapses completely into self-alienation (39). Jim Mc Williams also adds that although George has offered her an opportunity to escape a dull life, Lucy is afraid and decides to allow Miss Bartlett – who represents Edwardian convention – to control her actions, to suppress her essential self. Lucy's fall into this state of self-denial concludes the first half of the novel.

The second half of A Room with a View, set primarily at Windy Corner, England, shows that Italy's "unseen and . . . irresistible spiritual impulse" has affected Lucy even though she continues to deny her feelings toward George (40). Indeed, she is so anxious to disavow any attraction that she soon agrees to marry Cecil Vyse, even though she does not entirely like him and has twice before refused his proposals. While he may meet Miss Bartlett's standards for a chivalric lover, Cecil is a comic figure, one whom the narrator often shows to be a hypocritical prig. Cecil professes to hate snobs, for example, but he demonstrates his own bigotries when he laughs at how Mr. Emerson admires Italian art "stupidly" (41) and when he refuses to play tennis with Freddy Honeychurch, Lucy's younger brother, and Floyd, Freddy's friend (42). Even though she recognizes how intolerant her "fiasco" (Freddy's pet name for her fiancé) is toward others, Lucy nevertheless derives a certain amount of security from his company since he prevents her from thinking about George, who has made a lasting impression on her. Even Cecil notes to himself that Italy has changed Lucy for the better since

Italy had worked some marvel in her. It gave her light and ... it gave her shadow. . . . She was like a woman of Leonardo da Vinci's, whom we love not so much for herself as for the things that she will not tell us. . . . She did develop most wonderfully day by day (43).

Unfortunately for Lucy, Cecil's dissatisfaction with Lucy's town is a rejection of something that is an important part of her. He wants to remake her into something as urban and critical as himself; he seeks to shape her as he would shape a painting or a sculpture. In many ways, Cecil sees Lucy as an object that needs to be refined, or a creature that needs to be trained. He constantly compares her in his mind to a woman painted by Leonardo Da Vinci: mysterious, beautiful, the embodiment of a certain mystique. While Cecil's view of Lucy might be flattering, it is naïve and fails to treat her as a living person. He is more in love with the idea of Lucy than he is with the person.

Later in the novel, in an attempt to help her son accomplish his goal of "making" Lucy into a Vyse, Cecil's mother arranges a dinner party at which all of the guests will be "the grandchildren of famous people" (44). It is natural for Lucy to be somewhat awed by the London friends of the Vyses. She thinks that she should try to be more like the Vyses to please them, and that to marry Cecil she will have to leave behind anything in her that is of Windy Corner. At this point, Lucy thinks that this kind of self-transformation is necessary and beneficial. But something about this environment stifles her passion.

Cecil never truly understands the connection that Lucy's self has with her music, especially Beethoven, because of his selfishness in his relationship with Lucy. Music has the incredible ability to clear Lucy's mind of all her troubles and to see and evaluate life more clearly. Music plays a huge role in the communication between Cecil and Lucy at Cecil's mother's dinner party. "The grandchildren asked her to play the piano. She played Schumann. "Now some Beethoven, called Cecil ... She shook her head and played Schumann again. The melody rose, unprofitably magical. It broke; it was resumed broken ..." (45). Cecil simply can not see that the music Lucy plays on the piano is her passion, and as exemplified in the passage, Cecil asks Lucy to play something that is very dear to her, Beethoven. Lucy can't expose herself to people at the party; she cannot let the strangers see her true self and her passion for music. In fact, she can hardly play the lesser-invasive Schumann piece at the party. Thus, Cecil's failure to understand Lucy's main method of communication, music on her piano, shows that he does not understand her as a person. This makes Cecil the primary cause of the communication failure between the two because a relationship, much less love, cannot flourish without understanding one another, and understanding cannot come without ample communication.

Not only is Cecil the primary cause of the communication problems in his relationship with Lucy, his failure to see these problems ultimately damages their relationship beyond repair. In talking with his mother at the party, Cecil unknowingly proves that he does not understand that Lucy's small act of defiance by not playing Beethoven for his friends is actually a communication problem: " 'But her music!' he exclaimed. 'The style of her! How she kept to Schumann when, like an idiot, I wanted Beethoven. Schumann was right for this evening. Schumann was the thing' " (46). Clearly, Cecil believes that Lucy simply avoids playing Beethoven because she knows that Schumann will be more appropriate for the occasion. If he understands that Lucy's music is the main outlet and the key to her passion, he then knows the reasons for her disobedience. In talking to his mother, Cecil almost tries to make himself feel and look better about Lucy's direct defiance of his request to play what he wants at the party. Again, because Cecil cannot identify that he even has a problem listening to and understanding Lucy through her strongest method of communication, he can not take any steps to fix the problem. Her piano playing is her strength, her existence, and most importantly, her outlet. Cecil simply can't understand the importance of Lucy's music, so in effects, he is unable to understand the true essence of her. This ultimately ends their relationship because Cecil can't see that Lucy needs to be a free and independent woman. She needs to be more than the "woman of Leonardo da Vinci's, whom we love not so much for herself as for the things that she will not tell us" (47). This is what Cecil clearly wants her to be, but it is not the life she wants for herself.

Unfortunately, Cecil, acting as the "Comic Muse," unwittingly brings their engagement to a sudden end. This end comes after Cecil invites the Emersons to rent a vacant cottage near the Honeychurch house since he thinks it will be great fun to watch its snobbish landlord, Sir Harry Otway, and the socialistic Mr. Emerson argue about politics (48). Lucy is upset about having George Emerson so close, and, after Freddy invites him to play tennis, matters come to a head.

Following a tennis match, as Lucy, George, and Cecil sit in the garden, Lucy's "fiasco" begins to read from Under a Loggia, a recently published novel by "Joseph Emery Prank," which is Eleanor Lavish's pseudonym (49). During the reading, Lucy and George realize that the novel, a romance about a brief love affair in Florence, is based upon their encounter in the Italian meadow. The effect is immediate: Lucy, horribly embarrassed though outwardly composed, starts toward the house, with George and Cecil following her. Cecil, however, has left behind his novel and turns back. In the moment that he is gone, George, "who loved passionately," kisses Lucy and then runs off (50). Cecil then rejoins his fiancée, too self-centered to realize that anything has happened in his brief absence. Later that afternoon, however, Lucy confronts George and forbids him to come near her again. George protests that he loves her, adding that Cecil " 'should know no one intimately, least of all a woman' " since he is the "sort" who can " 'kill when they come to people' " (51). Moreover, George argues, his rival will never allow Lucy the independence to form her own thoughts. After Lucy criticizes his

outburst, George, wearily, concedes:

‘I’m the same kind of brute at bottom. This desire to govern a woman —it lies very deep, and men and women must fight it together before they shall enter the garden. But I do love you. ... I want you to have your own thoughts even when I hold you in my arms (52).

But Lucy rejects his plea, and George is forced to leave brokenhearted, saying, “ ‘I have been in the dark, and I am going back into it, unless you will try to understand’ ” (53).

That night, Lucy breaks her engagement to Cecil — citing the same arguments, and many of the same phrases, that George had used to attack Cecil’s character earlier that day — and declares that she will never marry (54). Later, as her lamp goes out, throwing her into literal darkness just as she had earlier thrown George into the figurative darkness of pessimism, Lucy gives up “trying to understand herself,” joining instead the “vast armies of the benighted, who follow neither the heart nor the brain ...” (55). Lucy, the narrator adds, voluntarily enlists into the same “army” that Miss Bartlett had joined some thirty years before (56), which means that Lucy’s self-alienation has now become complete.

Jim Mc Williams asserts that although she has successfully resisted Cecil’s attempts to suppress her personality, Lucy has now fully embraced self-alienation through her lies to George that she does not love him. In fact, she even lies to herself when she decides she will become a spinster, a woman who cares for “liberty and not for men” (57). She has come to believe, as does Eleanor Lavish, that marriage always enslaves women, that wives are never allowed to stand as equal partners with their husbands. To demonstrate her new determination to never marry, Lucy proposes to join two elderly spinsters on a trip to Greece, shocking her mother who had expected her daughter to settle back into Windy Corner following the split with Cecil. But Lucy desires independence; she tells Mrs. Honeychurch that she intends to move to London and to take a flat. For a moment, Lucy’s dour voice and facial expressions resemble Miss Bartlett’s, and her mother says that lately Lucy has come to be the mirror image of her erstwhile chaperon: “ ‘The same eternal worrying, the same taking back of words. You and Charlotte trying to divide two apples among three people last night might be sisters’ ” (58). Lucy resents any comparisons to Miss Bartlett, and so her mother’s criticisms sting, but she does not have long to reflect upon them because, as their carriage passes by the Emersons’ cottage, Lucy and her mother see that it is once again for rent. “Waste,” is Lucy’s initial thought when she realizes that George has moved away because he could no longer bear to live so close to her. “Wasted plans, wasted money, wasted love, and she had wounded her mother,” Lucy thinks with despair (59).

A short time later, as Miss Bartlett and her mother go to church, Lucy, who feels too upset to

join them, enters Mr. Beebe's study, only to find a very tired Mr. Emerson already sitting in front of the fire. He appears ill, although his words to her are as spirited as ever. After blaming himself for his son's impulsive nature (he had taught him to pursue love vigorously, wherever it might lead), Mr. Emerson says that George has "gone under," that Lucy's rejection has devastated his son, who no longer wants to live (60). Lucy apologizes for the trouble that she has caused, but lies to Mr. Emerson when she says that she and Cecil are looking forward to a life of happiness together. After a minute or two, however, she realizes that she cannot deceive any longer, and so she tells Mr. Emerson that she has broken her engagement. Excited, he bursts out, " 'You love George!' " (61). And, try as she might, Lucy cannot deny the truth, to Mr. Emerson or to herself. She begins to cry as Mr. Emerson praises love, and, after Mr. Beebe enters the room, sobs, " 'Mr. Beebe — I have misled you — I have misled myself —' " (62). As she finally ends her self-alienation by confessing her love for George, the narrator notes that, in gaining George for herself, Lucy feels as if "she would gain something for the whole world" (63). After she marries George, the final scene of the novel finds the lovers once again in Florence, their love "attained" (64).

Jim Mc Williams in Muted Groups in E.M. Foster's Edwardian Novels concludes that A Room with a View thus traces Lucy Honeychurch's evolution from a young woman suppressed by the conventions of traditional Edwardian society —exemplified first by Miss Bartlett and then by Cecil Vyse — into a mature woman determined to make the important decisions regarding her own life. Rather than choosing either of the roles that seemed available to her — a conventional marriage with Cecil, or spinsterhood, with the two elderly Miss Aliens and Miss Bartlett as examples — Lucy instead follows her instincts and connects with a man who not only inspires passion within her heart but also promises her freedom (65). In other words, Lucy chooses "the ultimate personal relation between two equal individuals, a relation which includes 'tenderness,' 'comradeship,' and 'poetry' " (66).

Forster's favorite social critic, Edward Carpenter, had long advocated such marriages as the one between Lucy and George, arguing that women should never be " 'the serf, but the equal, the mate, and the comrade' " of their husbands (67). He believed that such marriages would strengthen England because, rather than being a financial burden, women would gain the right to work and to make decisions regarding their own welfare. Such marriages as Lucy's and George's, then, would be just the first step toward a better society, one in which all people are equal and enjoy the same privileges.

Like Carpenter, Forster believed that relationships based upon love would strengthen England. The marriage between Lucy and George, Forster hints, is a microcosm of a better society, one without class distinctions. Thus, when she selects George, a railroad clerk, over Cecil, Lucy "rejects the hierarchical structures, both social and sexual, which are fundamental to the 'chivalric' code of her

class, in favour of ... social equality and sexual comradeship” (68).

For this significant decision, she is willing to be “alienated” from her family, who cannot forgive her choice in husbands (69). Like Maurice Hall, who is equally willing to forego his family, social position, and money if his lover will enter into the “greenwood” with him, Lucy is willing to sacrifice all for her love: She is willing to go into exile in Florence until her family accepts her as an individual. Lucy’s maturation into a person who comes to rely upon her own instincts rather than what society dictates as morally correct consequently represents a woman who has emancipated herself from the social forces which would keep her suppressed.

- (1) E.M. Forster, A Room with a View 9.
- (2) Ibid., p.9.
- (3) Richard Martin, The Love That Failed: Ideal and Reality in the Writings of E.M. Forster 76.
- (4) Forster. A Room with a View 17,18.
- (5) Ibid., p.17.
- (6) Ibid., p.18.
- (7) Ibid., p.18.
- (8) Ibid., p.18.
- (9) Ibid., p.32.
- (10) Lionel Trilling, E.M. Forster 100.
- (11) Martin. The Love That Failed 77.
- (12) Forster. A Room with a View 34.
- (13) Ibid., p.36.
- (14) Ibid., p.36.
- (15) Ibid., p.45.
- (16) Ibid., p.45.
- (17) Ibid., pp.45,46.
- (18) Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein, Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 68.
- (19) Forster. A Room with a View 25.
- (20) Ibid., p.30.
- (21) Martin. The Love That Failed 77.
- (22) Forster. A Room with a View 31,32.
- (23) Jim Mc Williams, Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 36.
- (24) Forster. A Room with a View 33.
- (25) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 77.
- (26) Forster. A Room with a View 48.
- (27) Ibid., pp.42, 44.
- (28) Ibid., p.43.
- (29) Trilling. E.M. Forster 100.
- (30) Forster. A Room with a View 46, 47.
- (31) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 37.
- (32) Forster. A Room with a View 75.
- (33) Ibid., p.69.
- (34) Ibid., p.72.
- (35) Ibid., pp.72, 73.

- (36) Ibid., p.75.
- (37) Ibid., pp.76, 77.
- (38) Ibid., p.76.
- (39) Tariq Rahman, Double Plot in Forster's A Room with a View 56, 57.
- (40) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 39.
- (41) Forster. A Room with a View 114, 15.
- (42) Ibid., p.164.
- (43) Ibid., p.87.
- (44) Ibid., p.118.
- (45) Ibid., p.129.
- (46) Ibid., p.130.
- (47) Ibid., p.104.
- (48) Ibid., pp.113, 14.
- (49) Ibid., p.153.
- (50) Ibid., p.156.
- (51) Ibid., p.161.
- (52) Ibid., p.162.
- (53) Ibid., p.163.
- (54) Ibid., p.169.
- (55) Ibid., pp.169, 70.
- (56) Ibid., p.170.
- (57) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 44.
- (58) Forster. A Room with a View 189.
- (59) Ibid., p.191.
- (60) Ibid., pp.193, 94.
- (61) Ibid., p.197.
- (62) Ibid., p.199.
- (63) Ibid., p.199.
- (64) Ibid., p.204.
- (65) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 45.
- (66) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 87.
- (67) Tony Brown, Edward Carpenter and the Evolution of A Room with a View 289.
- (68) Ibid., p.292.
- (69) Forster. A Room with a View 202.

CHAPTER III

HOWARDS END

Although E. M. Forster's fourth novel has two other round female characters Helen Schlegel and Ruth Wilcox, in addition to its many flat female characters – Evie Wilcox, Dolly Wilcox, Jacky Bast, Frieda Mosbach, and Mrs. Munt, Margaret Schlegel is the focus of Howards End (1910). Indeed, Howards End is the only novel out of Forster's six novels that is populated by such a large assortment of female characters. Even the narrative voice is occasionally feminine; at one point, for instance, it remarks that

[p]ity was at the bottom of her [Margaret's] actions all through this crisis. Pity, if one may generalize, is at the bottom of woman. When men like us, it is for our better qualities, and however tender their liking, we dare not be unworthy of it, or they will quietly let us go (1).

