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SKEPTICISM AND HUMANISM IN FORSTER'S TREATMENT OF PERSONAL RELATIONS

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A B S T R A C T

The aim of this dissertation is an analysis of the development of Forster's ideas about Personal Relations through his six novels, A Room with a View, Where Angels Fear to Tread, The Longest Journey, Howards End, Maurice and A Passage to India. In each of the novels we can note the influence of two opposite trends: Skepticism, which suggests doubt, and Humanism, indicating an implicit faith in human nature. The clash between these opposite doctrines is reflected in his themes, making Forster a most ambiguous author, and raising several paradoxes and controversies. On the one hand, this ambiguity originates many flaws and inconsistencies. On the other, it widens the scope of the novels and invokes interesting dichotomies such as ORDER versus CHAOS, or DEATH versus ETERNITY. Our purpose here is to proceed to a detailed analysis of each of the novels, taking into consideration the influence of these flaws and ambiguities upon the theme of Personal Relations.

R E S U M O

O objetivo desta dissertação é analisar o desenvolvimento das idéias de E.M. Forster acerca das Relações Interpessoais ao longo de seus seis romances, A Room with a View , Where Angels Fear to Tread, The Longest Journey, Howards End, Maurice e A Passage to India . Em cada um destes trabalhos percebe-se a influência de duas doutrinas opostas: o Ceticismo, que sugere a idéia da dúvida, e o Humanismo, que traduz uma fé implícita na natureza humana. O choque destas duas tendências se faz refletir nos temas analisados em cada romance, fazendo de Forster um autor ambíguo e dando origem a vários paradoxos e controvérsias. Por um lado, tais ambiguidades ocasionam falhas e inconsistências; por outro, ampliam consideravelmente o âmbito dos romances e invocam dicotomias tais como os problemas da ORDEM contra o CAOS, ou da MORTE contra a ETERNIDADE. O propósito deste trabalho, por conseguinte, é realizar um estudo detalhado de cada um dos romances de E.M. Forster, levando em consideração a maneira pela qual tais falhas e ambiguidades afetam o tema das Relações Interpessoais.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

1.1 - STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Since the title of this work is "Skepticism and Humanism in Forster's Treatment of Personal Relations" I would like to start with the definition of the way the terms "personal relations","humanism" and "skepticism" are going to be dealt with in this dissertation.

The concept of personal relations is quite clear for those who have read anything written by Forster. It is his major theme, his greatest concern. In Forster's universe people are created to meet other people, either through love or friendship. Once they have fulfilled this yearning for spiritual communion with other human beings they have got to self-completion and achieved a personal relation. This leads us into the idea of humanism, which emphasizes the vision of man as an end, a world in himself, greater than any sort of social or moral institution. According to this view, nothing would be greater than two persons — two universes — changing and enriching one another. Forster is usually called a Hellenist and a liberal humanist. A Hellenist because, like the disciples of the historical or artistical movement known as Renaissance Humanism, he reserves an important site for Greek and Latin mythology in his work. He is a liberal humanist because he has been highly influenced, at Cambridge, by G.E. Moore, creator of the doctrine that claims the pleasure of human intercourse and the enjoyment of beauty are the highest goals of the healthy spirit.

With the term "skepticism" we revert to Greek philosophy and the notion stated by Pyrrho that, due to the countless con-

tradictions presented by human beings, it becomes impossible to find out where truth lies. Thence, skepticism maintains that one cannot be sure about anything, not even about the permanence of personal relations.

The trends of skepticism and humanism are essentially contrary to one another. And it is odd that both should occur in the works of a single author. Liberal humanism suggests an implicit faith in successful communication among people, whereas skepticism suggests a questioning which brings along the awareness of different sorts of barriers that tend to hinder personal relations. These barriers can be cultural, when a link is established between people from different environments and with distinct codes of behavior. We have as an example Gino Carella and Lilia Herriton in Where Angels Fear to Tread, or Fielding and Aziz in A Passage to India. The impediments can be social, when the connection exists between people from distinct economic spheres (Mrs. Elliot and Robert, the farmer, or Maurice and Scudder) and when a member of a traditional family contacts a person who would not fit their environment (e.g. Lucy Honeychurch and George Emerson.) There is also the inner barrier — Forster calls it the 'enemy within' — the unconscious power that seems to push several of his characters towards loneliness, "the vast armies of the benighted."

As we have already seen, these opposite trends are present in the work of E.M. Forster. This uncertainty about things together with a deep awareness of the power of these barriers to personal relations lead the opposite way from humanism. This raises the question we are concerned with in the dissertation: What happens when an author is both an optimist and a pessimist, a skeptic and a humanist? Our task in this work is to search for an answer. And we might well start with an obvious piece of evidence: the combination of these conflicting elements reflects an ambiguity

in his novels, raising several paradoxes and controversies. Indeed, Forster is a most contradictory author: as we shall see in the following chapters, he is misogynistic in his feminism, deeply religious in his agnosticism, and a skeptic in his humanism. The effects of these ambiguities can be felt in each of the novels. On one hand they cause several flaws and inconsistencies; on the other, they account for the richness we find in the text, and lead us into the interesting dichotomies of order versus chaos, death versus eternity, and personal relations versus loneliness.

1.2 - CRITICISM AND APPROACH

The choice of a suitable critical approach is a frequent concern whenever we are examining the work of an author. And it is the very nature of this work that determines which course fits best. If we used, for instance, the sociological approach to Orwell, or the psycho-analytical to Lawrence, most of the relevant aspects of their fiction would be within our scope. But this is not the case with Forster, whose work is spread over several distinct areas, such as Philosophy, Psychology or Sociology. This work would be spoilt if analysed through a single angle, and that's why I have decided for an independent line of textual criticism. Thus we would be able to look for information in three specific fields, Philosophy (G.E. Moore, Hegel and Berkeley), Social Anthropology (the importance of the 'Myth') and Psychology (Freud and Breuer). These sciences are dealt with superficially, at an instrumental level, both because I am not able to tread upon them with the due skill and discernment, and also because I wouldn't like the individuality of the novels to be spoilt in the process of adapting them to a certain theory or philosophy. Each work is treated as an autonomous entity, and I trust the linking points will be to some extent self-evident.

I would like to turn, now, to the opinions critics hold about the novels of E.M. Forster.

With the noteworthy exception of F.R. Leavis — who makes a lordly effort so as to control his aversion to Forster[1] — all other critics seem to agree that he is a great author, with great qualities and also many faults. The most criticised faults are the building of his plots and the inconsistency of several characters.

The problem with his characters is that some of them are attributed a two-fold meaning: they are to work both as persons and as symbols. Sometimes they are not able to carry both functions on successfully. Rickie Elliot, for instance, is a person; Gino Carella is a symbol, and so is Stephen Wonham. But Stuart Ansell, in The Longest Journey, is both a person and a symbol. As a person he is partial, jealous and passionate; as a symbol he represents Cambridge and Culture, the capacity to see things steadily and as a whole. Similar flaws do occur with other characters (such as George Emerson, who starts A Room with a View as a symbol and becomes a human being at the end.) We shall examine this problem through the discussion of the novels: it is a serious problem, because it raises frequent inconsistencies which tend to destroy the characters and to change the course of the novel without the knowledge of the author.

As for the plots, they have a strong tendency towards the old fashioned technique of melodrama. There are extreme coincidences, which would sound extravagant even to the Victorian reader. But no one actually cares about them because, in Forster, plot and story are not the main elements at all. As , for the mystic, the body is the dressing of the spirit, in Forster the plot is the container of the theme. Maybe the best way to define what the author demands from his readers is to call it "a parallel

reading" of the plot. His novels can be read either on a current level, where fantasy and the supernatural are not taken into account, or on a symbolic level, where we are expected to transfer truth to another sphere, using plots and characters as elements which are to be decodified.

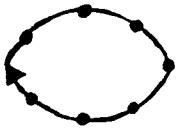
Forster is, himself, the critic who can help us most in the analysis of his novels. In his Aspects of the Novel[2] he gives his opinion of what a good novel ought to be. He is not thinking about his own work, but anyway we can learn a lot about his fiction by connecting it with the author's theories of literature. That's why I'm going to refer, now, to some chapters of Aspects of the Novel. They deal with Fantasy, Profecy, Rhythm and Pattern, all essential elements in the novels we are going to examine here.

Whenever we go to a show, or to watch a play, says Forster, we are expected to pay for our entrance ticket. We give something, a coin, and get the show, the play, or whatever, in return. This is also true of a book. Whenever we enter the universe of an author we have to participate by adapting our expectations to the reality of this author. We have to pay for several elements we find in Forster. The first of these elements is Fantasy. Fantasy consists of the mingling, in daily life, of reality and elements that are not akin to it. In Forster's fiction we have driads, muses, 'pans and puns,' and also a little god called Muddle. The coin we pay is our belief. We are to accept these elves and fairies as part of the reality of the text. And what we get in return, says the author, is a 'musical' basis to the novels. Fantasy provides the flutes and saxophones that work as the herald of the next element, the Prophecy.

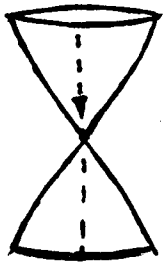
Prophecy is the foreshadowing, the omen, the subtle change in tune and atmosphere which allows the attentive reader to anticipate what is to follow. What it demands is humility and suspension of our sense of humor.[3] What it gives in return is the pleasure of

guessing and participating in the weaving of the plot.

Our next component is the pattern. Forster believes that novels, like houses, have an architectural shape. In Aspects of the Novel he refers to two sorts of patterns: the pattern which resembles a big chain and the pattern which resembles a sand-glass.



The big chain pattern, very common in 18th century's picaresque literature, and also in the comedy of errors, occurs when a character faces a series of events. One thing leads him into another, like links of a long chain and, at the end, he comes back to the first circumstance and resumes his previous position.



The sand-glass pattern, more frequent nowadays, implies the change of some characteristics in the main character. He starts the novel in a determinate state. Approximately in the middle of the book he meets other people, or circumstances, and changes. This is the sort of pattern we find in Forster. In A Room with a View, for instance, Lucy is introduced as a child, and George carries with him serious questions about the place of man in the universe. They meet, and the meeting induces a change in each of them. He gives up his questions, and in a way becomes a child. She grows up, and is not likely to trust people as easily as she did before. All of Forster's novels are remarkable because of their pattern. The price we pay for the pattern is the coherence of the plot. A group of tourists who meet at Florence are suddenly gathered together, two years afterwards, in England. Such coincidences are necessary to make things symmetrical, to add a feeling to completeness to the pattern. That's why critics don't care about the melodrama and the coincidences in the building of the plot. This is the coin they pay. In return they will be given an aesthetical sense of wholeness.

In two of the novels, The Longest Journey and A Passage to India, we have a different sort of pattern, the symphonic pattern.

A symphony — like a sonata — is usually composed of three parts[4]. In the first part we have the statement of two themes. In the second these themes clash and reach a climax. In the last part we have the restatement of each theme. Usually there is also a coda, the supplementary piece that sets the mood of the closing. The Longest Journey is divided into three parts: Cambridge, Sawston and Wiltshire ; A Passage to India into Mosque, Caves and Temple. Both have a coda and, as we shall see, follow carefully each of the steps in the building of a symphony.

Lastly we turn to rhythm. We know that the prophecy is formed out of slight changes in tune. Also the rhythm is built out of a sequence of symbols and leit-motifs. A wasp, a wisp of hay, a sound or a shade which reoccur so as to emphasize the theme we are dealing with, such are the elements that provide the rhythm of the narration. What it demands is our patience and attention. We are supposed to store these leit-motifs in our memory and then wait for the moment of decodification. As a reward, beauty will be added to the text.

The information we have gathered about fantasy, prophecy, rhythm and pattern will prove useful in our discussion of the novels. So much for Aspects of the Novel; let's turn now to the critics who have written about E.M. Forster.

The first great book of criticism on the author is, perhaps, Lionel Trilling's E.M. Forster, published in 1943. It links Forster's fiction with the precepts of liberal humanism. Few people had written extensively about Forster before, therefore Trilling can be called a pioneer in the field. It is he who first compares Howards End, the house, with England, and who sees Gino Carella

as a symbol. His are the first comments, at once the most basic and most obvious. What he says is going to be repeated, amplified and perfected through the years, by other critics. Our research owes a lot to Trilling, and so to other critics, Alan Wilde and Frederick C. Crews in particular.

In his book Art and Order: a study of E.M. Forster[5], Alan Wilde shows to be extremely sensitive: he is one of the few critics who is able to deal with such a subtle question as: 'Why do we like Forster?' His idea is that Forster's greatest quality is his tone, which is not imposing, but tentive, as if he were going to invite us to follow him in his quest.

> And we are tempted, in an age of propaganda and advertisement, to listen to someone who refuses to speak in loud and commanding tones, who is hesitant, cautious, acutely aware, even self-conscious, who is — like ourselves. (p. 1)

Wilde talks about the dichotomy of Mind and Body we are going to discuss in this dissertation. He uses a different terminology. He calls those people who are not afraid of their instincts and emotions, like Gino Carella, Stephen Wonham or Alec Scudder, members of the 'Natural Life,' which is represented by Italy, Greece and English countryside. As their foils he presents the ones who are afraid of emotions, such as Philip Herriton, who pass through life as spectators, and try to find in Art a substitute for Life. He also refers to undeveloped-hearted people, who 'respond to life as if it had permanence and fixity, the shape and coherence of a work of art.' He analyses this dichotomy — he calls it 'twoness' — we have in Forster in terms of 'Natural Life' versus 'The Aesthetic View of Life.'

Alan Wilde also discusses the yearning for Order and permanence we have in Forster. To him the author is a skeptic

who doesn't believe in Order but, at the same time, likes to pretend that it exists. This is the philosophy of "as if",[6] and Wilde quotes a passage from Abinger Harvest , where Forster talks about Order,

> One must behave as if one is immortal, and as if civilization is eternal (...) Both statements are false...both of them must be assumed to be true if we are to go on eating and working and travelling, and keep open a few breathing holes for the human spirit.[7]

Dr. Crews, in E.M. Forster: the Perils of Humanism[8], agrees with Wilde about Forster's strong bent towards skepticism. He makes reference to this as he talks of the negative implications of the theme of personal relations. According to him, 'the acceptance of the perils of humanism becomes (...) a major touchstone of value in his novels and finally emerges as his dominant theme.'[9] This implies a change in the nature of the novels. In A Room with a View and Where Angels Fear to Tread we have a plea for humanism. Then, gradually, it is the 'perils of humanism' that become Forster's great concern, leading his work towards a greater questionment.

Alan Wilde and Frederick Crews are the ones who deal specifically with the problem of Skepticism in Forster. Both agree that the trend of skepticism is the predominant note in the work of the author. Reuben Brower, in his essay about A Passage to India "The Twilight of the Double Vision: symbol and irony in A Passage to India"[10] seems to agree with them. According to the critic, the novel is to be read as an assessment of chaos. He goes further, and makes of chaos the symbol of the twentieth century,

> As an artist (Forster) has earned the right to attribute large and various meanings to Mrs.Moore's curious experience

> and to express a significance that goes well beyond the immediate dramatic moment. While presenting a seemingly personal crisis Forster has expressed the vision perhaps most characteristic of the 20th century, the discovery that the universe may not be a unity but chaos, that older philosophic and religious orders with the values they guaranteed have dissolved. (p. 221)

Brower sees the last section of the novel, called 'Temple', as an attempt to restore Order. According to him this attempt is a failure, and he rejects it, taking chaos as the final word.

Other critics, such as John Sayre Martin, K.W. Gransden and Rex Warner, comment about the peculiar position of Forster, who is both a skeptic and a humanist. I.A. Richards says he is 'the most puzzling figure in contemporary English letters.'[11] No one, though, develops these comments into articulate theories, or seems to relate the ambiguities in the novels with the presence of these opposite and contradictory trends in the author.