Unlike Forster's first two novels (Where Angels Fear to Tread and The Longest Journey), Howards End lacks any male bonding to disrupt relations between men and women. This dearth of males led Forster to believe that Howards End – praised as his masterpiece by many of his critics – to be his least interesting novel, noting in a 1958 entry in his Commonplace Book that it lacks “a single character” whom he liked or cared about (2). Forster, however, expressed his feelings regarding Howards End:

Howards End my best novel and approaching a good novel. Very elaborate and all pervading plot that is seldom tiresome or forced, range of characters, social sense, wit, wisdom, colour. Have only just discovered why I don't care for it: not a single character in it for whom I care ... I feel pride in the achievement, but I cannot love it (3).

By “social sense,” Forster presumably meant that he liked how clear his theme about the necessity of connections between individuals is portrayed in his novel. The beginning chapters of Howards End are mainly devoted to introducing the two families around whose lives the novel is centered and to giving some idea of their moral, intellectual and national identities. The Schlegels, represented by Margaret and Helen (and, to a lesser extent, Tibby and Aunt Juley), are intellectual, idealistic, somewhat flighty, romantic, and impractical, dedicated to “personal relations” above all things. The Wilcoxes, on the other hand, are hard-nosed, pragmatic, materialistic, and patriotic. The only thing connecting the two families is money: they are both quite well-off, and represent two different facets of the English upper class (or upper-middle class) at the time in which the novel is set.

The Schlegels represent culture, education, and a kind of idealism that Forster implies can only be obtained when one does not have to worry about money. The Wilcoxes represent the work ethic, materialism, imperialism (Paul is going to the British Colony in Nigeria), conventionalism, and form. Not surprisingly, the Wilcoxes are often characterized as “solid English”, and exhibit the emotional restraint and repressive conformity Forster considered typical in the England of his time. The Schlegels, coming from an English mother and a German father, are more cosmopolitan and far less conventional. In the pre-World War I years in which the novel is set, the conflict between England and Germany is just beginning to escalate into prejudice and hatred. The Schlegels face some unpleasantness about their German background, especially from people like the Wilcoxes; but they represent an older form of German nationalism held over from the time of Kant and Goethe.

Indeed, “Only connect” is his epigraph for Howards End, and these two words serve as a constant reminder of Margaret’s fundamental purpose: She is to “connect the prose and the passion” so that “both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its height” (4). In other words, Margaret’s primary objective is to bridge the “prose” of the Wilcoxes with the “passion” of the Schlegels, which means the reconciliation that Helen and Mr. Wilcox attain through her is just the sort of reconciliations between antitheses that must be found to ensure a better society in England. Furthermore, Margaret’s own personal growth from a suppressed woman into an individual free to make decisions about her life represents the sort of maturation each person must undergo in order to become a complete human being.

Even though she is more developed intellectually at the beginning of Howards End than Lucy Honeychurch is at the beginning of A Room with a View, Margaret, like Lucy, lacks experience in day-to-day life. With her younger sister, Helen, she spends much of her time in liberal discussion groups, asserting how terrible capitalism and colonialism are, even though she has had little contact with those who truly suffer. Just as the Stephen sisters populated their house in Bloomsbury with progressive thinkers, the Schlegel sisters “filled the tall thin house at Wickham Place” with people like themselves, intellectuals who argue passionately for “[t]emperance, tolerance, and sexual equality” (5). When, however, they meet the Wilcox family while vacationing in Germany, Margaret and Helen encounter a perspective very different from their own, a perspective that echoes the social Darwinism espoused by the leading capitalists of the day. Mr. Wilcox, the patriarch of the Wilcoxes, believes that poverty is inevitable in any modern civilization, and that people like himself and the Schlegels should never worry about its existence: “The poor are poor, and one’s sorry for them, but there it is. As civilization moves forward, the shoe is bound to pinch in places, and it’s absurd to pretend that anyone is responsible personally” (6).

Ironically, it is Helen – the more progressive of the two sisters – who falls for Mr. Wilcox’s argument about the necessity of a class system as, while on a visit to Howards End, the Wilcoxes’ summer home, she becomes enthralled by his stolid self-assurance. When, for instance, Mr. Wilcox and his eldest son, Charles, dismiss her arguments for sexual and economic equality between people, Helen appreciates their efficient logic since both men sound quite persuasive when all she can do is argue emotionally (7). “One by one,” the narrator says, “the Schlegel fetiches had been overthrown, and, though professing to defend them, she had rejoiced” (8). The one anomaly in this Wilcox family is Mr. Wilcox’s wife, Ruth, who cares nothing for politics or economics because her sole concern is for the welfare of her family and for the upkeep of Howards End, her ancestral home. While she likes Mrs. Wilcox, too, it is the male Wilcoxes that Helen especially admires. With her defences thus lowered, Helen impulsively falls in love with their youngest son, Paul.

Just as impulsively, however, she comes to despise Wilcoxism. What causes her to reject their philosophy, she later tells Margaret, is that she soon recognizes the vapidness of an existence which shows no concern for the welfare of other human beings. When Paul shows fear that she will use his impulsive kiss as an engagement for marriage, Helen says that his obvious fright was “too awful,” adding:

When I saw all the others so placid, and Paul mad with terror in case I said the wrong thing, I felt for a moment that the whole Wilcox family was a fraud, just a wall of newspapers and motor-cars and golf-clubs, and that if it fell I should find nothing behind it but panic and emptiness (9).

Helen then repudiates the Wilcoxes with the exception of Ruth Wilcox for their triviality, believing that they are so superficial in their intelligence, and so preoccupied with worldly gains, that they can never recognize the value of an unseen, inner life, which means that they can never appreciate what matters – personal relations between individuals. In fact, Helen comes to see Mr. Wilcox as nothing more than a “prosperous vulgarian” (10). She hopes therefore never to see the Wilcoxes again, a position she maintains until the very end of the novel. Margaret, even though she acknowledges the value of men like Mr. Wilcox, without whose character and “grit” England would fall apart, agrees with Helen that Schlegels and Wilcoxes do not mix (11).

Helen’s catch phrase in *Howards End* is “panic and emptiness,” words which describe a feeling of anxiety and fear which overwhelms her whenever she is confronted by the reality of the modern world. She uses the phrase a half-dozen times in the novel. Jim Mc Williams emphasizes that each time it signifies her feelings about the vacuousness of Edwardian society with its emphasis upon conspicuous wealth (12). As Denis Godfrey points out, Forster intends for Helen to represent the

antithesis of Mr. Wilcox: Helen “exalts” the unseen world while ignoring the visible one, while Mr. Wilcox does just the opposite (13). Although she gains the reader’s sympathy in a way that Mr. Wilcox never can, ultimately, Godfrey adds, Helen’s method of day-to-day life is less practical than Mr. Wilcox’s (14). In one of the novel’s most famous scenes, for instance, Helen rushes from a London performance of Beethoven’s Fifth Symphony after she visualizes goblins and dancing elephants produced by the powerful music:

For, as if things were going too far, Beethoven took hold of the goblins and made them do what he wanted. He appeared in person. He gave them a little push, and they began to walk in a major key instead of in a minor, and then – he blew with his mouth and they were scattered! Gusts of splendour, gods and demi-gods contending with vast swords, colour and fragrance broadcast on the field of battle, magnificent victory, magnificent death! Oh, it all burst before the girl, and she even stretched out her gloved hands as if it was tangible. Any fate was titanic; any contest desirable; conqueror and conquered would alike be applauded by the angels of the utmost stars.

And the goblins – they had not really been there at all? They were only the phantoms of cowardice and unbelief? One healthy human impulse would dispel them? Men like the Wilcoxes, or President Roosevelt, would say yes. Beethoven knew better. The goblins really had been there. They might return – and they did. It was as if the splendour of life might boil over and waste to steam and froth. In its dissolution one heard the terrible, ominous note, and a goblin, with increased malignity, walked quietly over the universe from end to end. Panic and emptiness! Panic and emptiness! Even the flaming ramparts of the world might fall (15).

These phantasms, especially the goblins which observe her that “there was no such thing as splendour or heroism in the world” (16), seem intent upon destroying her idealism by demonstrating the futility of believing in the potential excellence of man. Helen then becomes overwhelmed by “panic and emptiness” as she thinks there might not be any good in the world, and so she dashes from the theatre, inadvertently taking the umbrella of Leonard Bast along with her. This scene illustrates very well her inability to cope with a world that could lack “splendour or heroism,” or one that might refuse to acknowledge “the magnificence of life and of death” (17). As Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein points out, Helen’s goblins “parallel Conrad’s heart of darkness,” but, while Marlow can penetrate into the heart of darkness, understand it, and then return intact with the knowledge of its power, Helen cannot tolerate her metaphorical goblins, much less attempt to understand them (18). Instead, she runs from them, eventually leaving England for Europe after a sexual encounter with Bast.

Although she does not have the surfeit of passion found in her younger sister, Margaret, too, suffers from a lack of experience in day-to-day affairs, a fact made plain to her through her brief, yet intense, friendship with Ruth Wilcox, a woman of limited education but one who possesses “wisdom which is traditional and ancestral” (19).

Ruth Wilcox is the most sympathetic character, as she must be in her divine role of shaping the lives of the others. She knows she is dying but keeps it secret, and seeks a spiritual heir for her beloved Howards End where she was born and where she receives the strength necessary to help her husband and family. She must find someone equal to these responsibilities and arrange that they are undertaken. We meet her when she prevents a vulgar brawl between the families, when it is discovered that Helen and Paul have foolishly thought they were in love and should engage to marry:

She seemed to belong not to the young people and their motor, but to the house, and to the tree that overshadowed it. One knew that she worshipped the past, and that the instinctive wisdom the past can alone bestow had descended upon her – that wisdom to which we give the clumsy name of aristocracy. High born she might not be. But assuredly she cared about her ancestors, and let them help her. When she saw Charles angry, Paul frightened, and Mrs. Munt in tears, she heard her ancestors say, ‘Separate those human beings who will hurt each other most. The rest can wait’ (20).

She has the wisdom which gives her early knowledge of what goes on and the wisdom to be silent until speech is needed. “It’s all right, dear. They have broken off the engagement”, she assures Charles (21).

We see very little of her, even through the eyes of the other characters and this is for clear purpose. There are references to Margaret’s appreciation of her good sense just before it is realized that the old lady is seeking her friendship, and may have arranged meetings:

Perhaps the elder lady ... may have detected in the other and less charming of the sisters a deeper sympathy, a sounder judgement. She was capable of detecting such things. Perhaps it was she who had desired the Miss Schlegels to be invited to Howards End, and Margaret whose presence she had particularly desired. All this is speculation: Mrs Wilcox left few clear indications behind her (22).

The reflection is vague, because she is to be a greater influence as a spirit. The blurring is justified in the next reference, when once again we see her through Margaret’s eyes:

She was not intellectual, nor even alert, and it was odd that, all the same, she should give the idea of greatness. Margaret, zigzagging with her friends over Thought and Art, was conscious of a personality that transcended their own and dwarfed their activities. There was no bitterness in Mrs Wilcox; there was not even criticism; she was lovable, and no ungracious or uncharitable word had passed her lips. Yet she and daily life were out of focus: one or the other must show blurred (23).

And again, just at the end of the same scene: “ ‘I am used to young people,’ said Mrs Wilcox, and with each word she spoke the outlines of known things grew dim” (24). The friendship between the two ladies which is to be the sweet presiding influence in the story is cemented in that scene and the chapter ends with a typical gently ironic twist. The conversation ceased suddenly when Margaret went back to the room: “Her friends had been talking over her new friend and had dismissed her as uninteresting” (25).

Certainly she was simple and may have seemed colourless but her simplicity was of the order which is achieved beyond complication and is the voice of truth. As her husband is speaking about her after the funeral:

Ruth knew no more of worldly wickedness and wisdom than did the flowers in her garden, or the grass in her field. Her idea of business – ‘Henry, why do people who have enough money try to get more money?’ Her idea of politics – ‘I am sure that if the mothers of various nations could meet, there would be no more wars’ (26).

After the Wilcoxes take a house across the street from the Schlegel home, Mrs. Wilcox invites Margaret for a visit. The two women, however, do not get along very well at first. When, for example, Mrs. Wilcox states that she wishes she were back at Howards End, instead of living in London since there is nothing in the city which interests her, Margaret, “scandalized,” blurts out that there will be many exhibitions and concerts in the coming months (27). Moreover, when Margaret takes her leave, Mrs. Wilcox, without intending any offense, calls her a “girl.” Margaret, “annoyed,” states that she is twenty-nine, which is “not so wildly girlish” (28). With good humor, Mrs. Wilcox explains to her that – a married woman of fifty-one – Margaret is indeed “inexperienced” (29). After a moment of reflection, Margaret concedes to Mrs. Wilcox’s point, saying that she hopes to learn to live “by proportion” – to keep herself balanced at all times (30). When Mrs. Wilcox agrees that proportion should be a person’s goal in life, their friendship is sealed.

Margaret, however, still has much to learn from Mrs. Wilcox, as she realizes when she invites the older woman to a meeting of progressive thinkers at her house. Quite simply, the luncheon is a disaster since Mrs. Wilcox fails to fit into the circle of young men and women, whose minds “dart” from one topic to the next. Rather than debate politics or economics, Mrs. Wilcox would prefer to discuss practical matters, such as the weather or train service: “Clever talk alarmed her,” the narrator points out, “it was the social counterpart of a motor-car, all jerks, and she was a wisp of hay, a flower” (31). As Mrs. Wilcox is leaving the luncheon, Margaret, “with a sudden revulsion,” condemns her friends’ idle chatter as akin to “gibbering monkeys” with nothing better to do (32). She begs Mrs. Wilcox’s forgiveness, which is swiftly given, and then, “with a new-born emotion,” they part with their friendship stronger than before (33). As Finkelstein point outs, for Margaret, unfortunately, her new friend soon dies, but not before she has shown Margaret “how to care deeply for a place, for roots” (34). Margaret, whose home in Wickham Place is to be pulled down for a block of flats, realizes that she and her siblings lack the stability that a *Howards End* could have given them since they never possessed an ancestral home. She also gains from Mrs. Wilcox a new sense of proportion, a sense that the unseen world, in which Helen believes, must be balanced with the seen world, in which Mr. Wilcox places his faith.

At the end, when Margaret and Helen are at last in *Howards End* together, Margaret acknowledges the influence of Ruth Wilcox in their lives:

I feel that you and I and Henry are only fragments of that woman’s mind. She knows everything. She is everything. She is the house, and the tree that leans over it. People have their own deaths as well as their own lives, and even if there is nothing beyond death, we shall differ in our nothingness. I cannot believe that knowledge such as hers will perish with knowledge such as mine. She knew about realities (35).

As Godfrey states, while Helen comes more and more to embrace the primacy of the unseen world, which leads inexorably to tragedy since she, through her “sheer inattention to the details and processes of the visible world” (36), destroys Leonard and Jacky Bast, Margaret, meanwhile, dedicates herself to “the building of the rainbow bridge that should connect the prose in us with the passion” (37).