The one critic who sees Forster only as a humanist is Austin Warren. His reading of Forster is quite peculiar: first he acknowledges we have both the humanistic and the skeptic trends in the novels. Then he reminds us that these contradictory visions of things will originate several controversies in the books. This is the 'double vision' Lowes Dickinson has talked about, when referring to the works of Forster. Next, ignoring all traits of skepticism, Warren proceeds to his reading of the works, which is a difficult one, because, whenever he gets to a contradiction, or to a flaw, he stops and separates the 'double vision' into two halves, selects the humanistic view, and goes ahead. His comments, though odd, are all extremely coherent. He doesn't think, like us, in terms of junction of Heart and Mind to reach completeness. He sees these junctions (Philip/Gino, English/Italian) as a tem-

porary relation. He also concludes that Forster likes a character such as Mr. Wilcox. This because he sees the author as a humanist, and ignores the dimension in the novels where Forster forgets himself,

> There are times when, by reaction, Forster turns, temporarily, to primitivism — as Philip turns to Gino, as Rickie turns to that child of nature, his half-brother, Stephen. An animal is better than a prig, that parody of the saint; a child is better than a prude. But then Forster sees, too, the virtues of downright, unashamed, healthy extroverts like Henry Wilcox and Son, men devoid of intellectual curiosity and extradomestic sympathy who can "do" and build.[12]

To Warren, who sees Forster exclusively as a liberal humanist, the author is generous, and his goal is to reconcile everything in the universe. To Crews he is a Puritan who punishes his goats and rewards his sheep. As for us, we are going to analyse each of the novels thinking of Forster both as a humanist and as a skeptic, and then find our own way.

1.3 - STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

We have already established that the problem we are going to deal with is the ambiguity caused by the blend of skepticism and humanism in Forster's six novels. We have also settled that it is not convenient to follow a determined critical approach, and named the critics that are going to assist us through this work. Now it is time to set our goal and the procedures we will follow in the next chapters.

The purpose of this dissertation is to trace the development of Forster's ideas and beliefs about the theme of personal

relations through his six novels, A Room with a View, Where Angels Fear to Tread, The Longest Journey, Howards End, Maurice and A Passage to India.

The opposite trends of humanism and skepticism are present in each of these works, in different degrees. Dr. Crews' comment about Forster's increasing interest in the 'perils of humanism' shows that the tendency is a progressive movement towards pessimism. Parting from an ordered universe, we seem to be marching towards chaos. In A Room with a View we have the story of a girl who lives among people who care about social conventions more than anything else. According to the author's terminology these persons possess 'undeveloped hearts.' The novel narrates her painful journey towards the world of the 'developed heart.' As she gives up her social position and dignified acquaintances to marry a poor but sensitive young man, she is rewarded with a clear perception of life's complexity. Like in fairy-tales she lives happily ever after, in a universe of order, where things promise to be permanent. How innocent and Victorian this sounds, if compared, for instance, to the chaos and the piercing irony we find in later works, such as Maurice or A Passage to India, where those who are naïve enough to believe in permanence are punished either with disillusionment or with death. The difference between the universes we find in A Room with a View and A Passage to India makes us formulate questions such as "What sort of characters survive in Forster?" or "Why are those who believe in personal relations destroyed?" There are several kinds of people in Forster. There are his people of the 'undeveloped heart' who march straight forwards, never caring about the things and persons they meet on their way. They are hard to destroy, because they are dull and closed to emotions. They cannot be hurt by other people; but, on the other hand, they cannot be said

to be really 'alive.' Then we have the skepticals, who are so afraid of being hurt that they avoid a closer contact with emotion and with life. These characters are usually highly cultured and, since they are not strong enough to face life, they try to find a substitute for it in art, as Alan Wilde tells us. They end up by loving pictures, books and sculptures instead of real people. These characters are prisoners of their own aesthetical views. As the counterpart to the skeptical man and to the one with an undeveloped heart, we have people who believe in life, in friendship and in personal relations. Oddly enough, these are the characters which are most easily destroyed. It seems that only the stoics, such as Fielding, in A Passage to India, — who are always ready to give, but dare not expect anything in return because they are afraid of disappointment — survive. Such paradoxes lead us into further questions such as "To what extent does the author actually believe in personal relations?" , or "What changes and what remains the same through Forster's trajectory from A Room with a View up to A Passage to India?"

In order to get to the answer of each of these particular questions, and also to reach our goal in the dissertation — the course of Forster's beliefs about personal relations — we are going to proceed to an analysis of each of the novels. We will find several recurrent themes, and also many recurrent characters, and through the changes in these themes and characters we will learn a lot about the author. Each work will be examined independently, and we will keep to the plots, so that rhythm, pattern, symbols and leit-motifs can be acknowledged and appreciated properly.

NOTES ON CHAPTER ONE

1. F.R. Leavis' "E.M. Forster" (in: The Common Pursuit, p. 261) is crammed with clauses of concession. In the first part of his long sentences he pours out his antipathy to Forster and his work. Then come the concessions, to make his comments a little milder and to calm down the ardour of his criticism. Leavis considers the Italian Novels a weak substitute for Jane Austen's social comedies, and deplores Forster's "old-maidish touch." His greater restrictions apply to The Longest Journey and Howards End, because of the several flaws in their building. Almost unwillingly, he approves of A Passage to India. Forster's tendency to mingle poetry and prose is one of the traits which irritates him most. Leavis succeeds in picking all of the author's faults, and all of his comments are accurate. There is, though, a marked lack of proportion in his criticism. He identifies the faults but misses the qualities. And his tone is also a little too biassed.

2. Aspects of the Novel is the title of the publication of the eight lectures given by Forster in the year of 1926, at the annual Clark Lectures, from Trinity College.

3. Forster is not clear about the concepts of 'humility' and 'sense of humor.' I take the former as an acceptance of the nature of the omen. About the suspension of our sense of humor, Forster jokingly says that the prophet sometimes touches the pathetic and also the absurd as he shouts to the empty desert. Also with several of his characters, such as Mr. Emerson, we have to close our eyes to the ridiculous in order to get to the symbolic.

4. The division of a symphony into three part is not to be confounded with its movements, which are usually four (with remarkable exceptions, such as Beethoven's Sixth, which has five movements.)

5. Alan Wilde: Art and Order: a study of E.M. Forster. New York University Press, New York, 1964.

6. The philosophy of 'as if' is an idea taken from Hans Vaihinger's The Philosophy of AS IF (New York: Harcourt, Brace & Co., 1924, translated by C.K. Ogden.)

7. Wilde, p. 14.

8. Frederick C. Crews: E.M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism. Princeton University Press, New Jersey, 1967.

9. Crews, p. 6.

10. Reuben Brower, "The Twilight of the Double Vision: Symbol and Irony in A Passage to India" in: E.M. Forster: A PASSAGE TO INDIA (a selection of critical essays.)

11. Quoted from John Sayre Martin's E.M. Forster: the Endless Journey, p. 1.

12. Austin Warren, "E.M. Forster".

2 - CHAPTER TWO: E. M. FORSTER

2.1 - ON HIS LIFE

This item is not meant as a biography, but as some bits of information about the author which can prove useful to a better understanding of his novels.

Critics used to say that Forster belongs to a sort of 'intellectual aristocracy'. Indeed, his great-grandfather, Mr. Henry Thornton, was one of the leaders of the Clapham Sect. The Claphamites were a group of wealthy middle-class Evangelicals who used to meet and discuss religious and social problems. Mr. Thornton was also a member of Parliament. He preached against slavery and for the poor. The Clapham Sect is known nowadays as one of the several institutions which helped create the spirit of the Victorian Era. Through his great-aunt, Marianne Thornton, Forster has heard a lot about the Claphamites, and soon was ready to form his own opinions about them. On the one hand, he is as proud of his ancestors as the rest of his family. And he never denies how important it has been, for him, to grow up among educated people who provided him a sound cultural basis. On the other hand, though, he resents his family's serious and solemn ways. In Two Cheers For Democracy [1] he complains about their lack of passion and enthusiasm,

> It came out in everything — in the books they collected, in the letters my great-aunts wrote to one another, and in the comments which they made upon life, which are surprisingly dry for people so pious. Poetry, mystery, passion, ecstasy, music, do not count.