Margaret, for instance, writes in a letter to her sister that, instead of working to preserve the barrier between the unseen and the seen, people should always aspire to bridge the gulf between the two worlds: “Don’ t brood too much ... on the superiority of the unseen to the seen. It’s true, but to brood on it is mediaeval. Our business is not to contrast the two, but to reconcile them” (38).

In a sense, as Finkelstein points out, Margaret fails to learn the full truth of her words until the end of the novel, when she comes to epitomize the Bloomsbury ideal: She grows into an “androgynous mind” that can reconcile feminine passion with masculine prose (39). Rather than destroying relationships, as her sister has done, Margaret thus serves to build relationships – specifically, she provides a bridge between her sister and her husband and their two very different worlds.

At the back of the cult of personal relations is the struggle to realize the self, so that life has form and colour and design. In the last chapter, when the chief characters are together in a glow of friendly happiness which is the spirit of *Howards End* in Hertfordshire, Helen confesses to Margaret that she feels something wanting in herself, and Margaret from the sure background of the house is able to comfort and reassure her:

All over the world men and women are worrying because they cannot develop as they are supposed to develop. Here and there they have the matter out, and it comforts them. Don't fret yourself, Helen. Develop what you have; love your child. I do not love children. I am thankful to have none. I can play with their beauty and charm, but that is all –nothing real, not one scrap of what there ought to be. And others – others go farther still, and move outside humanity altogether. A place, as well as a person, may catch the glow. Don't you see that all this leads to comfort in the end? It is part of the battle against sameness. Differences – eternal differences, planted by God in a single family, so that there may always be colour; sorrow perhaps, but colour in the daily grey (40).

Before she can accept her responsibility to build a “rainbow bridge,” however, Margaret must first recognize her own true self, which she does after risking self-alienation through her lies to Mr. Wilcox before and immediately after their marriage. When they are in a restaurant, for example, Mr. Wilcox asks about the interest she has expressed in the unseen – he wants to know if she truly believes “in the supernatural and all that” (41). Margaret subsequently tries to please him by dismissing her speculations about the existence of “auras” and “astral planes” as simply her attempts to be “funny” (42). Furthermore, even though she prefers fish pie and Gruyere, she allows Mr. Wilcox to select saddle of mutton and Stilton for her lunch (43).

In short, Jim Mc Williams concludes that she willingly allows her personality to be eclipsed by his since she knows that he expects women to defer to men. Yet, through her efforts to subordinate herself to him, Margaret acts dishonestly, both toward Mr. Wilcox and, more significantly, toward herself (44).

Later, after she and Mr. Wilcox become formally engaged to be married, Margaret again concedes to a dominant male Wilcox when she allows Charles to characterize her leap from a moving automobile – one which has just killed a cat – as an attack of “nerves” (45). Instead of explaining to Mr. Wilcox that she had felt an obligation to help the little girl whose pet has been run over, Margaret allows Charles to speak for her, thus voluntarily suppressing herself before her fiancé (46). Similarly, she finds it imperative to lie to Mr. Wilcox – to manipulate him – when she wants him to offer Bast a job (47). In this particular instance, Margaret knows that she must influence Mr. Wilcox through flattery and deception, instead of exercising the logic that she would prefer to use:

Now she understood why some women prefer influence to rights. Mrs. Plynlmmon, when condemning suffragettes, had said: ‘The woman who can’t influence her husband to vote the way she wants ought to be ashamed of herself.’ Margaret had winced, but she was influencing Henry now, and though pleased at her little victory, she knew that she had won it by the methods of the harem (48).

In this case, Margaret deliberately chooses not to debate the question of whether or not Mr. Wilcox is morally responsible for Bast losing his job as Helen would have her do, but, instead, decides to appear meek before her husband, as though she is only asking a favor of him and would not think of questioning his judgement.

After their marriage, Margaret continues to allow Mr. Wilcox to dominate her; whenever he calls to her, for example, she drops the book she has been reading so that she may attend to every one of his needs (49). Mr. Wilcox, consequently, has thoroughly suppressed his wife’s strong personality by compelling her to become the sort of woman that he desires, which means that Margaret is obliged to play the role of a prosperous London businessman’s wife, instead of being an intellectual patron of the arts, the role that she would prefer to play since it is her own. Just as Charles Herriton had suppressed Lilia in Where Angels Fear to Tread, and just as Cecil Vyse had suppressed Lucy Honeychurch before she ended their engagement in A Room with a View, so Mr. Wilcox has now suppressed Margaret. But when Mr. Wilcox attempts to force her to renounce Helen after her sister reveals her illegitimate pregnancy, Margaret can no longer remain silent.

Following her husband’s refusal to allow Helen to spend even a single night in Howards End because it would dishonour the memory of Ruth Wilcox, Margaret—“with the precipice in sight” (50) – decides to use her husband’s infidelity as a weapon to demonstrate his hypocrisy. She argues that Mr. Wilcox’s affair should excuse her sister’s indiscretion, adding that she will force him to “see the connection” even if it should “kill” him:

Not any more of this!' she cried. 'You shall see the connexion if it kills you, Henry! You have had a mistress – I forgave you. My sister has a lover – you drive her from the house. Do you see the connexion? Stupid, hypocritical, cruel – oh, contemptible! – a man who insults his wife, when she's alive and cants with her memory when she is dead. A man who ruins a woman for his pleasure, and casts her off to ruin other men. And gives bad financial advice, and then says he is not responsible. These men are you. You can't recognize them, because you cannot connect. I've had enough of your unweeded kindness. I've spoiled you long enough. All your life you have been spoiled. Mrs. Wilcox spoiled you. No one has ever told you what you are – muddled, criminally muddled. Men like you use repentance as a blind, so don't repent. Only say to yourself, "What Helen has done, I've done" (51).

Since she so correctly points to the source of his masculine "obtuseness," Margaret's condemnation of Mr. Wilcox's double standard, in K.W. Grandsen's words, is "one of the finest and deadliest pieces of feminism to have been written in the era of the suffragettes" (52). Mr. Wilcox, like other men of his class, Grandsen adds, is used to getting what he wants from women since all his life women have deferred to him. He never stops to consider what Margaret's feelings might be about her sister's pregnancy since he believes her opinions to be wholly superfluous. In other words, he suppresses Margaret by treating her as an inferior intellect. Like other upper-middle-class men, he sees her as nothing more than a form of "mere chattel," as Edward Carpenter had described women trapped in such marriages (53). Because of his "obtuseness," Mr. Wilcox cannot comprehend the connection that Margaret tries so hard to show him.

Margaret, however, refuses to remain suppressed, and so decides to defy her husband when she and Helen spend a night together in *Howards End*. Following Charles's violent confrontation with Bast the next day, leading to the clerk's death from a heart attack, Margaret further decides to end her marriage by moving to Europe with Helen. She realizes that she cannot forgive her husband's "obtuseness," that his refusal to connect "on the clearest issue that can be laid before a man ..." means that she can no longer love him (54). Her speech about him being "spoiled" was "perfect," she also realizes, since it had been addressed not just to her husband but also to "thousands of men like him – a protest against the inner darkness in high places that comes with a commercial age" (55). Essentially, she now sees herself as an advocate for suppressed women everywhere.

With her decision to leave Mr. Wilcox, Margaret has successfully resisted his attempts to suppress her, but she now risks repudiating her role as the builder of "the rainbow bridge that should connect the prose in us with the passion" through that same decision. Her determination to end their marriage, however, leads Mr. Wilcox, confessing that the prospect of his son in prison for the

manslaughter of Bast has “broken” him, to tell Margaret that he feels “ended” (56). His “fortress” subsequently crumbles entirely as he begs for her forgiveness and places himself into her hands (57). Accordingly, Jim Mc Williams claims that Margaret then becomes able to fulfill her purpose in life, to unite the prose of the Wilcoxes with the passion of the Schlegels, while at the same time she can express herself freely as an individual since she is no longer suppressed by Mr. Wilcox (58). In Finkelstein’s terms, rather than remaining a member of a particular gender or social class, Margaret has become an independent human being (59). In short, Margaret now refuses to allow others –her husband included – to define her, or to control her words and actions. Instead, like Lucy Honeychurch, she has learned that she must always be an individual.

Jim Mc Williams, in his penetrating analysis of the novel, maintains that Margaret’s relationship with Henry Wilcox thus serves as an exemplary of the sort of reconciliation, or “rainbow bridge,” between antitheses that is necessary if England is to gain a better society (60). Furthermore, her sister’s union with Leonard Bast, although it leads to tragedy for Bast himself, represents a symbolic union between the middle class and the working class that brings an additional reconciliation between antitheses. Significantly, Mr. Wilcox chooses to ensure that Helen’s baby son, the product of that union, will eventually inherit Howards End (61), the house which began as a farm, and then became a weekend residence for an industrialist and his family. Margaret herself is optimistic about the future, now that she has seen how connections can reconcile opposites: She tells Helen that England’s capitalistic society therefore

may be followed by a civilization that won’t be a movement, because it will rest on the earth. All the signs are against it now, but I can’t help hoping, and very early in the morning in the garden I feel that our house is the future as well as the past (62).

While she waits for such an agrarian civilization, Margaret is content to exile herself from life in London and live in the country.

Thus, reconciliation, represented in the figure of Mrs. Wilcox, is the key note of Howards End. Forster prefers the term “connection” which Margaret uses in her crucial speech to Henry (63) and which is used in the novel’s epigraph. The word “connect” is not used with such deliberation in the earlier novels, although the idea behind it is not new in Howards End. The requirement that the hero should connect by moving above and across conventional social boundaries is clearly present in all of Forster’s major fiction. What is new in Howards End is the explicit demand that not only should the characters connect by establishing social contacts among themselves – Schlegels with Wilcoxes, Schlegels and Wilcoxes with Basts – but that individuals, and in particular those of the villain’s party who are not generally inclined to do so, should connect the disparate aspects of their own human nature. The requirement is applied specifically to Henry, who must see that the aspect of humanity

which manifests itself in such events as Leonard's affair with Helen and his own past dealings with Jacky cannot be held in conceptual isolation from the conventional world of civilized self-control.

To Margaret, as heroine and as the "spiritual heir" of Mrs. Wilcox, falls the task of enforcing this connection. Here are the terms in which she sees the undertaking:

Margaret greeted her lord with peculiar tenderness on the morrow. Mature as he was, she might yet be able to help him to the building of the rainbow bridge that should connect the prose in us with the passion. Without it we are meaningless fragments, half monks, half beasts, unconnected arches that have never joined into a man. With it love is horn . . . Only connect! That was the whole of her sermon. Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its highest. Live in fragments no longer. Only connect, and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation that is life to either, will die (64).

The demand for connection, in the sense of moving freely between the two Forsterian worlds – the two "sides of the hedge," the everyday world of social norms and the arcadian or paradisaical world of individual self-realization – has its roots in earlier stories. The image of the "rainbow bridge" used in this passage from Howards End occurs in "The Celestial Omnibus" as the means of travelling between earth and heaven, and is alluded to in the opening scene of The Longest Journey when someone plays the prelude to Rheingold on Rickie's piano (65). The earliest heroes, Eustace and Philip, are bridge-builders like Margaret, in the sense that, through their own visionary experiences, they are able to cross the gap between the two planes of living. Margaret, however, requires additional connection in a psychological sense, the connection by the individual of otherwise desperate elements of his own personality. The demand for self-knowledge and for psychic integration is implicit, in the earlier stories – in, for example, Rickie's obligation to reconsider his own life in the light of his revealed relationship to Stephen – but it is given a newly explicit development in Howards End.

The reconciliation emphasized in Howards End is therefore not only the social reconciliation achieved in the final pages as Margaret brings most of the central characters into peaceful coexistence under one roof, but also, and more fundamentally, the reconciliation within the individual of conflicting impulses and self-images. Not only must Margaret reunite with Henry, Henry with Helen, and all three with Leonard represented by his infant son, but also, in doing so, each must reconcile or connect for himself the range of conceptual polarities exposed by the story – prose and passion, seen and unseen, masculine and feminine, new and old.

The psychological emphasis in Howards End marks a major step forward in Forster's development as a novelist. In the earlier novels the issue of connection is handled on a largely

allegorical level: Lucy connects by rejecting the incomplete personality of Cecil in favour of the more integrated character George; Rickie similarly makes his crucial move by turning away from the unsatisfactory Pembrokes towards the more rounded Stephen who, as his half-brother, is his natural and proper companion. These moves are allegorical in the sense that they are achieved by groupings and regroupings among characters, each of whom comes to stand for an aspect of the hero, for a viewpoint or set of values he must either assimilate or reject. There are, of course, many traces of allegory in Howards End, most obtrusively in such hyper-dramatic episodes as the death of Leonard, where the oppressed spirit of struggling humanity is struck down by a son of the arch-conservative oppressor using a weapon unwittingly provided by Schlegel liberalism. In Howards End, however, the chief moves are made not by groupings of character-principles but by developments and adjustments within individual characters. Allegory is subordinated, for the most part, to character-growth.

Such growth, of course, takes place in the earlier novels as well. Philip grows to the point where he can appreciate Gino and love Caroline; Rickie grows away from Cambridge, through Sawston to Wiltshire. In the earlier novels, however, significant growth is largely confined to the heroes, to the characters who make the move from one world to the other, and it tends therefore to be expressed allegorically, in terms of the hero's progress from one set of characters to another. In Howards End growth is potentially required of all. Margaret must still make the crucial move to bridge the gulf between the worlds, but the ending requires not only this movement but also a concomitant maturation of the chief supporting characters. Not only must Margaret rescue Helen and Leonard's child, but Helen must see that her course has been extreme, and Henry must accept Helen. Psychological readjustment is necessary not only for the heroine but for all who are to participate in the story's happy ending.

NOTES TO CHAPTER III

- (70) E.M. Forster, Howards End 243.
- (71) Forster. Commonplace Book 203, 04.
- (72) Ibid., p.203.
- (73) Forster. Howards End 186, 87.
- (74) Ibid., p.28.
- (75) Ibid., p.191.
- (76) Ibid., p.4,6.
- (77) Ibid., p.24.
- (78) Ibid., p.26.
- (79) Ibid., p.137.
- (80) Ibid., p.27.
- (81) Jim Mc Williams, Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 55.
- (82) Ibid., p.55.
- (83) Ibid., p.56.
- (84) Forster. Howards End 27.
- (85) Ibid., p.27.
- (86) Ibid., p.34.
- (87) Ibid., p.100.
- (88) Lionel Trilling, E.M. Forster 120.
- (89) Forster. Howards End 31.
- (90) Ibid., p.18.
- (91) Ibid., p.55.
- (92) Ibid., p.44.
- (93) Ibid., p.32.
- (94) Ibid., p.34.
- (95) Ibid., p.41.
- (96) Ibid., p.69.
- (97) Ibid., pp.72, 73.
- (98) Ibid., p.73.
- (99) Ibid., p.73.
- (100) Ibid., p.74.
- (101) Ibid., p.78.
- (102) Ibid., p.78.
- (103) Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein, Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 103.
- (104) Forster. Howards End 84.