This criticism can be applied to his family, to the Claphamites and

the whole of Victorian society. Raised in the London whose spirit his family has helped to create, he will make of the city the universe of his fiction. His relatives, more worried about their duties than about loving people, will provide the mould for his people of the undeveloped heart. The changes he witnesses in the city during the turn of the century will also be portrayed in his fiction — his aversion to the products of industrialization and the hope of an eventual return to nature.

Raised among women — his father dies when he is still a small boy — and having few friends, he has a bad time when he is sent to Tombridge public-school. He feels lost and out of place. It is during his Tombridge years that he realizes he is a homosexual. The memory of these bad times will persist throughout his life, and his hatred of this sort of institution, which prepares children to face the world as if it were a battlefield, will appear as a permanent theme in his novels.

It is only at Cambridge that he realizes that life is not necessarily a trial. There he makes friends and learns to accept himself, as well as other people. During his under-graduate years his feelings about his city, his family, his social class and about society in general are rationalized and take a definite form. He learns to trust himself and his ideas. He makes a point of being honest and truthful to his beliefs. He gives up his religious practices, which have never been serious, and embraces a conscientious agnosticism. His political views, infuenced by the doctrine of liberal humanism, turn towards Socialism and owe a lot to Nathaniel Wedd, Lowes Dickinson and Trevelyan , to whose "Independent Review" he contributed with several articles. Wedd was also his Classics tutor, the one who induced him to regard the Greeks not as sacred and respectful monsters, but as people whose philosophy could be discussed, approved or denied. There is

much of Wedd in Mr. Jackson, the humanist we find in The Longest Journey.

At Cambridge Forster also becomes friends with some young intellectuals known as the 'Bloomsbury Group.' Among them we have Lytton Strachey, Roger Fry, Leonard and Virginia Woolf, Clive and Vanessa Bell, Bertrand Russell and Maynard Keyes. All of them, like Forster, belong to the upper middle-class, and most of them descend from well-known Claphamites. Forster is not actually a member of the Bloomsbury Group, though he partakes of many of their views. He is too much of an individualist to belong to such a clique. Most of the members of the Bloomsbury party, and also Forster, are linked to a secret intellectual organization, the 'Apostles', founded in 1820. People like G.H. Hardy, Alfred North Whitehead, James Clerk Maxwell and Tennyson had already belonged to the 'Apostles.' The dominant figure, during Forster's time, was the humanist G. E. Moore, whose Principia Ethica soon became the spiritual guide of all Cambridge young men.

In 1900 E.M. Forster takes a Second Class in the Classical Tripos, part I, and in 1901 a Second Class in the Historical Tripos, part II. In 1910 he takes his M.A. , and in 1927 is elected a Fellow of King's College. He spends his whole life at Cambridge.

2.2 - ON HIS THEMES

The best way to establish the reasons why one can find both skepticism and humanism in the works of this author is an analysis of the main themes we find in his novels. These themes reoccur in each of the novels, and it is through them that we will be able to trace the development of Forster's thoughts through the period of twenty-one years we have between his first novel (A Room

with a View) and his last one (A Passage to India). These themes will help us to settle what changes and what remains the same in Forster's theories, from 1903 to 1924.

2.2.1 - The For Ever Theme - In a short-story called "Other Kingdom"[2] a young girl is given a copse as a wedding present. She is very happy, and shouts "It's mine! I can walk there, work there, live there. A wood of my own! Mine for ever." Then she is told that her fiancé has not actually bought the land — he has got it on a lease of ninety-nine years. She knows she will be dead within ninety-nine years; still, something deep in her mind demands for the idea of "for ever." Another character jots down on a piece of paper: 'Eternity: practically ninety-nine years.'

This yearning for permanence is a central point in Forster. Like the young girl, the humanist in him longs for order, stability and permanence. The skeptical, though, calls this longing for "for ever" childish. He denies eternity, both in time and in intensity. Eternity is denied in time because the existence of a God is questioned. If there isn't God, people are not likely to live for ever. The idea of permanence is also denied in intensity by the realization that even the stronger emotional ties between two people, such as personal relations — love and friendship — are fragile and can be broken. Adela Quested, in A Passage to India, states that people meet in space, but are separated in time. This brings in the ghost of ultimate loneliness.

If the humanist is right there is hope for people and order in the universe. Human ties can be trusted to be permanent and our expectation for "for ever" is likely to be fulfilled. If the skeptic is right, though, and people are bound to die, something ought to be done in order to achieve immortality by other roads. This introduces the Continuance Theme. According to it a man, through his children, would in a way be marching to-

wards eternity. The continuance theme would thus work as a counterpart to the denial of permanence in time. To balance the denial of permanence in intensity we are left with the hope of a better time, in the future, when people will be taught, from childhood, to develop their hearts.

2.2.2 - Religion - Rationally Forster has never cared much about religion. When he became an agnostic, at Cambridge, he did not enter any sort of crisis. His one trouble were some weak complaints from his mother. Nevertheless, the greatest concern in his novels is the search for religion, or for a substitute for it. D. H. Lawrence sees this clearly and, in a letter to Forster,[3] makes reference to this desire for the absolute,

> You see I know all about your Pan. He is not dead, he is the same forever. But you should not confuse him with universal love, as you tend to do. You are very confused. You give Pan great attributes of Christ.

Unlike most atheistic authors, who calmly believe that people ought to take life for life's own sake, Forster is always in search of a goal, of some sort of transcendency.

To make the discussion easier it would be better if we separated Forster's ideas about religion as an institution — let's call it "Christianity" — and his feelings about God.

Forster's reservations about the Church as an institution are basically the same reservations he has towards public-school. He regrets the fact that the spontaneity, passion and enthusiasm of true faith have given way to the disparities of a code of morals that tends to distort people's minds. The sort of Christianity taught at public-school leads people either to fanaticism or to hypocrisy. We have examples of that in Harriet (Where Angels Fear to Tread) and in Henry Wilcox (Howards End.) Harriet's

religion lacks kindness and tenderness. It doesn't take other people's feelings into account, and approaches insanity and a sort of masochism. As for Mr. Wilcox, he has a tendency — so common in people who are shaped out of public-school moulds — to establish a rigid religious code for other people while reserving to himself the right to interpret the will of God.

Then, apart from Christianity, there is God. His craving for the absolute has much to do with the "for ever" theme and the desire for permanence. The denial of eternity in time and intensity implies the acceptance of loneliness. With loneliness comes in the mood for sadness. And whenever a person is sad and lonely, he turns to the absolute. In A Passage to India one of the nick-names for God is "the Friend". Characters who feel lonely, in this novel, use to turn to Poetry because, 'less explicit than the call to Krishna, it voices our loneliness nevertheless, our isolation, our need for the Friend who never comes yet is not entirely disproved.'[4]

That's the heart of the matter: God is not entirely disproved. If he were disproved, we would have the certainty about chaos and about loneliness. But we are still between the two possibilities.

Some of Forster's characters are deeply religious, such as Rickie Elliot. Others, like Mr. Emerson, are untroubled in their unbelief. Anyway, there is a strong tendency in his chaotic universe towards order. Pan, the muses and other supernatural creatures watch over the action. After building plots that lead characters into panic and emptiness the author sends his little gods to the rescue. After 'ultimate' truths, such as Mrs. Moore's, there still comes hope.

2.2.3 - Homosexuality - Homosexuality in Forster is not exactly a theme. It is rather the agent which determines the

views he has of life. In many ways this is a delicate subject because one is in danger of emphasizing minor details or missing relevant points. Homosexuality in an author — like his political views, his style or his social position — is one more of his attributes and may or may not be an essential point in his work. I don't think it is a crucial point, for instance, in much of Oscar Wilde's work. In Forster, though, it has a direct influence on the themes.

Dr. Crews says in his book that 'the skepticism of Forster and (the Bloomsbury Group) came not from personal experiences of disillusion but from a legacy which they accepted with varying degrees of earnestness (from the Claphamites).'[5] Nevertheless I think that part of his skepticism can be attributed to the peculiar position he holds in Edwardian society. Homosexuality is a secret he has to keep from those who belong to his social group. As an intelligent man he understands the working of society. He knows of its weaknesses, its fears and little hypochrisies, and portrays all that in his novels. Much of Forster's irony can be traced back to his contempt of Christianity and to public-schoolish mentality, which pervert people's minds and make society degenerate. Because he is homosexual, Forster is forced to cheat a cheating society, and this is reflected in his work through his bitterness towards his people of the undeveloped heart. The dichotomies Cambridge/Public-School, Personal Relations/Telegrams and Anger, Developed Heart/Undeveloped Heart reflect his appreciation of people who realize that individuals are not perfect, and accept them as they are, and also his regret because society demands from people a perfection they are far from possessing.

If we go back to the themes we have already examined, we will see that the author's homosexuality sheds a further light on them. Probably he wouldn't care so much about the 'Continuance

Theme' if he had been able to have children. Maybe also he would have different ideas about religion. In Maurice, when Clive realizes he is homosexual, he turns to the Bible in search of comfort, but what he finds is the promise of punishment. It is in Greek literature, later on, that he will find some help. In "What I Believe"[6] Forster says, 'My law-givers are Erasmus and Montaigne, not Moses and St. Paul. My temple stands not upon Mount Moriah but in that Elysian Field where even the immoral are admitted.' He condemns Christianity, in A Passage to India, for being an 'exclusive religion.' And homosexuality is the factor that makes of him one of the excluded.

NOTES ON CHAPTER TWO

1. E.M. Forster: Two Cheers for Democracy (Penguin, London, 1972.) The passage is quoted in Crews' E.M. Forster: the perils of humanism.
2. Forster: "Other Kingdom" in Collected Short Stories (Penguin, Bucks, 1970.)
3. Lawrence's letter to Forster — written in 02/03/1915 — can be found in P.N. Furbank's E.M. Forster: a life (Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1979.)
4. Forster: A Passage to India (Penguin, Bucks, 1974) p. 103.
5. Crews, p. 10.
6. Forster: "What I Believe" in: Two Cheers for Democracy.

3 - CHAPTER THREE: THE ITALIAN NOVELS

Critics use to refer to A Room with a View as Forster's third novel. For our purposes, it is going to be treated as his first. Both positions are valid, for the story of this novel is a complicated one. A Room with a View is Forster's first attempt at writing. He started sketching it in 1901. In 1902 he wrote some scenes and then, in 1903, wrote the first nine chapters — which make about half of the book, and surely most of the action. Then he stopped, for he was at a loss and didn't know in which way action was to be developed. He started then Where Angels Fear to Tread, published in 1905, and wrote all of The Longest Journey , which was brought out in 1907. It is only in 1908 that A Room with a View is finally accomplished and released.

Though third in order of publication, the reader can easily feel that it has much more to do with Where Angels Fear to Tread than with any of the later novels. Together, they seem to form an independent body. This is the main reason why critics call them "the Italian novels." This is a useful device that allows us to place both works together without having to bother about chronological details. They are also referred to, sometimes, as the "social comedies" — not that they are comedies at all, but because they are lighter in tone and keep several peculiarities of the old Comedy of Manners. Instead of the sharp social criticism we are used to in Forster, here we have a good-humored satire of middle-class gentility and its usages. It is also in the Italian novels (particularly in A Room with a View) that we can see how much Forster owes to Jane Austen in this first stage of his career. The universe portrayed by both authors is the same; Lucy Honeychurch

(we might well start by her name) could very easily be placed in any of Miss Austen's novels. Also in the light irony and wit they resemble one another. In theme, however, Forster is already independent. He is already concerned with the achievement of personal relations, though there is a great difference between the treatment of the theme in the Italian novels and in the other ones. The former are much more optimistic. The skeptical stoops to the humanist. It is not that the author is not aware of the barriers people have to surpass in order to touch other people.He chooses not to deal seriously about them in the Italian novels. Lucy loses her home and Lilia and her baby die, but still the stories end pleasantly. The bonds characters succeed in establishing seem likely to last. In order to have a happy-ending Forster decides not to deal with the deeper implications of the plot. Also, the Italian novels are intended to be structurally perfect books, where every detail — rhythm, pattern, imagery — fits together. In order to achieve this formal perfection the scope of the theme has to be reduced. The results pleased the critics in general, but Forster himself was not so glad. In a letter to Nathaniel Wedd about A Room with a View he asserts his belief that the novel would gratify the home circle, but not those whose opinions he valued most.[1] From then on he grows each time more honest to his theme. The range of his novels widens progressively to the extent that not even the author is able to deal with them. People criticise Forster for the several inconsistencies we find in novels such as Howards End or The Longest Journey, yet they are aware that he has become a greater author, whose work is capable of gratifying those whose opinions he values most.

It is not merely because they are set in Italy that A Room with a View and Where Angels Fear to Tread are known as the Italian novels. Italy functions as a metaphor here for the inner, emotional

life. The journey characters make to Italy can be also interpreted as a journey into the subconscious, which will lead them into self knowledge and will teach them to challenge narrow prejudices and preconceptions of their conventional English upbringing.

In his essay "Notes on the English Character" Forster refers to the influence exerted by Public-school on the personality of the Englishman. He criticises it for sending into the world people who possess 'well-developed bodies, fairly developed minds, and undeveloped hearts.'[2] This "undeveloped heart" consists of an inability to deal with one's feelings or to disclose one's own emotions without the fear of being hurt. And whenever this cautious and self-contained Englishman reaches Italy he enters a different culture where the shock between his values and the ones of these quaint people proves great. Italians look spontaneous and responsive to friendliness. Through them Italy is magnifyed into more than a country; its pettiness and poverty are lent a picturesque charm, and it reaches the state of a symbol.[3] It stands for the ideal place where people are natural and unconstrained, where warmth matters more than delicacy and passion is worth more than civility. To Forster, who works through contrast, the cheating and romantic Italians provide good foils for the English characters, who are honest and unemotional. In Where Angels Fear to Tread we find Gino Carella, perhaps the most successful among Forster's symbolic characters. Despite all his weaknesses, Gino stands as the healthy and athletic young man whose faults are overlooked due to the warmth of his heart. He lacks the qualities of the Englishman — he is neither trustworthy nor a gentleman — but he is pure in the sense that he is genuine and lacks malice. Gino never worries about the contradictions in his behavior, following his nature without experiencing either guilt or pride. 'No more modest than immodest,'[4] he has much of the Adamic hero of American literature in him. Both are free and at ease in their environments, and willing

to establish new links with people.

This sort of character is going to reoccur in Forster's following novels. He will come as the gamekeeper in Maurice, or as Stephen Wonham in The Longest Journey. His name and nationality will change. Still, either as the Italian Phaeton or as the English peasant, he will remain as the symbol of the unbidden soul and of the power of Nature to restore people their hearts.

3.1 - A ROOM WITH A VIEW

The action of A Room with a View takes place during the turn of the century. The world is changing fast, and old Victorian patterns suddenly won't fit anymore, though the new ways that are going to replace them have not been established yet. This is the time when a young girl, Lucy Honeychurch, passes from childhood into womanhood. She is surrounded by all sorts of different people, and the point of the story is the choice of the kind of woman she is going to turn into. Were Forster a more impetuous author this book could be read as feministic propaganda, but he is temperate in his criticism. Lucy is not portrayed as the victim of a prejudiced social system, but as a person who is able to solve the problems she is going to be faced with. Hers is the responsibility if she fails or the praise if she succeeds. What she is going to settle is whether she is going to take life as it is offered to her, submitting to rules those she loves and believes tell her are undisputable, or whether she has a right to choose by herself what is correct and what is not. The problem is that she is too young and inexperienced to understand her own situation, and doesn't even realize she is bound to make any choice at all. Indeed, Lucy looks like a very common girl, her one trace of greatness being disclosed at the moments she plays the piano. And it is Mr. Beebe who, when he listens to her playing of Beethoven's Opus III, realizes the

potentiality for heroism in her. But things like heroism, poetry or passion do not count in the circle where she has been raised, and probably they would never be cultivated had she not met two rather peculiar men, Mr. Emerson and his son George.