- (105) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 58.
- (106) Forster. Howards End 186.
- (107) Ibid., p.104.
- (108) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 90, 91.
- (109) Forster. Howards End 102.
- (110) Ibid., pp.153,54.
- (111) Ibid., pp.153,54.
- (112) Ibid., pp.152,53.
- (113) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 60.
- (114) Forster. Howards End 215.
- (115) Ibid., pp.214, 15.
- (116) Ibid., pp.229, 31.
- (117) Ibid., p.230.
- (118) Ibid., p.259.
- (119) Ibid., p.306.
- (120) Ibid., p.280.
- (121) K.W. Grandsen, E.M. Forster 72.
- (122) Tony Brown, Edward Carpenter and the Evolution of A Room with a View 282.
- (123) Forster. Howards End 331.
- (124) Ibid., p.331.
- (125) Ibid., p.334.
- (126) Ibid., p.334.
- (127) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 63.
- (128) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 89.
- (129) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 63, 64.
- (130) Forster. Howards End 339.
- (131) Ibid., p.339.
- (132) Ibid., p.300.
- (133) Ibid., pp.187,88.
- (134) Forster. The Longest Journey 9.

CHAPTER IV

THE LONGEST JOURNEY

Until 1861 in England, a man found guilty of sodomy could be condemned to death; from 1861 until 1885, convicted homosexuals faced a maximum penalty of life imprisonment. The Criminal Law Amendment Act of 1885 moderated the statutes regarding “gross indecency with another male person” by changing the penalty for sodomy to a maximum of two years imprisonment at hard labor (1). Although not every homosexual faced such a draconian penalty upon his conviction, many, including Oscar Wilde (convicted of “gross indecency” in 1895), served the maximum sentence as an example of the lengths English society would go to persecute homosexual behavior. As Richard Ellmann points out in his biography of Wilde, a number of French newspapers covering the playwright’s trial reported with astonishment to their readers that “in England sodomy ranked only one step below murder” (2). Homosexuality remained a crime until the Sexual Offences Act of 1967 legalized homosexual intercourse between consenting adult males.

As Williams notes in Muted Groups in E.M. Forster’s Edwardian Novels, although Forster had realized early in his adolescence that he lacked sexual urges for women, he failed to understand precisely what a “homosexual” was until he had been at Cambridge for a year or two and had heard discussions praising love between males, which confirmed his suspicions that other men felt desires similar to his own (3). In fact, two of his friends, Lytton Strachey and John Maynard Keynes, even construed G. E. Moore’s ideas about the importance of personal relations between men as an “endorsement of what they called the ‘higher sodomy’, an idealized platonic homosexuality ...” (4). Although platonic love may have been the model, many of his friends also engaged in carnal love affairs with each other. For Forster, however, because of “his intensely prim upbringing . . . and having come to manhood during the aftermath of the Wilde scandal, the thought of actual physical relations with friends seemed to him remote and impossible” (5).

The platonic love between Maurice Hall and Clive Durham, as described by Forster in Maurice, reflects the only type of “affair” that Forster enjoyed during his Cambridge years. As Furbank claims, like Maurice, however, Forster ached for physical contact with another man; he felt unsatisfied until, finally, at the age of thirty-eight, he engaged in sexual intercourse with a male lover (6).

Nevertheless, Beauman asserts that, as his biographers have noted, as late as the 1920s Forster frequently tried to suppress his passionate feelings toward men, which he regarded as abnormal, before he finally acknowledged to himself that he would always be homosexual (7). This acknowledgement, however, he kept to himself and to his close friends since he feared he would be ostracized should his homosexuality become known. In 1961, for example, Forster considered making an anonymous

donation to the Homosexual Law Reform Society, a group which had worked strenuously for decades to repeal the Sexual Offences Act, but he decided against getting involved in the battle for equality because of the risk of his donation becoming public knowledge (8). His reluctance to join the struggle for legalization of homosexual intercourse reflects Forster's own deep-seated ambivalence about his sexuality.

After graduating from Cambridge in 1901, Forster began an extended tour of Italy, a country he had long wanted to visit, for, as Tariq Rahman has shown, Italy—“notorious since the Renaissance as the land where homosexual pleasure could be procured”—represented homosexual freedom (9). Indeed, Rahman adds, other homosexual English writers, such as John Addington Symonds and Baron Corvo, also viewed Italy, especially Venice, as a place for homosexual liaisons. While there is no evidence that Forster himself engaged in any love affairs with an Italian, clearly the country symbolized a place where affection between men was accepted. In his Italian notebooks, for example, Forster frequently alludes to the open displays of affection that he witnessed during his trip to Italy. And, on at least one occasion, he felt astonished to see two young men embracing as they walked along a public sidewalk (10). Whether the young men were lovers, friends, or brothers was irrelevant for Forster since they represented an openness about passion that he had never witnessed in England. He subsequently decided to feature Italy and its unrestrained passion in his fiction. Although his published fiction never deals directly with homosexual themes, hints of Forster's sympathies for the condition of England's homosexuals is evident throughout his short stories and novels.

Following the posthumous publication of Maurice, in 1971, many critics reread Where Angels Fear to Tread (1905), Forster's first novel, with the purpose of detecting a homosexual subtext within its main plot. Barbara Rosecrance, for instance, theorized that Philip's latent homosexuality—represented by his attraction for Gino—leads to his “deflection” from Caroline (11). Where Angels Fear to Tread, Rosecrance adds, ends somewhat unsatisfactorily since Philip cannot achieve his “self-realization” within the novel's “earnest heterosexuality” (12). Tariq Rahman argues that, although the novel's plot seems to revolve around male-female relationships, especially a potential union between Philip and Caroline, it actually celebrates male-male relationships, in particular that between Philip and Gino (13). By contending that Philip struggles with repressed homosexuality, Rahman emphasizes that Where Angels Fear to Tread should be read as an exploration of “self-alienation.” Essentially, his thesis is that Forster reflects his own personal search for a homosexual identity through his analyses of how fictional characters—Philip Herriton in this instance—search for their authentic selves. Rahman calls Philip's dissatisfaction with his identity “self-alienation” and asserts that “the finding of the self” in Forster's fiction is “analogous to the recognition of one's homosexual orientation” (14).

Without question, as Williams maintains, Where Angels Fear to Tread extols the ideal of close

friendships between men as time after time in the novel Forster depicts male-male relationships favorably, while male-female relationships are shown as transitory and unfulfilling (15). In the opera-house scene, for instance, Philip is physically pulled from his sister and Caroline Abbott by Gino and his friends; he subsequently lands in the middle of their private box, where the young men greet him with open affection (16). Although he feels shocked by their immediate familiarity, Philip soon shares an intimacy with the Italians that he has never felt with his sister or with Caroline:

Philip would have a spasm of horror at the muddle he had made. But the spasm would pass, and again he would be enchanted by the kind, cheerful voices, the laughter that was never vapid, and the light caress of the arm across his back (17).

It then becomes clear to Philip that he much prefers the company of Gino and his friends to the company of Harriet and Caroline, neither of whom enjoyed the opera that he liked so much. In fact, throughout the novel, Forster describes the joys of male brotherhood, demonstrating that in Italy such affection is natural, freely offered and reciprocated between men. Life, Forster's narrator adds, "is very pleasant in Italy if you are a man" (18).

Rahman argues that the close male friendships in Where Angels Fear to Tread, especially the one formed by Gino and Philip by novel's end, should be read as implicitly homosexual (19). As such, any "intrusion" of women is threatening (20). Certainly, the meddlesome Mrs. Herriton, who attempts to control her son as if he were a mere "puppet" (21), and her zealot daughter, Harriet, are overt threats to Philip's happiness, but Caroline poses a danger to him as well since his fantasies of marriage to her detract from his potential relationship with Gino. Fortunately for Philip, however, Caroline confesses her own love for Gino, thus blasting his idle fantasies of wedlock and freeing him to make good his promise to return to Italy in the spring to see Gino (22). By contrasting the Philip-Gino relationship with the Philip-Caroline relationship, Rahman argues that Forster "points to the fact that he [Philip] is beginning to be capable of human love, but the passion is missing . . . [from the Philip-Caroline relationship] because the author has not invested it there" (23). Instead, Rahman adds, the passion is invested into the friendship between Philip and Gino, as reflected in their scenes together, such as when they meet at the Gaffe Garibaldi and share their thoughts about how women always try to manipulate men. After Philip states that he will have to "face" his mother, Gino lays "a sympathetic hand" on his knee. Later, they shake hands "warmly," parting with "a good deal of genuine affection" only after they have each agreed to meet again the next year (24).

Forster contended in a letter to his friend R. C. Trevelyan that his novel's theme is "the improvement of Philip" (25), an improvement which includes Philip's rejection of class snobbery (which initially causes him to despise Gino – a barber's son – as a potential brother-in-law) as well as

his acceptance that an intimate connection with another man can be more fulfilling than connections with women. While a heterosexual reading of Where Angels Fear to Tread suggests that the novel ends pessimistically since the connection fails between Philip and Caroline, a homoerotic interpretation argues persuasively that Philip overcomes his self-alienation and forms a much closer bond with Gino than he could ever have attained with Caroline. According to this latter interpretation, as Williams adds, the novel ends optimistically since the separation between Philip and Gino will be temporary (26).

In The Longest Journey (1907), Forster's next novel, no optimistic ending is possible since its protagonist, Rickie Elliot, fails to overcome his self-alienation and connect with either of the males, Stewart Ansell or Stephen Wonham, who offer him comradeship. Instead of learning the importance of close personal relations with other men, Rickie chooses to ignore his feelings for Ansell and Stephen so that he can marry Agnes, a decision which leads to his wretched unhappiness and eventual death. With the character of Rickie, Foster thus portrays the dangers facing a man who refuses to accept his feelings toward other men.

Brotherhood in The Longest Journey first emerges at Cambridge; Agnes learns early in the novel that Rickie's friends are like brothers to him, but she replies, "He has no real brothers" (27). "Fratribus," the dedication and perhaps also an epigraph to the novel, is precisely what Rickie must discover. Although Stephen, his illegitimate half-brother, knows fraternity intuitively (28), Rickie is unable to accept him or his knowledge of true brotherhood, for Rickie insists on idealizing and labeling people rather than seeing them as individuals – his one great fault, which finally destroys him. Rickie is lame, and his deformity is his inability to walk with his brother. As a child he reminds us of the young Maurice, lonely and different: "Shall I ever have a friend? ... I don't see how. They walk too fast. And a brother I shall never have" (29). Rickie ultimately has Ansell as a friend and Stephen as a brother, yet his deformity keeps him from really connecting with them; he chooses instead the unreality of marriage to Agnes. Rickie is aware of the "irony of friendship":

so strong it is, and so fragile. We fly together, like straws in an eddy, to part in the open stream. Nature has no use for us: she has cut her stuff differently. Dutiful sons, loving husbands, responsible fathers – these are what she wants, and if we are friends it must be in our spare time (30).

Ansell's reaction to this and similar beliefs states Forster's great theme, the acceptance of individual differences: "The point is, not what's ordained by nature or any other fool, but what's right" (31). Ansell tells Rickie to react to people spontaneously, as individuals, rather than as images (32), but Rickie does not take his advice: "he wished there was a society, a kind of friendship office,

where the marriage of true minds could be registered” (33). He wants to label his relationship with Ansell, but labeling has only negative results. As Finkelstein points, while the novel stresses again and again the dangers of labeled marriage, it also touches briefly on the perils of a labeled friendship when Ansell and Rickie are cavorting in a meadow, almost as lovers: Ansell jealously “held him prisoner” to stop him from going to see Agnes (34).

Finkelstein, further notes that Ansell, who is expected to identify with women, is a misogynist. His misogyny is rejected when his reasons for it are accepted. He is correct in his estimation of Agnes as personally neither serious nor truthful, and his definition of a “lady” as essentially manipulative is accurate in Forster’s world; but he is not enlightened enough to see that women are as trapped and destroyed by being ladylike as are the men they manipulate. Yet, Ansell declares war on women, and this may be attributed partly to a passible homosexual jealousy (35).

Trilling suggests that the title of The Longest Journey comes from Shelley’s Epipsychidion, a poem with the theme that marriage drastically limits one’s horizons:

“I never was attached to that, great sect
Whose doctrine is that each one should select
Out of the world a mistress or a friend,
And all the rest, though fair and wise, commend
To cold oblivion, –though it is the code
Of modern morals, and the beaten road
Which those poor slaves with weary footsteps tread
Who travel to their home among the dead
By the broad highway of the world, –and so
With one sad friend, perhaps a jealous foe,
The dreariest and the longest journey go” (35).

In The Longest Journey, marriage is totally destructive not only of fraternity but also of one’s ability to accept the significance of symbolic moments, a rejection which inevitably leads to a loss of reality. Marriage, unlike friendship, is an attempt to locate one’s reality in someone else, a futile and destructive ambition. Although Rickie is the protagonist, he is not a hero. His situation is that of many modern men and women: out of touch with reality and overwhelmed by forces he does not understand. Only an occasional hero like Ansell or a born countryman like Stephen manages to escape.

In Ansell’s opinion, as Stone explains, friendship is Rickie’s “reality,” not marriage, and following Rickie’s engagement he declares “war” – motivated partly by sexual jealousy of Agnes and

partly by a hatred of the female sex. His words stir the suspicion that he has recently been reading Man and Superman (37):

You are not a person who ought to marry at all. You are unfitted in body: that we once discussed. You are also unfitted in soul: you want and you need to like many people, and a man of that sort ought not to marry. ‘You never were attached to that great sect’ who can like one person only, and if you try to enter it you will find destruction. . . . Man wants to love mankind; woman wants to love one man. When she has him her work is over. She is the emissary of Nature, and Nature’s bidding has been fulfilled. But man does not care a damn for Nature – or at least only a very little damn (38).

Rickie shares this misogyny, but he is also fighting with the fear of sexual inadequacy, which Ansell knows almost nothing about. Half-paralyzed by the fear he is facing, Rickie can neither deny the woman nor acknowledge her. Agnes is the aggressor; and it is in his own dell that she snares him. At first, he refuses to enter the sacred place with her, but when she calls to him, he follows as if bewitched:

“Did you take me for the Dryad?” she asked. She was sitting down with his head on her lap. He had laid it there for a moment before he went out to die, and she had not let him take it away.

“I prayed you might not be a woman,” he whispered.

“Darling, I am very much a woman. I do not vanish into groves and trees. I thought you would never come to me” (39).

Rickie acts like one in the grip of some painful moral compulsion, doing what he knows he must do, though it nauseates him. To admit this woman is to betray the mother, whose temple the dell really is; but not to admit her would be to abandon his own chances for manhood. However wrong she is for him, however false he is to his own “reality” in taking her, it would be suicidal in Rickie not to make the experiment.

Rickie should not have married, according to Shaw’s theory; for his deformity, in the sense that he is a gentleman, places him against the evolution of a Superman, and the fact that he is an artist irrevocably alienates him from productive marriage. As Finkelstein points out, Shaw seems to be speaking of both Rickie and Ansell when he states that “Whether the artist becomes a poet or a philosopher . . . his sexual doctrine is nothing but a barren special pleading for pleasure, excitement, and knowledge when he is young, and for contemplative tranquillity when he is old and satiated” (40).

Ansell accepts Shaw's theories completely. He does not realize that both men and women are oppressed by arbitrary sex roles and conventions; he can sympathize only with men. When he calls woman "the emissary of Nature," he does not take into account his own great comment that what matters is not nature "but what's right." He assumes that men want civilization but women do not:

man does not care a damn for Nature – or at least only a very little damn. He cares for a hundred things besides, and the more civilized he is the more he will care for these hundred other things, and demand not only a wife and children, but also friends, and work, and spiritual freedom (41).

By equating "civilized" with masculine and "natural" with feminine, Ansell arbitrarily cuts off half of woman's possibilities, a view which fortunately is transcended in Howards End, a novel with, significantly, a female protagonist. In Howards End, women too "demand not only a [husband] and children, but also friends, and work, and spiritual freedom." In The Longest Journey, Ansell sees woman as merely body, and reproduction as woman's only role; in Howards End it is one of many roles. In The Longest Journey it is not essential for men to want to reproduce physically; in Howards End it is also nonessential for women. Helen chooses to do so; Margaret does not. Reproduction becomes a matter of choice, not of duty, and both sexes are thereby humanized (42).

Finkelstein points out that Ansell's argument against Rickie's marrying could be made much more impressive and still remain within the philosophical framework of "Man and Superman" if he abandoned Shaw's arbitrary sex roles and addressed himself instead to Rickie as an artist. In this area Agnes is most purely negative: "she had always mistrusted the little stories" (43). Because of her, Rickie accepts a job he hates at a school he hates and never becomes a major creative force. Ansell's generalizations about women deceive him, for Rickie as an artist is much more closely linked to nature than Agnes as a woman: his stories all deal with Pan and Dryads and what he deprecatingly refers to as the "ridiculous idea of getting into touch with Nature" (44). The one story whose plot we're told is almost a paradigm of what happens to Rickie and Agnes:

a stupid vulgar man is engaged to a lovely young lady. He wants her to live in the towns, but she only cares for woods. She shocks him this way and that, but gradually he tames her, and makes her almost as dull as he is. One day she has a last explosion . . . and flies out of the drawing-room window, shouting, 'Freedom and truth!' (45)

The sex roles in the novel itself are reversed: the woman entraps the man. Rickie does not make the connection and therefore does not escape, but Forster does connect and identifies Rickie with the woman protagonist.

Ansell's assessment of Agnes is later proven to be correct as Rickie is soon completely under his wife's thumb. In fact, Rickie is changed by Agnes as early as their engagement, and the changes are all negative. He views her as a "triumphant general, making each unit still more interesting ... He loved Agnes, not only for herself, but because she was lighting up the human world" (46); but his perception is faulty; Agnes is connected only with artificial, electric light that has no warmth. Unlike Ansell, Agnes is the opposite of enlightening; because of his "new life" with her, Rickie becomes less observant of the world, less sensitive to other people, and he does not pursue his potential relationship with Stephen: "Generally he was attracted by fresh people, and Stephen was almost fresh: they had been to him symbols of the unknown, and all that they did was interesting. But now he cared for the unknown no longer. He knew" (47).

Thus, Agnes twice stops Rickie from realizing his brotherhood with Stephen, both before and after they know of the physical kinship. When Mrs. Failing reveals to Rickie his physical brotherhood with Stephen, Rickie denies it: "Stephen Wonham isn't my brother, Aunt Emily" (48). Rickie must come to terms with his parents in order to accept Stephen's physical brotherhood, and he must come to terms with himself to accept him symbolically. Agnes unintentionally prevents him once more from accepting his brotherhood.

Rickie, because of Agnes, rejects the symbolic moment that could have saved him and does not acknowledge Stephen as his half-brother. In rejecting Stephen, Rickie dooms himself; in accepting Agnes's condemnation of Stephen as "worse than a man diseased" (49), he forgets that he himself is lame. As a result, he suffers a "curious breakdown", because

the heart of all things was hidden. There was a password and he could not learn it
... had he not known the password once – known it and forgotten it already?
But at this point his fortunes become intimately connected with those of Mr.
Pembroke (50).

It is Rickie's brother-in-law who prevents him from rediscovering the password, "fratribus." Rickie thus loses his opportunity to enjoy male companionship and lapses wholly into self-alienation. Rickie begins to understand Agnes and becomes aware of how greatly she has destroyed his freedom.

In Williams's view, Rickie steadily "deteriorates", both mentally and physically after his repudiation of kinship with Stephen, and following his earlier rejection of comradeship from Ansell (51). Finally, as he ebbs to his lowest point, his brother and his friend rescue him from Agnes by showing him the value of fraternity. After Ansell tells him that Stephen is actually his mother's illegitimate son, Rickie listens to Stephen's appeal to go with him into the woods "as a man". He,

subsequently leaves Agnes, but unfortunately, never learns to accept Stephen as an individual. Instead, he sees him as the embodiment of their mother, which causes him to feel disillusioned when Stephen gets drunk (52). When he later dies while saving him from being run over by a train, Rickie thus dies without ever accepting Stephen as an individual (53). His life, consequently, ends with him still denying reality.

Thus, Williams concludes that, Rickie fails to overcome the social forces which suppress him since he fails to accept his homoerotic desires for Ansell or his kinship with Stephen. Because he accepts without question the roles that Agnes wants him to play (husband, father, responsible member of the middle class), Rickie dies as a failure. While he certainly expresses a wish to forego those roles so that he can live freely with Stephen, his words lack conviction and, in fact, he is quick to renounce his brother when he finds him drunk. In short, unlike Philip Herriton or Maurice Hall, he never learns the enduring value of fraternity (54). As Rahman points out, Rickie is offered numerous opportunities to accept the reality of his homosexuality, but each time he refuses to admit the existence of any reality other than the one imposed upon him by Agnes – that of a conventional life (55). Wilfred Stone, the first critic to suggest a disguised homosexual theme in the novel, argues:

This latent homosexuality is one of the realities of his nature. He must either courageously face this knowledge and its consequences or else try to force his life into an alien, conventional mold. . . . Either way, he faces a test – the one of his courage to defy convention, the other of his courage to endure it (56).

Unlike Maurice's decision to abandon propriety, money, and family in order to live with his lover in the "greenwood," Rickie lacks the confidence to defy the conventions of Edwardian England, as well as the inner strength to endure the continual disillusionment and unhappiness that life with Agnes represents (57).

NOTES TO CHAPTER IV

- (1) H. Montgomery Hyde, The Love that Dared Not Speak Its Name: A Candid History of Homosexuality in Britain 5.
- (2) Richard Ellmann, Two Faces of Edward 458.
- (3) Jim Mc Williams, Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 69.
- (4) Jonathan Rose, The Edwardian Temperament, 1895-1919 65.
- (5) P.N Furbank, E.M. Forster: A Life I 78.
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- (11) Barbara Rosecrance, Forster's Narrative Vision 45, 50.
- (12) Ibid., p.50.
- (13) Rahman. Double Plot in Forster's The Longest Journey 65, 69.
- (14) Ibid., p.53.
- (15) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 75.
- (16) Ibid., p.75.
- (17) Ibid., p.75.
- (18) Ibid., pp.75, 76.
- (19) Rahman. A Study of the Under-Plot in E.M. Forster's Where Angels Fear to Tread 60.
- (20) Ibid., p.60.
- (21) E.M. Forster, Where Angels Fear to Tread 86.
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- (24) Ibid., p.55.
- (25) Ibid., p.53.
- (26) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 77.
- (27) Forster. The Longest Journey 9.
- (28) Ibid., p.262.
- (29) Ibid., p.26.

- (30) Ibid., p.69.
- (31) Ibid., p.87.
- (32) Ibid., p.21.
- (33) Ibid., p.69.
- (34) Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein, Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 36, 37.
- (35) Ibid., pp.86, 89.
- (36) Lionel Trilling, E.M. Forster 138.
- (37) Wilfred Stone, The Cave and the Mountain: A Study of E.M. Forster 199.
- (38) Ibid., p.199.
- (39) Ibid., p.199.
- (40) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 44.
- (41) Forster. The Longest Journey 88.
- (42) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 45.
- (43) Ibid., p.45.
- (44) Forster. The Longest Journey 78.
- (45) Ibid., p.77.
- (46) Ibid., p.117.
- (47) Ibid., p.116.
- (48) Ibid., p.142.
- (49) Ibid., p.151.
- (50) Ibid., p.158.
- (51) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 82.
- (52) Ibid., p.82.
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- (54) Ibid., pp. 82, 83.
- (55) Rahman. The Under-Plot in E.M. Forster's The Longest Journey 59.
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- (57) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 83.

CHAPTER V

MAURICE

The thematic parallels between E.M. Forster's The Longest Journey and Maurice (written 1913-1914) are many, but, while the former describes Rickie Elliot's death following his refusal to abandon social morals so that he may live in the woods with his half-brother, the latter concludes with Maurice Hall repudiating Edwardian society so that he may enter into the "greenwood" with Alec Scudder. It is likely that the earlier novel ends so pessimistically since Forster had not met Edward Carpenter and George Merrill when he wrote The Longest Journey. In other words, before he traveled to Carpenter's house in the countryside of Derbyshire during the autumn of 1913, Forster had never witnessed an enduring relationship between two men (1).

Already famous for his theory about the "Universal Self" – his idea that all creatures, from protozoa to man, stemmed from a single consciousness and are thus intrinsically connected (2) – Carpenter had become notorious by 1910 for Homogenic Love (1895) and The Intermediate Sex (1908), two books about human sexuality. In the latter work, after theorizing that "inversion," or homosexuality, is a "natural" and "ineradicable" condition for some males, Carpenter preached that English society should accept men who love other men as readily as it accepts men who love women (3). He hoped that one day, as he states in his autobiography, "the restoration and full recognition of the heroic friendships of Greek civilization could return to Europe" (4). Carpenter, like his friend John Addington Symonds, greatly admired how ancient Greek society had allowed homoerotic relationships between males, and both men blamed Christianity for England's laws forbidding homosexuality (5).

Carpenter, who had been born into an upper-class family and educated at Cambridge lived at Millthorpe with George Merrill, whom Forster described in his autobiography My Days and Dreams as an "extraordinary fellow".

I had met him on the outskirts of Sheffield ... and had recognized at once a peculiar intimacy and mutual understanding. Bred in the slums quiet below civilization, but of healthy parentage of comparatively rustic origin, he had grown so to speak entirely out of his own roots; and a singularly affectionate, humorous, and swiftly intuitive nature had expanded along its own lines – subject of course to some of the surrounding conditions, but utterly untouched by the prevailing conventions and proprieties of the upper world. Always – even in utmost poverty – clean and sweet in person and neat in attire, he was attractive to most people... Yet being by temperament loving and even passionate... he remained always fairly assured of himself – with the same sort of unconscious assurance that a plant or an

animal may have in its own nature ... To George Merrill the arrival at Millthorpe was the fulfillment of a dream (6).

Carpenter further gained notoriety for living openly with his male lover, a man from the working class named George Merrill. Carpenter and Merrill had lived together since 1898, and their steadfast relationship demonstrated to Forster that two homosexuals could live together as contentedly as could a husband and his wife. In fact, Forster believed that the two men complemented each other perfectly since they had overcome both class and intellectual barriers, impediments which had doomed many heterosexual matches to failure. Carpenter himself wrote in The Intermediate Sex that often “Eros is a great leveler,” meaning that love can overcome what might initially seem to be insurmountable differences between two people (7). He adds:

Uranians [his term for homosexuals] of good position and breeding are drawn to rougher types, as of manual workers, and frequently very permanent alliances grow up in this way, which although not publicly acknowledged have a decided influence on social institutions, customs, and political tendencies... (8).

Carpenter predicted that such Uranians as himself would constitute the “advance guard” of a political movement to reform England by transforming it from a society based upon commerce into a society centered around “the bond of personal affection and compassion” (9). Indeed, Carpenter argues in both Homogenic Love and The Intermediate Sex that upper-class Uranians had a moral obligation to form alliances (which may not be sexual in nature) with men from the lower classes. As Scott R. Nelson points out:

Thus, those of the intermediate sex (particularly, it would seem, those in a position to affect such [social] transformations: i.e upper-class Uranians...) are responsible for being the mediators between homophobic, capitalistic, and Christian society and the new Utopia Carpenter promotes (10).

Forster himself, by wholeheartedly embracing Carpenter’s ideas, used them to rationalize not just the theme of Maurice but also to explain to his friends his own love affairs with bus drivers, soldiers, and policemen (11).

Later in his life Forster even credited Carpenter’s lover, George Merrill, with directly inspiring Maurice. In his Terminal Note to Maurice Forster tells how the novel came to be written during his second visit to the Carpenter-Merrill household.

It was the direct result of a visit to Edward Carpenter at Millthorpe. Carpenter... was a socialist who ignored industrialism and a simple- lifer with an independent income and a believer in the love of comrades, whom he sometimes called Uranians. It was this last aspect of him that attracted me in my loneliness... I approached him... as one approaches a savior. It must have been on my second or third visit to the shrine that the spark was kindled as he and his comrade George Merrill combined to make a profound impression on me and to touch a creative spring. George Merrill also touched my backside – gently and just above the buttocks... the sensation was unusual and I still remember it ... It was as much psychological as physical. It seemed to go straight through the small of my back into my ideas, without involving my thoughts (12).

More concretely, the Carpenter – Merrill relationship proved to be the catalyst for the idyllic conclusion to Maurice, and Carpenter himself became the model for the elder male sages of Forster’s fiction – men like Mr. Failing in The Longest Journey and Mr. Emerson in A Room with a View, both of whom express utopian ideals about brotherhood and socialism (13). As Forster notes in a 1944 essay commemorating Carpenter’s life and works, Carpenter “strove to destroy existing abuses such as landlordism and capitalism, and all he offered in their place was love.. He believed in Liberty, Fraternity, and Equality...” (14).

Similarly, Mr. Failing and Mr. Emerson profess such idealistic beliefs through their attempts to have other characters always seek love.

Because the characters and the plot of Maurice interested him so much, Forster thoroughly enjoyed writing the novel (15). Its composition, he says, “went through without a hitch” (16), and he finished his revisions by August 1914, just a year and a half after Merrill had touched his back. The writing followed so smoothly since, as in The Longest Journey, numerous parts of the novel are clearly autobiographical. Maurice’s reluctant acceptance of his homosexual nature, for example, is certainly based upon Forster’s hesitant recognition of his own homosexual desires. Also, like his protagonist, Forster fell in love with another Cambridge undergraduate, H.O. Meredith, an older man more intelligent and better versed in the tradition of platonic love (17). Like Maurice’s love affair with Clive Durham, Forster’s affair with Meredith remained relatively chaste, never advancing beyond occasional kisses and caresses. Unlike Maurice, however, Forster never chose to renounce the conservative world of Edwardian England so that he might escape with a lower-class lover into a self-sufficient, rural lifestyle, just as Edward Carpenter had escaped with George Merrill from Victorian oppression a generation earlier.

When the novel opens, Maurice is nearly fifteen years old and is about to graduate from a preparatory school to a public school, from celibacy to sexuality. Mr. Ducie, one of Maurice's teachers, takes it upon himself to aid in his transition by teaching Maurice about sex. Yet, as Finkelstein asserts in *Forster's Women*, his approach is hypocritical from the beginning (18): " 'When I was your age, my father told me something that proved very useful and helped me a good deal.' This was untrue his father never told him anything. But he needed a prelude to what he was going to say" (19).

Maurice's first exposure to sex that exists for the express purpose of reproduction. He later despairs when he realizes that his sexuality will never people the earth, for Mr. Ducie "spoke of male and female, created by God in the beginning in order that the earth might be peopled" (20).