It is not by chance that Mr. Emerson has this name. Like the philosopher, he has his own way of looking at the world. An anarchist in his ideology, he blames social and political institutions for deforming people's minds, making them proud of their faults and ashamed of their qualities. Mr. Emerson believes in Man and — representing the Liberal values — dreams of the day when people will be simple enough to accept their own feelings. His ideas are quite daring. He believes that thorough simplicity can only be reached in Nature. He conclaims people to accept their bodies and their souls. He scares people with his ideas about sex. To Rev. Beebe he says that 'The Garden of Eden, which you place in the past, is really yet to come. We shall enter it when we no longer despise our bodies.'[5] (p. 145) The old man's attitudes shock people, and he is often taken either as a lunatic or as a silly and ridiculous person. As a matter of fact, he is rather Quixotic in the way he treats people. Ready to share his ideas with everybody, he talks to strangers as if they were his friends, but people usually resent his meddling with their affairs.

Mr. Emerson is an optimistic man who never loses hope. He has created his own set of values, and behaves accordingly to his beliefs. One of his favorite readings is Walden[6] and, on his wardrobe, Mr. Emerson has scribbled his motto, 'Mistrust all enterprises that require new clothes.' (p. 144) He makes a point of keeping his line of behavior. For him, using new "clothes" means treating different people in different ways. Clothes is one of the many leit-motifs we find in the novel. It means different things to different people. For George, who reads Sartor Resartus[7] (each character in Forster has his own literature), there is a

connection between clothes and personal relations, since none of them are likely to last for long. The fact that the same symbol can mean such distinct things for father and son makes us wonder why both men are so different in the way they see life. Mr. Emerson has raised his son to be free from all the bounds and prejudices which misshape the human mind, but his son, instead of the ardent creature he was meant to be, is thoughtful and gloomy. When he is asked what is the problem with his son Mr. Emerson answers, 'The old trouble: things won't fit.' (p. 47) Indeed, George's scope is wide enough for him to understand the reasons why people behave as they do. He sees that all are afraid of his father's ways, and this hurts him — not only for his or Mr. Emerson's sake, but for all others too. His father also knows that "things won't fit," but he can live with that. George is the one who is shocked, the one who reflects Forster's own questions. George wants things to fit, i.e., he longs for a world of order; but, like Mrs. Moore, in A Passage to India, he realizes the chaos and cannot find a meaning in things. He sees people striving against their own problems and, at the same time, hurting his father, the only person who cares about them. This makes him aware of an ultimate sort of loneliness he is not able to deal with.

George carries with him a sheet of paper with an enormous question mark painted on it. His father calls it "the everlasting Why." He asks Lucy to help the boy in terms which again remind us of Carlyle; he asks her to make him realize that 'by the side of the everlasting WHY there is a YES — a transitory YES if you like, but a YES.' (p. 48)

George's questions are going to absorb more and more Forster's attention, up to the point they are going to turn into his greater center of interest. But this is going to occur only in the other novels, because George will not pursue his goals any

further in A Room with a View. As soon as he gets involved with Lucy he stops caring about the welfare of Humanity and worries over his own problems. Through her he finds a purpose to his life and becomes both a sounder and a less noble character. Alan Wilde gives us a good account of what happens with George in his chapter about "The Aesthetic View of Life,"

> What is troublesome is not that George has found a solution in personal relations and love, but that he no longer seems aware of the question mark with which he began. One must affirm the transitory Yes, says Mr. Emerson, but George's road has led from the transitory No, through the Center of Indifference, to the everlasting Yes. He no longer realizes that the Yes is transitory; (...) George, rather abruptly for one who suffers and thinks so much, loses awareness of his earlier doubts, and he is a lesser, if a happier, person as a result.[8]

In short, starting as a symbol — as the everlasting Why — which tends to illustrate philosophic positions, George is not consistent enough to work both as symbol and character. He starts the novel as one thing and ends it as the other.

The scheme of action in this novel is quite a simple one. Lucy is to choose between two young men, each representing a different sort of life. One is rich and belongs to her social class, therefore the marriage pleases both families. The other is George, with whom she is in love. Of course this is a silly plot, and Lucy's choice, in theory, is a clear one. But things are complicated by her inexperience. If she decides for George, she will have to break with her family and with her own way of life. Lucy is an honest girl, but the fact is that she wants to avoid getting in trouble. She doesn't realize she loves George; she simply senses he means "trouble", and flees from him, pretending to herself that she loves Mr. Cecil Vyse. Mr. Emerson calls her state 'muddle,' and, according

to him 'there's nothing worse than a muddle in all the world. It is easy to face Death and Fate, and the things that sound so dreadful. It is on my muddles that I look back with horror.' (p. 222) If Lucy didn't escape this muddle and married Mr. Vyse she would find in him an honorable gentleman who intended to be her lover, teacher and protector. In George, instead, she finds a companion and a friend. Together they dream of a new society where men and women are equal in their rights and duties. According to George 'this desire to govern a woman — it lies very deep, and men and women must fight it together before they shall enter the Garden.' (p. 187)

There is a strong current of feminism in this novel — not the feminism that connotes fanaticism, but the ideal of equality and comradeship. The role of woman in the 20th century is one of the three subjects developed in this novel to illustrate the theme of personal relations. The other two are art and sex. All of them represent rather controversial grounds, and it is a paradox that they should be discussed in the most Victorian of Forster's stories. In order to be clear in the discussion of these three aspects I'd like to refer to some plot sequences. Many of the important scenes and symbols will not be dealt with, since they don't have a direct connection with the development of our work.

As the story opens we find Lucy and her elderly cousin, Miss Charlotte Bartlett, in Florence. Both are rather disappointed: they have travelled a long distance to reach Italy — we know what Italy means in Forster — and now they are in a pension that looks exactly like a British one. All guests are English, and on the walls one can find a notice of the English church and two portraits, one of Queen Victoria and the other of Tennyson. At table, Lucy and Charlotte are complaining because they have not found a room with a view to the Arno river. The other guests, be-

having properly, do not intrude upon this private conversation. But Mr. Emerson, also lodging at the pension, promptly tells the ladies he and his son have rooms with views, and that they will be glad to exchange rooms with them. Charlotte, vexed by the old man's meddling and not willing to owe favors to strangers, is cool and distant in her refusal. But Mr. Emerson keeps insisting. The episode turns into something disagreable, each character reacting according to his/her perception. The clash of these conflicting levels of reality creates the 'muddle': Mr. Emerson is exasperated at people's turning simple things into intricate political affairs, whereas Charlotte is annoyed with having to deal with uneducated people. All others, still quiet, find a way — through looks and gestures — of conveying the notion that they side with Charlotte. As for Lucy, she has the curious feeling that 'whenever these ill-bred tourists spoke, the contest widened and deepened till it dealt, not with rooms and views, but with — well, with something quite different, whose existence she had not realized before.' (p. 25) George is able to apprehend rationally what for Lucy is only an impression. He sees that his father — who has a <u>view</u> of life, and wants to share it with others who don't — is being rejected again.

When Lucy leaves the table she gives George a bow, and he answers with a smile. She feels he is smiling at her "across" something, but again this is a notion she is not able to handle further. Anyway, she has a feeling she likes the Emersons and that their gestures, though lacking in delicacy, have plenty of beauty in them. Charlotte doesn't share Lucy's impression, and this raises the first big question we have in the novel: Shall one follow one's own heart or rely on the wisdom of more experienced people? A casual incident, involving art, takes Lucy further into the pursuit of an answer. It happens when she goes to Santa Croce church with another guest, Miss Eleanor Lavish (names are allegorical.), who likes to think of herself as a suffragette and a romantic writer. Finding