Mr. Ducie's sexuality, although heterosexual, is unconnected with women: he tells Maurice, "It is not a thing that your mother can tell you, and you should not mention it to her or to any lady" (21). The implications of this statement are twofold: first, sexuality is somehow evil or dirty and men should not mention it in mixed company; and should not know about it at all, as indeed Clive's wife later in the novel does not. Mr. Ducie's insistence on a discretion which seems more like secrecy implies that for him the knowledge of sexuality is not integral but is rather a set of unconnected diagrams which have no relation to life.

The diagrams Mr. Ducie draws in the sand are meaningless to Maurice, and he does not respond with the expected questions; even early in the novel he is different. Mr. Ducie propounds a chivalry Forster rejects: "To love a noble woman, to protect and serve her – this, he told the little boy, was the crown of life" (22). Mr. Ducie's simplistic raptures about heterosexual love mean nothing to Maurice, and their exchange is revealing: "God's in his heaven. All's right with the world. Male and female! Ah wonderful! I think I shall not marry," remarked Maurice (23).

Mr. Ducie assumes that Maurice's comment reflects merely a child's lack of interest in sex, and he invites Maurice and his wife to dinner "ten years hence" (24). Maurice smiles at the invitation with pleasure; but the person with whom he will meet Mr. Ducie in ten years' time is Alec Scudder, in the British Museum. In a sense Mr. Ducie himself assures this outcome, for just as the young Maurice begins to contemplate marriage for the first time, Mr. Ducie's hypocrisy takes over and he panics at the realization that he "never scratched out those infernal diagrams" (25), and a lady is approaching! Maurice allays his fears by assuring him that "The tide'll have covered them by now" (26). The tide functions symbolically as the tide of Maurice's homosexuality, which washes out the wonder of male and female before a lady can approach it. Only Maurice not Mr. Ducie, is aware of the unreality and impermanence of heterosexual diagrams, and he also appreciates the hypocrisy of his teacher: " 'Liar,'

he thought. 'Liar, coward, he's told me nothing' " (27). Maurice returns to the "darkness" of childlike asexuality, but he has already rejected Mr. Ducie's brand of heterosexuality. Jim Mc Williams states in Muted Groups in E.M. Forster's Edwardian Novels that this opening scene is central to an understanding of Maurice since it introduces the idea that the novel's protagonist comprehends from an early age that he is unlike most other boys (28). Indeed, Tariq Rahman argues that this scene reinforces Maurice's alienation by making him feel isolated since there is no room in Mr. Ducie's paradigm for males who lack feelings for women (29).

The image of darkness continues throughout the novel and at times seems an allegorical symbol for homosexuality. When Maurice graduates from preparatory school, the other boys "showered presents on him, declaring he was brave. A great mistake – he wasn't brave: he was afraid of the dark. But no one knew this" (30). His childlike pretense of bravery parallels the pretense of heterosexuality against which Maurice ultimately rebels, as going to bed in the dark parallels the acceptance of homosexuality, an acceptance which at this point is reluctant and contrasted to "manhood": "When Maurice did go to bed, it was reluctantly.... He had been such a man all the evening, but the old feeling came over him as soon as his mother had kissed him good night. The trouble was the looking-glass" (31).

What Maurice fears is his double, or "homo," in the mirror. This fear of his reflection is symbolic of the plight of all young homosexuals. Only when Maurice accepts his homosexuality can he look in the mirror with satisfaction, when he is in love with Clive. The young Maurice can bear total darkness, the darkness of presexuality; but across from his bedroom is a street lamp which forces him to accept the knowledge of his own nature, and which he can later gaze at confidently with Clive's letters in his pocket. When Clive rejects Maurice, he begins to doubt himself again and feels damned: "It was so late that the lamps had been extinguished in the suburban roads, and total night without compromise weighed on him, as on his friend" (32).

Maurice loses the light within when he loses Clive, but the image of light and dark changes at this point in the novel. In the light of a self-knowledge which Maurice has internalized darkness itself becomes a positive force: "Ah for darkness- not the darkness of a house... but the darkness where he can be free!" (33). When Alec's boat sails without Alec on it, the sun comes out for the first time since Clive rejected Maurice. Maurice no longer needs artificial light; he knows himself finally, and he makes the ultimate connection when he knows without even receiving Alec's wire where to find his lover: asleep in the boathouse, "just visible in the last dying of the day" (34).

Maurice's ultimate acceptance of his homosexuality and of a lower-class lover is foreshadowed in the figure of George, the garden boy. When the young Maurice's mother announces her intension of

giving Maurice “a lovely time,” his response is immediately to ask, “Where’s George?” (35). Only by thinking of George as a common servant can Maurice fall asleep in his dark room. Maurice’s final triumphant connection with Alec overcomes his early snobbery, and he finally realizes the impossibility of referring to anyone as “just a common servant,” for the acceptance of homosexuality leads to the further discovery of the falsity of class values when compared to human ones. This is apparent quite early in the novel: the young Maurice speaks to servants in a different voice from the one he uses for gentlemen except when he asks about George, and then his voice becomes natural. Frank Kermode in A Queer Business points out that “the book concerns itself with the relation between homosexual freedom and the breaking down of class barriers” (36). The adolescent Maurice has two dreams, both significant and both homosexual:

In the first dream he felt very cross. He was playing football against a nondescript whose existence he resented. He made an effort and the nondescript turned into George, that the garden boy. But he had to be careful or it would reappear. George headed down the field towards him, naked and jumping over the wood-stacks. “I shall go mad if he turns wrong now,” said Maurice, and just as they collared this happened, and a brutal disappointment woke him up (37).

Maurice both desires and fears physical contact; he resents a generalized homosexuality in the image of a nondescript adversary but accepts it in the image of a focused, personal object, the naked George. His second dream is less explicit: “Nothing happened. He scarcely saw a face, scarcely heard a voice say, ‘That is your friend,’ and then it was over, having filled him with beauty and taught him tenderness” (38).

During his public school years, Maurice seems almost in every way an average adolescent, and his popularity rests on his ordinariness. He has not yet developed any sympathy for the underdog and is a bit of a bully. Forster stresses that in Maurice’s case brutality “was against his nature. But it was necessary at school, or he might have gone under” (39). Forster’s indictment is more of the public school system than of Maurice, and indeed Maurice stops being a bully as soon as he arrives at Cambridge.

When Maurice graduates from public school, his normal homosexual dreams and crushes are thrust up against society’s heterosexual expectations. When Dr. Barry implies an affair between Maurice and the housemaster’s wife, Maurice thinks of heterosexual sex apparently for the first time. His reaction is “a violent repulsion... he had remembered Mr. Ducie’s diagrams” (40). Dr. Barry, like everyone else, expects Maurice to be like his father, and Maurice for the first time realizes the

unlikelihood of his ever being so. He knows at this point that he cannot fulfill society's role expectations, and Dr. Barry, who went on lecturing him, said much that gave pain.

Maurice inherits his ordinariness from his father, and presumably would develop into another dreary Mr. Hall senior if he were not "different." Maurice's father traverses the ordinary route from homosexual to heterosexual love, but Maurice does not make that transition and thus is saved: "Mr. Hall senior had neither fought nor thought; there had never been any occasion; he has supported society and moved without a crisis from illicit to licit love" (41). As Finkelstein explains in Forster's Women, in Maurice, the flesh educates the spirit as in A Room with a View, and Maurice's father's ghost envies his son's salvation from the faith of an undeveloped heart (42):

Now, looking across at his son, he is touched with envy, the only pain that survives in the world of shades. For he sees the flesh educating the spirit, as his has never been educated, and developing the sluggish heart and the slack mind against their will (43).

Maurice's salvation develops in two stages, with two mentors: Clive teaches him to accept his homosexuality; Alec, his sexuality.

Maurice's rejection of conventional religion is closely bound up with his homosexuality: "Maurice's father was becoming a pillar of Church and Society when he died, and other things being alike Maurice would have stiffened too" (44). But other things are not alike, and Maurice damns the church for damning him near the end of the novel, when "the church," not the church bell, forces Alec to leave Maurice's bed.

Agnosticism and homosexuality are also closely linked in Clive, who states explicitly that his rejection of religion is due to his homosexuality, or rather to religion's view of his homosexuality. The Holy Communion which first Clive and then Maurice refuse to take suggests communion with women, holy in Duciedom. Only Maurice, however, has the courage to carry his rebellion to its logical conclusion to refuse also to go through the (for them) hypocritical forms of a heterosexual life. The primary difference between Clive and Maurice are the things they replace to Christianity they reject: Clive a philosophical Hellenism; Maurice a personal love for an individual. Clive's Hellenism is as antisexual as conventional Christianity, and the most passionate scene he has with Maurice is consummated by a discussion of Trinity: "'You wanted to get it and you're going to,' said Durham, sporting the door. Maurice went cold and then crimson. But Durham's voice, when he next heard it, was attacking his opinions on the Trinity" (45). In Maurice, as elsewhere, Forster sees the rejection of

Christianity as a step towards salvation, but although both Clive and Maurice reject Christianity, only Maurice is saved.

Clive gains the courage to reject Christianity through the example of Risley, an important catalyst in Maurice. Maurice's acceptance of Risley is Maurice's first rebellious act, and his first unexpected one. He feels that Risley might help him, and indeed it is Risley's room that Maurice meets Clive. Later in the novel, when Maurice is terribly lonely, he meets Risley at a performance of Tchaikovsky's Pathetic Symphony, the same symphony Clive was looking for in Risley's room when Maurice met him. At the concert, Risley gives Maurice real aid when he tells him enough about Tchaikovsky's life for Maurice to realize the mistake he would be making if he were to attempt heterosexuality without feeling it. Maurice, however, does not like Risley; Forster stresses the crucial point that all homosexuals are not alike and do not necessarily like each other, anymore than do all women, all men, all Indians.

Before Clive's articulation of love, it is Maurice who stalks Clive. His hunt is not conscious, however, and he is shocked when Clive puts his feelings into words. Maurice is a nonverbal person who articulates nothing, and he needs Clive to force him to acknowledge consciously what he already knows subconsciously. Their early physical intimacy is not regarded as sexual and is apparently considered normal, for it attracted no notice.

Clive's first mention of homosexuality to Maurice is academic. He resents the fact that Dean Cornwallis, whom Risley has correctly called a "eunuch", tells his translation class to "Omit: a reference to the unspeakable vice of the Greeks" (47). Clive insists on his own academic approach: "I regard it as a point of poor scholarship. The Greeks, or most of them, were that way inclined, and to omit it is to omit the mainstay of Athenian society" (48). This fact is new to Maurice and liberating as a piece of information, but he must wait a long time to find someone whose approach to sex is not academic and as both Mr. Ducie's and Clive's are. Even Clive's protestation of love is academic and has more to do with Plato and The Symposium than with Maurice: "books meant so much for him he forgot that they were bewildering to others. Had he trusted the body there would have been no disaster" (49).

When Maurice rejects Clive's offer of love, he rejects "spring", the very rejection Mr. Emerson has warned against in A Room with a View. Maurice lives through a crisis one aspect of which is to feel horror at the idea of "A man crying!" (50). Society does not allow men to show emotion, but Maurice achieves a vision which places him outside society's dogmas, and he vows to end his past hypocrisy:

He would not- and this was the test- pretend to care about women when the only sex that attracted him was his own. He loved men and always had loved them. He longed to embrace them and mingle his being with theirs.... After this crisis Maurice became a man (51).

He is finally connected, even more connected than Clive turns out to be, for Clive rejects the physical; Maurice unites the spiritual and the physical, “idealism and brutality,” into love (52). A man now, he rejects Mr. Ducie: “There was still much to learn.... But he discovered the method and looked no more scratches in the sand” (53).

Clive’s development is very different from Maurice’s. Unlike Maurice, he “suffered little from bewilderment as a boy” (54), but also unlike Maurice, he never felt anything at all directly. Clive’s homosexuality, like the rest of his life, is intellectual, metaphorical, and literary. Stephen K. Land in Challenge and Conventionality in the Fiction of E.M. Forster maintains that Clive, more intelligent and more aware than Maurice, faces his homosexuality but contains it within a framework of false idealization based upon a refined reading of Plato (55):

He had no doubt as to what it was: his emotion, more compact than Maurice’s, was not split into the brutal and the ideal nor did he waste years in bridging the gulf. He had in him the impulse that destroyed the City of the Plain... He could control the body; it was the tainted soul that mocked his prayers. The boy had always been a scholar, awake to the printed word, and the horrors the Bible evoked for him were to be laid by Plato. Never could he forget his emotion at first reading the Phaedrus. He saw there his malady described exquisitely, calmly, as a passion which we direct, like any other, towards good or bad. Here was no invitation to licence. He could not believe his own fortune at first – thought there must be some misunderstanding and that he and Plato were thinking of different things. Then he saw that the temperate pagan really did comprehend him, and, slipping past the Bible rather than opposing it, was offering a new guide for life. “To make the most of what I have.” Not to crush it down, not vainly to wish that it was something else, but to cultivate it in such ways as will not vex either God or Man (56).

At first damned by Sodom, he is saved by Plato. Plato liberates him by teaching him the value of differences: “ ‘To make the most of what I have.’ Not to crush it down, not vainly to wish that it was something else, but to cultivate it in such ways as will not vex either God or Man”(57). Unfortunately, Clive forgets this lesson as soon as he himself is no longer “different”; his intellectuality is poorly selfish.

Yet, his reaction to Maurice's rejection is genuine, and he must sympathize with him. Clive's pain and self-loathing, which will be mirrored in Maurice when Clive rejects him, is a much stronger reaction to rejection than any in Forster's heterosexual love affairs. Maurice's rejection of Clive, and the later reversal, both express something beyond the rejection of an individual; they both involve the rejection of a style of life, the passing of a moral judgement, and Maurice's "Oh, rot!" (58) creates in Clive a reborn "sense of sin".

Maurice's relationship with Clive contrasts well with his later, more natural one with Alec, where two lovers, physical lovers, live together in the greenwood. Clive's attempt to use a motorcycle to affect the unity taught by premechanical Plato is rather absurd. He correctly sees that he needs something beyond books to affect platonic love and unity in the modern world, that Plato is not sufficient by itself. But Clive makes the wrong choice. What is needed to realize platonic unity is not mechanization, which is surely lacking in Plato, but physical love, which is somewhat lacking in Plato and even more so in Clive.

One positive result of Maurice's outing with Clive is the confrontation with Dr. Barry, in which Maurice rejects chivalry. Maurice is sent down from Cambridge for his rudeness to Dean Cornwallis, a "eunuch" who resents even platonic homosexual love affairs, and Maurice's mother delegates the job of chastising her son to Dr. Barry, a neighbor and surrogate father. Dr. Barry tells Maurice that he is "a disgrace to chivalry" (59) for hurting his mother by not apologizing to the Dean and this accusation begins a new and critical chain of thought in Maurice's mind:

"A disgrace to chivalry." He considered the accusation. If a woman had been in that side-car, if then he had refused to stop at the Dean's bidding, would Dr. Barry have required an apology from him? Surely not. He followed out this train of thought with difficulty. His brain was still feeble. But he was obliged to use it, for so much in current speech and ideas needed translation before he could understand them (60).

Maurice's "difference" forces him to develop his intelligence and to question society's arbitrary judgements. When he returns from Dr. Barry's, his mother senses that he "had grown up," and his

sisters “had a sense of some change in his mouth and eyes and voice since he had faced Dr. Barry” (61).

Mrs. Hall is more concerned about the loss of Maurice’s motorcycle than she is about the loss of his degree when he is sent down from Cambridge. Like Mrs. Herriton and Lilia in Where Angels Fear to Tread, Mrs. Hall’s life centers around her home: “Church was the only place Mrs. Halls had to go to—the shops delivered” (62). If Mr. Hall, senior, has no demands on him to develop any individuality or real humanity, Mrs. Hall has even fewer. Finkelstein states in Forster’s Women that, in the world of Maurice, women barely exist, for they live two stages removed from the novel’s main concern, the problems of male homosexuals (63).

Forster briefly touches on women’s problems when he discusses Kitty’s financial dependence on her brother. Even her hardly radical desire to go to an institute to study “Domestic Economy” is dependent on his whim, and he thwarts her for no real reason. Only after he is rejected by Clive can he sympathize with another person’s frustration and grant Kitty the right to live the life she wants. Kitty is the more intelligent of Maurice’s two sisters, but Ada’s beauty makes her their grandfather’s heiress.

Maurice sees Ada as the ultimate sexual stereotype and unfairly blames her for breaking up his “friendship” with Clive. Clive also uses Ada unfairly, and she is hurt by his withdrawal. Clive, who cannot see men as real, has even more trouble with women; he does not consider Ada a person but merely a transition. He never gets in touch with her even to tell her that “circumstances” do not allow their relationship to continue, but cruelly says nothing at all and lets her wonder, for she does not really exist to him. Women in Maurice are oppressed both by society in general and by oppressed men in that society.

Clive, like Ansell, is an outright misogynist, but Maurice is less so (64). Clive can never tolerate differences: when he is homosexual, all women are awful; when he is heterosexual, all homosexuals are awful. The homosexual Clive assumes that women cannot understand the “harmony” of homosexual love, a harmony which in his hands turns into precisely the “starved medievalism” he says it is not (65). He takes out his antagonism toward his mother and sister on all women. Maurice is more open and heroic; he condemns some women, but not all. Maurice, unlike Clive, can react individually. Clive’s attitude toward Kitty when he becomes a heterosexual is telling: “He had always cared for Kitty least of the family- she was not a true woman, as he called it now” (66). No definition of “true woman” is forthcoming. Presumably, Kitty is simply too intelligent to fit Clive’s stereotyped demands.

Women function negatively in Maurice as the constant reminder of society’s heterosexual expectations; Clive’s mother spends the first half of the novel pressuring Clive to marry. Mrs.

Durham, as a widow, has no defined position in society and must live, emotionally and financially, through her children: “Oh, Penge is his absolutely, under my husband’s will. I must move to the dower house as soon as he marries” (67). Like Mrs. Herriton, she exists by manipulating others: “Mrs. Durham did not propose to retire to the dower house in practice, whatever she might do in theory, and believed she could best manage Clive through his wife” (68). When Clive does marry, Mrs. Durham remains at Penge but loses her power: “though Clive’s mother no longer presided she remained in residence, owing to the dower house drains” (69).

The Durhams’ class of society is losing control of an England that is being run more and more by Wilcoxes, but Mrs. Durham retains her snobbery toward the lower classes. She is rude to her servants, speaking French in front of Alec, as Herbert Pembroke does before Rickie’s bedder in The Longest Journey. Herself a victim of society’s oppression of women, Mrs. Durham, epitomizes society’s oppression of the lower classes. She cannot understand why Alec wants to emigrate and live for himself any more than the early Maurice could understand why Kitty wanted to go to school and learn to do something.

Mrs. Durham’s desire for an heir to Penge leads to Maurice’s first awareness of physical sterility that is a necessary corollary to exclusive homosexuality (70). His reaction is “immense sadness” and feeling of inadequacy: “His mother or Mrs. Durham might lack mind or heart, but they had done visible work; they had handed on the torch their sons would tread out” (71).

Ironically, Maurice spends his first day with Alec hunting physical fertility in the shape of rabbits, a hunt prudently arranged by Clive (72). Whether Maurice is trying to catch fertility or kill it is unclear, but the former is more likely, for Maurice at this point is going to a hypnotist to try to become “normal.” While Maurice is hunting rabbits, Alec seems to be hunting Maurice, and their later discussion of fertility in the British Museum furthers their comradeship, friendship, and childless homosexual love (73).

Clive’s change to heterosexuality is sudden and linked to the image of religious communion. When Clive accepts Mr. Ducie’s idea of holy communion, he rejects Maurice’s: “The heat at dinner! The voices of the Halls! Their laughter! Maurice’s anecdote! It mixed with food—was the food. Unable to distinguish matter from spirit, he fainted” (74).

In religious communion, too, matter equals spirit; but Clive can never accept homosexual matter and becomes hysterical when Maurice kisses him. Maurice Christopher, Christ-bearer, carries Clive to bed. After his faint, Clive gains “the knowledge that love had died” (75), and his reaction is to become cruel.

The night before Clive leaves for Greece, he comes into Maurice's bed, presumably for the first time; and a most peculiar scene ensues:

"I'm cold and miserable generally. I can't sleep. I don't know why."

Maurice did not misunderstand him. He knew and shared his opinions on this point. They lay side by side without touching. Presently Clive said, "It's no better here. I shall go." Maurice was not sorry, for he could not sleep either, though for a different reason, and he was afraid Clive might hear the drumming of his heart, and guess what it was (76).

Apparently Clive feels a sexual urge and realizes that he must either copulate with Maurice or become heterosexual and copulate with a woman. When he gets into bed with Maurice, he cannot go through with the homosexual act, so he goes to Greece and sends Maurice a letter saying he has become "normal".

Maurice's reaction to his scene in bed with Clive is as peculiar as Clive's. He apparently wants to have sexual intercourse but doesn't think he ought to because of Clive's teaching; yet the implication remains that he would if Clive would. Clive, on the other hand, also doesn't think he ought to and really will not.

In Finkelstein's view, Forster's terminology for Clive's change is ambiguous (77): "Clive did not give in to the life spirit without a struggle. He believed in the intellect and tried to think himself back into the old state" (78). Clive's central problem, is his reliance on the intellect at the expense of the emotions. The "life spirit" is not necessarily heterosexuality, as it seems at first; it refers instead to sexuality, regardless of focus. Clive exists in a world of bizarre morality. He attempts to fight his change to "normality," and his time in bed with Maurice is a battle in that fight, but it reveals the sickness of the mind formulating the strategy: "he could not recall it without disgust. Not until all emotion had ebbed would it have been possible. He regretted it deeply" (79). Apparently, Clive can consider sex only when there is no love, a level of morality significantly less connected than Maurice's. Maurice wants to copulate with Clive when he loves him and is only ashamed of his sexual urges when they are directed at someone he does not love, like Dickie. He is disgusted at Dr. Barry's acceptance of prostitution (80), and prostitution is essentially what Clive's attitude toward homosexual sex turns out to be.

Moreover, Finkelstein insists that Clive does not realize that what he is attempting to preserve is an incomplete relationship (81). He is humiliated by his change precisely because he is not internally connected: "It humiliated him, for he had understood his soul, or, as he said, himself, ever since he was fifteen" (82). But "the body is deeper than the soul" (83), and Clive is a slave to his body, if not

why he is homosexual, at least in his leaving of that state. The change takes him by surprise because he has ignored his body all along. The body demands fulfillment, as Mr. Emerson stressed in A Room with a View, but Clive cannot accept homosexual physical fulfillment.

Clive first notices his change when he is ill. His change comes about through his attraction to his nurse, a woman playing what he sees as the ultimate woman's role, that of mother: "He noticed how charming his nurse was and enjoyed obeying her" (84). Clive prefers the easier mother-child relationship to the more difficult comradeship he attempts with Maurice; and immediately before his confrontation with his former lover, he submitted his body to be bound with bandages by Maurice's mother and sisters.

Clive's change of sexual focus marks his transition from idealist to hypocrite, with no stop at individualist: "Greece had been clear but dead. He liked atmosphere of the North, whose gospel is not truth, but compromise" (85). Clive's deterioration is due to his inability to see that the spiritual part of him is not all, that it is precisely part of him. After his return from Greece, he is glad to be cut off from Maurice on the telephone, glad to have a bad connection. Clive and Rickie have much in common: they are both classicists; they both care for images of people rather than for people themselves; and they both make an incorrect choice, give up a male friend for a wife, and then deteriorate. The primary difference between them comes at the ends of the novels: Rickie is somehow redeemed, Clive not at all.

Clive does not escape from Maurice's reality without a scene. Maurice who tries to convince Clive to continue their love appears "like an immense animal in his fur coat" (86); and although he sheds his coat, his animal exterior, Clive remains adamant and impersonal. Indeed, his letter of rejection from Greece is impersonal, and Clive continues that tone in their confrontation. Maurice will not physically accept the impersonal, and although his tone "too was impersonal," he keeps touching: "he had not got off the chair" (87). The previously inarticulate Maurice now believes in the power of personal intercourse, and his command to Clive is moving: "One ought to talk, talk, talk – provided one has someone to talk to, as you and I have. If you'd have told me, you would have been right by now" (88). Clive does not tell Maurice about his feeling until the change is irrevocable. Clive never thinks of Maurice as a person to "talk to" but rather an image to talk at.

Clive's cruelty and condescension at this point are striking. He totally dissociates himself from his lover; when Maurice makes the parallel between Clive's change and his own brief fling with Miss.

Olcott, Clive cuts him short and calls him childish: "I know my own mind.... I was never like you" (89). Clive obviously never really loves Maurice, but merely worships an image of a Greek god. He is self-centered and cruel: Maurice's interest in a woman is obviously a stupid mistake; Clive's, the will of "the power that governs Man" (90). Although Clive tries to remain impersonal in a very personal situation, he is not above using the personal to wound. He cruelly mentions his attraction to Ada and then attempts to revert immediately to the impersonal, but the impersonal to which he reverts is sheer hypocrisy: he tells Maurice that he likes him "enormously" when he does not like him at all; and he tells Maurice that "character, not passion" is "the real bound" (91) when he has just shown his total lack of character..

At the end of their scene, Maurice attempts to summon Ada, and Clive becomes completely despicable, for "chivalry had awoken at last. 'You can't drag in a woman,' he breathed; 'I won't have it'" (92). Clive has learned nothing from being different. He now gives in completely to society's roles and leaves the Halls, "Asserting a man's prerogative" (93). Even less connected than before, he still thinks of images, not people, and goes off to look for "some goddess of the new universe" (94) to replace Maurice. Maurice's last words to Clive here, "Arrange... I'm done for" (95).

After Clive's change he can no longer penetrate into Maurice's mind. He sees Maurice, like Ada, as a transition and not a person: "But for Maurice he would never have developed into being worthy of Anne. His friend had helped him through three barren years" (96). But those years are essentially "barren" because of Clive's platonic asexuality. Clive does not even give Maurice the courtesy of a personal letter to announce his engagement; like Ada, Maurice is a nonperson. When Clive does telephone, Maurice is eighth on his list. Although Clive is a transition for Maurice – from confused, amorphous asexuality to focused, physical homosexuality with Alec – Maurice never sees him in those terms, but always as a person.

Maurice is better off without Clive and develops beyond him, for their platonic affair expresses Clive, not him. Maurice, who is happy in a platonic love relationship, assumes that Platonism is necessary for happiness, but in fact he is happy with Clive in spite of the platonic nature of their affair. At the end of the novel, Maurice recognizes Clive's inconsistency and points it out to him: "I can't hang all my life on a little bit. You don't. You hang yours on Anne. You don't worry whether your relation with her is platonic or not, you only know it's big enough to hang a life on" (97).

After Clive's change Maurice suffers severe loneliness, a loneliness Forster portrays more successfully than any other emotion in the novel: "One cannot write those words too often: Maurice's loneliness: it increased" (98). He has no one to talk to about his problems, a peculiar aspect of the homosexual plight that is not shared by heterosexual women: Margaret and Helen Schlegel can talk to

each other. Maurice considers suicide but decides against it when, in Forster's image, he is rejected by a female Death.

Thus, Maurice decides to seek aid from a doctor. Maurice equates lust with "sin" (99) and wants the doctor to punish him; his chief complaint is pathetic: "I'm an unspeakable of the Oscar Wilde sort" (100). The awful judgement comes in the voice of Dr. Barry: "Rubbish, rubbish!" (101). Homosexuality and decency seem incompatible to the good doctor, and he knows Maurice to be a decent fellow, so he refused even to discuss Maurice's problem. Maurice is impressed: "was not Science speaking?" (102). Maurice takes the doctor's advice and attempts to live a heterosexual life. He does indeed want to marry, but for the wrong, purely external reasons: he wants peace with society and the law, and he wants children.

Maurice makes one last effort to become "normal", by consulting a hypnotist but Forster strongly implies that Maurice's homosexuality is intrinsic and deep: "If this new doctor could alter his being, was it not his duty to go, though body and soul would be violated?" (103). His interviews with the hypnotist are attempts to go along with society's arbitrary roles, attempts to act the way society says one should act rather than the way one personally knows is right.

Maurice feels that he will never be free of Clive until something greater intervened, and that something is physical homosexual love, not hypnotism and hypocritical heterosexuality. Going to the hypnotist is a regressive act in which Maurice tries to recapture the trance of childhood, when he was confused and bewildered; he is trying to escape self-knowledge. He has some brief success on his first visit, but after he meets Alec, he is no longer susceptible; although his conscious desire to be cured increases, his unconscious desires prevent him from going into a trance.

When the hypnotist gives up and tells Maurice to go somewhere where homosexuality is legal, Maurice is surprised to hear such places exist: "You mean that a Frenchman could share with a friend and yet not go to prison?" (104). The hypnotist doubts that the law will ever be changed in England, for "England has always been disinclined to accept human nature" (105); but Maurice himself has done so: "He smiled sadly. 'It comes to this then: there always have been people like me and always will be, and generally they have been persecuted'" (106).

Maurice's journey toward self-realization comes to an end when he falls in love with Clive's assistant game keeper. Alec Scudder had tried to talk to Maurice a number of times, but on each occasion Maurice ignores him because of his low social status. Jim Mc Williams clearly explains in his Muted Groups in E.M. Forster's Edwardian Novels that not until Maurice allows his subconscious desires to overwhelm his sense of conventional morality does he accept Scudder as a human being

(107). This subconscious act – which occurs when Maurice, without thinking, one night opens a bedroom window at Penge and cries ““Come!”” (108) – is the pivotal point of the novel, for it signifies the beginning of a new life as he gradually learns to subdue his sense of social superiority by accepting Scudder as an equal partner in a relationship. This process of becoming a new person, however, is a painfully slow one for Maurice since he must overcome the ideas about social class that Clive has so successfully planted in his mind. The morning after Maurice and Scudder have enjoyed their first night of sexual intercourse, for example, Maurice asks Scudder not to address him as “sir”, but this attempt at familiarity makes both of them feel awkward (109). Later in the day, when he asks Clive about his assistant game keeper, Maurice is sickened to learn that he is merely the son of a butcher (110). When, therefore, Scudder’s note comes to him asking for a second rendezvous, Maurice decides that he will have nothing more to do with the young servant: “Of course he shouldn’t answer, nor could there be any question now of giving Scudder a present. He had gone outside his class, and it served him right” (111). Although his body still yearns for Scudder, Maurice remains focused upon his own position in society and so he resolves never to see Scudder again.