an acquaintance, Miss Lavish goes with him, leaving Lucy by herself. The girl is very angry, for she has come to the church to watch some frescoes by Giotto, one of which has been praised by Ruskin. Miss Lavish has taken the Baedeker with her, and without the guide-book Lucy is not able to identify the paintings whose 'tactile values'[9] are worth her praise. This illustrates her position in life; she stands between spontaneity and what is proper. She knows the church is 'beautiful' according to established patterns. She feels it looks like a barn though. All frescoes seem identical to her, who doesn't want to direct her attention to something which is not "pure art." Lucy is not willing to behave like some children who, taking him for some saint, are praying by Machiavelli's memorial. It is then that she meets the Emersons for the second time. Taking her to the place where the works by Giotto are, Mr. Emerson invites Lucy to settle for herself which is the most beautiful piece. This is the first time she is invited to make a decision. But the old man, who is not tactful, goes too far and tells her to '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.' (47) He tells her that, by understanding George, she would also understand herself. Lucy finds it better to leave this odd man, says good-bye and goes away. She tries to think of Mr. Emerson in the patronizing tone Charlotte masters so well, but she is sensitive enough to be affected by his words. Through them Lucy starts to grow up. The first effects can be felt some days later, at the pension. Lucy wants to go for a walk, but it is raining and there is no one to go with her. Besides, young girls should never go out by themselves, since it is not proper. She feels rather annoyed, all interesting things being unladylike. 'Charlotte had once explained to her why. 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.' (p. 60) Not com-

pletely convinced, she goes to the piano. Sitting in an arm-chair is Rev. Beebe, a friendly and intelligent man who is 'from rather profound reasons, somewhat chilly in his attitude towards the other sex, preferring to be interested rather than enthralled.' (p. 54) He is curious about Lucy and Charlotte. He believes the girl to be on the brink of something that will lead her to greatness, and wants to be near when the moment arrives. As for Charlotte, he thinks that she 'might reveal unknown depths of strangeness, though not, perhaps, of meaning.' (Eventually, he will change the statement to 'she might yet reveal depths of strangeness, if not of meaning.') Lucy is playing Beethoven when something in the music, suggesting the sound of a roar, demands that something great be done. She wants to do something daring, and leaves for a walk. 'Too much Beethoven,' is Mr. Beebe's good-humored remark. Wanting to do something rebellious and forbidden Lucy goes to a shop and buys some posters, Botticelli's Venus among them. Charlotte, referring to the naked goddess, once commented that Venus, 'being a pity, spoiled the picture, otherwise so charming.' (p. 61) After this act of defiance she feels better. The rain stops and the last rays of sun can be seen on the square. She is at the piazza Signoria at sunset. The earth is already in shadow, but the last rays still touch the top of the taller buildings. The emotions this raises on her are strong. All leit-motifs start to gather together. The roaring sound in the melody by Beethoven, Botticelli and the birth of the goddess of love from the roaring sea, and now what she experiences as she looks at the sun shining at the top of the tower of the palace, known as the Torre del Gallo (the Cock's Tower,)

> 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 unat-

> tainable treasure throbbing in the tranquil sky. Its brightness mesmerized her, still dancing before her eyes when she bent them to the ground and started towards home. (62)

The phallic implications of the imagery are ratified later in the novel, when Lucy links her feelings for George with what she felt looking at the tower. Again it is interesting that the strongest of Forster's symbols happens in the mildest of his novels. Written before Freud, this is the closest the author ever gets to Lawrence.[10] All this is worked into a crescendo, tension increasing at each new stage, up to the climax when Lucy witnesses a murder. Two Italians have been fighting about money, and then one stabs the other who, wounded to death, staggers towards Lucy as if he has a message for her, but dies before talking. In The Perils of Humanism[11] Crews interprets the message as the statement that 'it is better to bring your passion out, even if it is murderous, than to remain unaware of its presence.' It can also be interpreted the other way round, in the sense that, if you are willing to bring this passion out, you've got to be ready to bear suffering. Now Lucy — who has travelled from so far in order to see Italy, the place where instincts and emotions can be released — has realized that where there is passion the element of danger is also present. At Santa Croce she has been told that, in life, either one thinks by oneself or follows those who never question the order of things. Now she is told of another choice: either one fights for love and passion, accepting the danger which comes along with them, or one goes for security, opting for feeling nothing, in order not to suffer.

As the man dies, at her feet, Lucy realizes that George Emerson is also at the piazza, looking at her across the scene of the murder. He comes to her and, picking up her posters that have fallen to the floor, walks home with her. When they get close to the river he suddenly throws the photographs down the stream. She

asks for an explanation and George, with an anxious voice, tells her that the pictures were stained with blood. He tells her he has been afraid, and it pleases her that George, who is a man and therefore ought to be wise, and a protector, can be as human and as scared as herself. She knows that he, also, has hinted the message, and is willing to decodify it, when he states that 'something tremendous has happened; I must face it without getting muddled. It isn't exacly that a man has died.' (p. 64) This frightens the girl because she is not willing to understand her own feelings. This settles the beginning of another phase for Lucy. If before she was not aware of her emotions, from now on she starts prohibiting herself from thinking about them. This is what Forster calls the "enemy within". Because of it she decides to avoid the Emersons, who make her feel so uncomfortable.

Next morning she refuses an invitation to go with Rev. Beebe and the Emersons for a walk. She feels that 'Charlotte and her shopping were preferable to George Emerson and the summit of the Torre del Gallo.' (p. 68) While shopping, Lucy and Charlotte find Rev. Eager (another allegorical name), a pedantic pseudo-scholar who reminds us of Mr. Bons, in the short-story "The Celestial Omnibus."[12] Mr. Eager is the character in the book who holds that Art is worth more than Life itself. Talking about the murder, he is outraged by seeing that the Florence of Dante and Savonarola has been stained with blood. Lionel Trilling, in his book on E.M. Forster, comments that

> Mr. Eager, choosing to forget what the Florence of Dante and Savonarola was like, has turned life into art, thus it can be contemplated by the timid. But art is not life, as we are reminded by the blood that now and then falls on our pictures, or, to be more precise, we should say that the art of the timid is not life: to the courageous the pictures have had blood from the first.[13]

After talking for a while, Rev. Eager invites the ladies for a drive to the hills, saying that Rev. Beebe is to go too. Both she and Charlotte accept, and set the date. But their 'partie carrée' is somewhat 'rounded' at the last minute by Mr. Beebe, who invites Miss Lavish and the Emersons to go with them.

Lucy is determined not to get near George, but her intent cannot be carried out, since the excursion is controlled by gods in disguise. Here paganism is clearly part of humanistic self liberation, and opposed to English prudery. The carriage is pulled by Phaeton and Persephone and led up to the hills where lives the great god Pan. Lucy decides to stay with Mr. Beebe and Mr, Eager, but she doesn't know where they are. Addressing Phaeton in her poor Italian, she asks "Dove buoni uomini?" (where good men?) meaning "Where are the holy men?" The guide, whose idea of a good man doesn't include nasty Rev. Eager, leads her into a field of violets, 'the well-head, the primal source whence beauty gushed out to water the earth.' (p. 88) As she falls into a sea of violets George — the good man she has been brought to — kisses her. But their kiss lasts no longer than a few seconds, since Charlotte — 'brown against the view' comes to rescue the girl.

When they reach the pension Lucy is very excited, wanting to share with somebody all the emotion she is feeling. In a sunny day, inside a sea of violets, she has got her first kiss from a handsome young boy. But Charlotte's first question, as she closes the door, is 'What is to be done?' Then she talks about men, 'who take a brutal pleasure in insulting a woman whom her sex does not protect or rally round,' (p. 96) and proceeds to the choice of the best way of silencing George, so that he won't boast about the 'exploit' with other people. As she speaks the atmosphere in the room turns heavy and one has the feeling of humidity. Lucy is disappointed and becomes aware of a 'cheerless, loveless world in which the young rush to destruction until they learn better — a

shamefaced world of precautions and barriers which may avert evil, but which do not seem to bring good, if we may judge from those who have used it the most.' (p. 100) As for Charlotte, she believes she is doing what is right, saving Lucy from sorrow and humiliation. Both women are aware of the complexity of the moment. Charlotte feels it her duty to cut the affair at the beginning and, at the same time, is ashamed of her behavior. Lucy makes up her mind never to open her heart so easily from now on. What follows is an embrace as hypocritical as Judas' kiss. According to John Sayre Martin[14],

> Feeling the weight of her inexperience and the superior wisdom of Charlotte, Lucy expresses a sorrow for what has happened and a warmth for her cousin that belie her deeper feelings. Charlotte, for her part, is anxious enough to preserve her reputation as a reliable chaperon with Lucy's mother, whose money has made the trip possible, to capitalize on Lucy's immediate need for understanding and love. At the same time, as an unloved and sexually chilly spinster, she is not above gaining a vicarious warmth by raking over the coals of Lucy's adventure.