Maurice’s conviction that he has erred in allowing a man from the lower class to be his lover shows just how far he must go before he understands social equality. In other words, although he has finally accepted his homosexuality following two attempts at a cure through hypnotism, Maurice’s snobbishness demonstrates that he still accepts without question the Edwardian social hierarchy that Clive instilled within him. In fact, when Scudder again asks for a meeting, Maurice, whose stock brokerage is rapidly becoming successful, feels certain that the assistant game keeper can only be interested in blackmail (112). Essentially, Maurice cannot recognize Scudder as a fellow human being, one whose feelings have been wounded by a lover’s rejection. Instead of showing sympathy for him, Maurice can only see Scudder as a representative of the lower class, one whose feelings are wholly irrelevant to the higher classes.

Eventually, though, just as he had allowed his subconscious desires to overwhelm his alienated self of the night that he and Scudder first became lovers, Maurice finally trusts his emotions toward the assistant game keeper and thus decides to accept him as an equal. “They must live outside of class”, however, “without relations or money”, Maurice realizes (113). He then decides that he will enter into “greenwood” with Scudder, and, even though they will be “outlaws” since they must defy the social and criminal laws of England, they will enjoy a life of happiness. Although Forster later deleted an epilogue in which he described explicitly Maurice’s happy life with Scudder as they become woodcutters living in a forest far from other people, he states in his Terminal Note to the novel that he intends for his readers to understand that his two characters remain in love forever as they “roam the greenwood” (114).

The novel thus traces the evolution of Maurice, who had begun his mature life dangerously alienated from his true self because of society's constraints on his sexuality. When he successfully overcomes this self-alienation, however, Maurice then becomes estranged from a potential lover because of their difference in social class, but, through a long and arduous process of self-discovery, he finally recognizes that class distinctions between men are artificial. Maurice consequently becomes a wiser person than Clive. As Robert K. Martin states, "Forster moves his.... protagonist toward wisdom through courtship and concludes with a marriage that seals his moral growth" (115). Thematically, then, the novel is similar to A Room with a View in that, just as Lucy Honeychurch is pulled from a "wasted" life through her connection with George Emerson, Maurice is pulled from a miserable, lonely existence through his connection with Scudder.

A number of critics, beginning with Lytton Strachey who read the novel in manuscript in 1915, have argued that Forster's idyllic ending to Maurice is unrealistic, that what Maurice finds is carefree sex and not true love. Strachey, for instance, insisted that the Maurice – Scudder relationship was based upon " 'lust and curiosity and would only last six weeks'" (116). A more contemporary critic, Wilfred Stone, agrees, contending that all Maurice achieves is "sex-in-action" with his lover after years of frustration with Clive (117). Forster, however, believed that a "happy ending was imperative" because he wanted to demonstrate that two men can fall in love and remain together forever in fiction (118). In other words, Forster knew that his novel was hopeful rather than realistic, but, as he also demonstrated in Where Angels Fear to Tread and in A Room with a View, his intention in his novels is to describe how close personal relations may lead a person from self-alienation to an understanding of the irrelevance of social class. Consequently, Maurice is not intended to be a "realistic" portrait of a relationship. It is, instead, a fantasy. In fact, Rahman contends that the story only intends to make "a statement ... that given intensity of feeling, even purely sexual, all distances between human beings can be overcome" (119). Forster's emphasis then is less on the believability of how Maurice comes to understand himself and more on the necessity of such self-recognition. Moreover, failure to attain self-recognition, as Forster shows in the characters of Rickie in The Longest Journey and Leonard Bast in Howards End, leads to misery, frustration, and, quite possibly, a premature death.

NOTES TO CHAPTER V

- (1) P.N. Furbank, E.M. Forster: A Life I 256.
- (2) Jonathan Rose, The Edwardian Temperament, 1895-1919 64.
- (3) Scott R. Nelson, Narrative Inversion: The Textual Construction of Homosexuality in E.M. Forster's Novels 312, 13.
- (4) Rose. The Edwardian Temperament, 1895-1919 65.
- (5) Nelson. Narrative Inversion: The Textual Construction of Homosexuality in E.M. Forster's Novels 323.
- (6) E.M. Forster, My Days and Dreams 74.
- (7) June Perry Levine, The Tame in Pursuit of the Savage: The Posthumous Fiction of E.M. Forster 73.
- (8) *Ibid.*, p.74.
- (9) Nelson. Narrative Inversion: The Textual Construction of Homosexuality in E.M. Forster's Novels 313.
- (10) *Ibid.*, p.313.
- (11) Jim Mc Williams, Muted Groups in E.M. Forster's Edwardian Novels 100.

Of course, by not publishing Maurice, Forster failed to publicize Carpenter's cause as widely as Carpenter himself had done through his life and work. Forster's decision not to contribute financially to organizations fighting to legalize homosexual intercourse, as well as his failure to declare publicly his own homosexuality, has led some contemporary gay rights activists to denounce him as a hypocrite. Indeed, one such activist has ridiculed Forster as the "Closet Queen of the Century" for his refusal to publish Maurice which, he argues, could have "been of real practical help to countless gay people... Had he been prepared to come out, it is possible that so prestigious a figure would have had influence in bringing forward homosexual law reform" (qtd. In Beauman 358-59).

- (12) Forster. Terminal Note to Maurice 249.
- (13) Nicola Beauman, E.M. Forster: A Biography 208, 09.

While it is unclear whether or not he recognized himself in Maurice, Carpenter did read the novel in manuscript soon after Forster had completed it. He wrote to Forster in August 1914 that he felt "very much pleased" with the story, adding that he had appreciated the happy ending since "I was so afraid you were going to let Scudder go at the last – but you saved him & saved the story, because... the idea [is] that improbable is not impossible & is the one bit of real romance – wh. those who understand will love" (qtd in Letters I:223).

- (14) Forster. Two Cheers For Democracy 213.
- (15) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life I 257, 58.

- (16) Forster. Terminal Note to Maurice 249, 50.
- (17) Furbank. E.M. Forster: A Life I 98.
- (18) Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein, Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 138.
- (19) Forster. Maurice 13.
- (20) Ibid., p.13.
- (21) Ibid., p.13.
- (22) Ibid., pp.14, 15.
- (23) Ibid., p.15.
- (24) Ibid., p.15.
- (25) Ibid., p.15.
- (26) Ibid., p.15.
- (27) Ibid., p.15.
- (28) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M. Forster's Edwardian Novels 90.
- (29) Tariq Rahman, A Study of Alienation in E.M. Forster's Maurice 81, 82.
- (30) Forster. Maurice 11.
- (31) Ibid., p.19.
- (32) Ibid., p.130.
- (33) Ibid., p.191
- (34) Ibid., p.240.
- (35) Ibid., p.17.
- (36) Frank Kermode, A Queer Business 141.
- (37) Forster. Maurice 22.
- (38) Ibid., p.22.
- (39) Ibid., p.30.
- (40) Ibid., p.28.
- (41) Ibid., p.151.
- (42) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 144.
- (43) Forster. Maurice 151, 152.
- (44) Ibid., p.46.
- (45) Ibid., p.47.
- (46) Ibid., p.33.
- (47) Ibid., p.51.
- (48) Ibid., p.51.
- (49) Ibid., p.73.
- (50) Ibid., p.61.
- (51) Ibid., pp.62,63.
- (52) Ibid., p.63.

- (53) Ibid., p.63.
- (54) Ibid., p.69.
- (55) Stephen K. Land, Challenge and Conventionality in the Fiction of E.M. Forster 179, 180.
- (56) Forster. Maurice 67, 68.
- (57) Ibid., p.70.
- (58) Ibid., p.58.
- (59) Ibid., p.85.
- (60) Ibid., p.85.
- (61) Ibid., p.85.
- (62) Ibid., p.16.
- (63) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 152.
- (64) Forster. Maurice 100.
- (65) Ibid., p.90.
- (66) Ibid., p.121.
- (67) Ibid., p.95.
- (68) Ibid., p.101.
- (69) Ibid., p.166.
- (70) Ibid., pp. 96, 97.
- (71) Ibid., p.97.
- (72) Ibid., p.173.
- (73) Ibid., p.222.
- (74) Ibid., p.119.
- (75) Ibid., p.119.
- (76) Ibid., p.115.
- (77) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 157.
- (78) Forster. Maurice 120.
- (79) Ibid., p.120.
- (80) Ibid., p.160.
- (81) Finkelstein. Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 157.
- (82) Forster. Maurice 118.
- (83) Ibid., p.118.
- (84) Ibid., p.118.
- (85) Ibid., p.121.
- (86) Ibid., p.126.
- (87) Ibid., p. 127.
- (88) Ibid., p. 127.
- (89) Ibid., p. 128.

- (90) Ibid., p. 127.
- (91) Ibid., p. 128.
- (92) Ibid., p. 129.
- (93) Ibid., p. 130.
- (94) Ibid., p. 130.
- (95) Ibid., p. 130.
- (96) Ibid., p. 163.
- (97) Ibid., p. 245.
- (98) Ibid., p. 141.
- (99) Ibid., p.155.
- (100) Ibid., p.159.
- (101) Ibid., p.159.
- (102) Ibid., p.159.
- (103) Ibid., p.170.
- (104) Ibid., p.211.
- (105) Ibid., p.211.
- (106) Ibid., p.211.
- (107) Mc Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 95.
- (108) Forster. Maurice 191, 92.
- (109) Ibid., p.195.
- (110) Ibid., p.205.
- (111) Ibid., p.207.
- (112) Ibid., p.216.
- (113) Ibid., p.239.
- (114) Ibid., p.250.
- (115) Robert K. Martin, Edward Carpenter and the Double Structure of Maurice 45.
- (116) Forster. Terminal Note to Maurice 252.
- (117) Wilfred Stone, Overleaping Class: Forster's Problem in Connection 280.
- (118) Forster. Terminal Note to Maurice 250.
- (119) Rahman. A Study of Alienation in E.M. Forster's Maurice 87.

CONCLUSION

One of E. M. Forster's primary objectives in his Edwardian novels is to emphasize the significance of an individual's search for self-determination in a society that restricted people to certain roles. Women of the upper-middle-class, for instance, were to remain deferential toward men and devote themselves to domestic affairs, while men of the same economic class were to idealize women, place their faith in laissez-faire capitalism, and willingly shoulder "the white man's burden." Lower-class men, on the other hand, were to remember their social station by always showing respect for the upper classes and to work hard without questioning the social Darwinism which rationalized the necessity of poverty. Only on rare occasions bridges were allowed to span the wide gulfs separating the economic classes or the two genders. Homosexual men had no social status at all. In fact, they were subject to arrest and imprisonment if they had the courage to show affection publicly toward their lovers (1).

In each of the five novels he wrote between 1905 and 1914, Forster shows an individual suppressed by Edwardian society. In A Room with a View and Howards End, he depicts two upper-middle-class women, Lucy Honeychurch and Margaret Schlegel, who resist being forced into the role of dutiful wives, which means subordinating themselves to their husbands. In Where Angels Fear to Tread, The Longest Journey, and Maurice Forster portrays three men (Philip Herriton, Rickie Elliot, and Maurice Hall) who should reject the traditional role of upper-middle class men if they are to find happiness. With the exception of Rickie, all of these protagonists, overcome the restrictions that Edwardian society tries to place upon them by insisting that they are individuals, which means that they reject being treated as if they are nothing more than stereotypes representing a particular gender, economic class, or sexuality. These protagonists manage to escape being trapped into such roles by forming an intimate connection with another person. As Forster himself notes in his Commonplace Book, it takes "two people pulling each other into salvation," not "rescuer and rescued" (2). Since, however, Edwardian society, as Forster depicts it in his novels, is unwilling to accept people as unique individuals, they must exile themselves, literally or figuratively, from England. Philip, Lucy, Margaret, and Maurice, therefore, each come to the realization that he/she cannot live in an England which refuses to acknowledge the existence of individuals who do not readily conform to social expectations (3).

Philip, by learning to trust his instinctive affection for Gino Carella, evolves from a repressed male under the thumb of his mother into an individual liberated to make his own decisions. He consequently looks forward to the day that he will leave England for Italy and the company of Gino, to whom he feels "bound" through "ties of almost alarming intimacy" (4). Although he is not homosexual, Philip has learned to appreciate the sense of fraternity that is fostered through the

company of other men. Now that he enjoys Gino's friendship, he can distance himself from his family, as well as from the society that it represents, which he does when he disobeys his mother's instructions to seize Gino's son and return with him to England. In other words, even though he does not permanently exile himself from England, Philip has changed into an individual who has rejected the Edwardian social system and, consequently, has become an individual who has voluntarily exiled himself from a society that he no longer accepts as wholly valid (5).

Lucy, at the end of A Room with a View, achieves happiness and equality with George, but at the price of a break with her family: "His own content was absolute, but hers held bitterness: the Honeychurches had not forgiven them; they were disgusted at her past hypocrisy; she had alienated Windy Corner, perhaps for ever" (6). Lucy, rather than choosing either of the roles that seemed available to her – a conventional marriage with Cecil, or spinsterhood, with the two elderly Miss Allens and Miss Barlett – she, instead follows her instincts and connects with a man who not only inspires passion within her heart but also promises her freedom. As Finkelstein points out, Lucy chooses "the ultimate personal relation between two equal individuals, a relation which includes tenderness, comradeship and poetry" (7).

Margaret, after reconciling her husband and her sister, retires to rural life at Howards End, content to abandon the many social activities and cultural events that London has to offer. Like Philip and Lucy, she makes an intimate connection with another person, Mr. Wilcox, then distances herself from the society that London represents. In short, Margaret refuses to allow others – her husband included – to define her, or to control her words and actions. Instead, like Lucy Honeychurch, she has learned that she must always be an individual.

Even more absolutely than Margaret, Maurice understands that he must exile himself from English society if he is to find happiness. Consequently, he decides that he will enter into the "greenwood" with Scudder, and, even though they will be "outlaws" since they must defy the social and criminal laws of England, they will enjoy a life of happiness. Maurice is pulled from a miserable, lonely existence through his connection with Scudder just as Lucy Honeychurch is pulled from a "wasted" life through her connection with George Emerson.

Unlike Philip, Lucy, Margaret, and Maurice, all of whom successfully reject the roles that society would have them play, and thus also reject Edwardian society itself, Rickie thus fails to overcome the social forces which suppress him since he fails to accept his homoerotic desires for Ansell or his kinship with Stephen. Therefore, Rickie dies as a failure because he accepts without question the roles that Agnes wants him to play as a husband, father and a responsible member of the middle class.

All in all, as Finkelstein points out “Bloomsbury believed that each individual human being possesses a full range of human potential; that each person must strive, not to be manly or ladylike, but to be human” (8). Bloomsbury held personal relations to be the highest good: relations between people who were equal yet unique, regardless of gender. Friendship and passion were equally approved. The keynote is tolerance, variety, and respect for reasoned individual judgement. Bloomsbury believed in the value of individual attempts to lead a good moral life. This gives Forster a nonpolarized view of the world: he rejects class snobbery, and he shares with Bloomsbury a faith in the importance of self-knowledge as a prelude to that good moral life.

NOTES TO CONCLUSION

- (1) Jim Mc Williams, Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 102.
- (2) E.M. Forster, Commonplace Book 55.
- (3) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 102.
- (4) Forster. Where Angels Fear to Tread 174.
- (5) Williams. Muted Groups in E.M Forster's Edwardian Novels 103.
- (6) Forster. A Room with a View 243.
- (7) Bonnie Blumenthal Finkelstein, Forster's Women: Eternal Differences 87.
- (8) *Ibid.*, p.viii.

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