The following morning they leave for Rome.

Some months later we find Lucy back in England and engaged to the gentleman called Cecil Vyse. She looks much the same, but for two things: she doesn't talk about her feelings and now she plays Schumann rather than Beethoven, which implies she has given up the trail that leads, through passion and sorrow, to heroism. Her fiancé is a very proud young man who, like Rev. Eager, has a tendency to turn life into art. He sees Lucy as a 'woman of Leonardo da Vinci's, whom we love not so much for herself as for the things she will not tell us.' (p. 107) This means that he likes a stereotype he has created, and not Lucy herself. Cecil doesn't give people the same respect he directs to art. He is patronizing towards Lucy's family, and doesn't worry about being friendly to their neighbors. He has also the loathsome habit of using people as puppets in jokes

he alone is able to understand and appreciate. And it is because of one of these jokes that he is going to be destroyed. It all starts when they are paying a visit to an old gentleman, Sir Harry Otway.

Windy Corner, Lucy's home, is one of the buildings that form the small country society in which she lives with her mother and her brother Freddy. Her family are not like Miss Bartlett. They are simple and friendly, silly and tender. They seem to belong to some novel by Miss Austen or by Dickens. Windy Corner is more than a house, to Lucy. Like Howards End to Mrs Wilcox, it is the source from where she gets strenght and energy. Recently some signs marking the intrusion of industrialization have begun to appear in the neighborhood. Two ugly brick villas, too small to be inhabited by respectable people, have been built. Sir Harry Otway has bought them in order to control the sort of people that were going to rent the houses. Now he is having problems finding a respectable tenant for 'Albert', one of the villas. Cecil, who has been hesitating whether he should despise the villas or despising Sir Harry for despising them, finds the latter impulse more fruitful and decides to play a trick on this arrogant little man. Meredith being his favorite author, he invites the Comic Muse to come and have some fun at Summer Street.[15] Of course the Muse accepts. But since her chief function is that of holding a mirror so that people can see their own faults, it is Cecil who is going to be played with. Going to a museum Cecil meets the Emersons and, finding them rather excentric persons, manages to persuade them to rent 'Albert' and thus enter Summer Street society.

When Lucy meets George again he is at the Sacred Lake, a pond where she and her brother Freddy used to bathe when they were children. Mr. Beebe and Freddy call on the Emersons, and Freddy, a friendly and unconventional young man, invited George and Rev.

Beebe to have a bath at the pond. They go, and this is an important event to George. Being against the Church as an institution, Mr. Emerson had not allowed his son to be baptised. And now, while he is at the Sacred Lake, in the presence of Nature, we have Goerge's baptism in passion. He enters the water gloomy and wearysome and then, suddenly, all forces of youth burst out and he becomes as lively as the other two. After the bath they run naked in the sun to get dry, while 'three little bundles lay discreetly on the sward, proclaiming: "No. We are what matters. Without us shall no enterprise begin. To us shall all flesh return in the end." ' (p. 150) It is then that Lucy, Cecil and Mrs. Honeychurch, who have left for a walk, find them. George, who is drunk with joy, greets Lucy. She bows 'to whom? To gods, to heroes, to the nonsense of schoolgirls!' She bows to him across something, across the bundle of clothes that symbolize conventions. For a moment, like Mr. Emerson and the philosopher, she passes beyond all concepts of original sin or depravity and realizes she is bowing to him 'across the rubbish that cumbers the world.' (p. 153)

Freddy soon becomes friends with George and invites him to Windy Corner. Since he has decided to fight for Lucy, George goes. There he kisses her again and, when she tells him to leave, declares he is not ashamed and will not apologize. This is his last chance and he is willing to do all he can to wake her up to the truth that she cannot deal with such an important thing so lightly. Since Lucy doesn't listen to him he addresses Charlotte, saying simply, 'I have been into the dark, and I am going back into it, unless you will try to understand.' (p. 187) As we are going to find out, the comment is not lost upon Miss Bartlett, who might yet reveal strange depths of meaning.

Lucy goes on telling herself that what happened was an unimportant and disagreable incident. Yet, she breaks her engagement with Cecil that very night. Using George's very words, she tells

Cecil that he is not the sort of person that knows anyone intimately. She points out to him that, though he understands beautiful things, he doesn't know what to do with them. Cecil, thus betrayed by his own Comic Muse, is deeply hurt, but his eyes are finally open. For the first time he realizes that life can be greater and more powerful than art. 'He looked to her, instead of through her, for the first time since they were engaged. From a Leonardo she had become a living woman, with mysteries and forces of her own, with qualities that even eluded art.' (p. 191)

Cecil leaves for London the following morning. He is sad and hurt, but seems gentler as he addresses other people. It looks as if he is going to improve and eventually be saved. As for Lucy, she starts behaving like Charlotte. She uses her cousin's gestures and twists of language. Suddenly she gives up all the big questions posed in the novel. Like Miss Bartlett, she opts for security rather that passion and danger. Or, as we have it put in the novel, she surrenders to the enemy within and enters the vast armies of the benighted,

> She gave up trying to understand herself, and joined the vast armies of the benighted, who follow neither the heart nor the brain, and march to their destiny by catchwords. The armies are full of pleasant and pious folk. But they have yelded to the only enemy that matters — the enemy within. (...) The night received her, as it received Miss Bartlett thirty years before. (p. 195)

This is the way things would have ended, were it not for an unexpected twist where Charlotte Bartlett — the unpleasant woman who might yet reveal depths of strangeness and meaning — changes the course of the action. She knows what Goerge is talking about when he asks her to save him from darkness, for she lives in it herself. She answers his appeal finding a way of making Lucy meet Mr. Emerson. Here the two women seem to have changed places:

Lucy, who seemed to be waking up to the world of the developed heart proves to be too weak to face her own troubles. Charlotte, who looked so obtuse, has all the time understood the importance of the values which have been discussed in the novel. Now she senses that Mr. Emerson, the one who scares her so much, is the only person still able to move the girl. The old man is plain and direct. He tells Lucy of her muddle. Kindly he points to her that she loves George and that, if she has not realized this yet, it is because she has been too busy protecting herself from — nothing.

As he speaks 'the darkness was withdrawn, veil after veil, and she saw to the bottom of her soul.' The muddle is over and, like in a fairy-tale, Lucy marries George and both live happily for ever after.

In this novel Lucy is faced with three choices. If she marries Mr. Vyse she will accept the role of the Victorian woman of the past, and never grow to be the heroic person Mr. Beebe once thought she could be. Remaining alone means the acceptance of Charlotte's world of darkness, where security counts more than life itself. Marrying George is, actually, the best solution for her. And that's what she does. In order to stay with him, however, there are lots of things she has to give up, and several people she's got to hurt.

The first to be affected by her decision is Mr. Cecil Vyse. He was able to understand her reasons when the engagement was broken, and was even thankful to her for showing him the way he actually looked. Now he believes he has been fooled by the girl, who has loved George all the time. This causes him to change for the second time. Cecil grows skeptical and, hiding himself again behind his sofisticated jokes, it is he, after all, who enters darkness.

Freddy and Mrs. Honeychurch are rather cold with Lucy and George, which is odd, because they don't care about conventions. They are simple people, and related to the country. Their restrictions to George don't have to do with the fact that he doesn't belong to their social class. They blame Lucy because she has cheated them for so long. Actually, it is Rev. Beebe who infuences them against the girl.

The reasons why Mr. Beebe, a good and open-minded man, is so shocked when he knows about Lucy and George is a mystery not disclosed, one of the several rather unaccountable switches of attitude in the book. One cannot say that his reaction is a surprise, since there are hints all through the novel suggesting that he might change his behavior. When he is by the Sacred Lake, for instance, while he plays with Freddy and George, his clothes, in a bundle, convey the omen that 'to us shall all flesh return in the end,' meaning that, when the time for action came, he would probably side with conventions. Critics have tried several interpretations to his attitude. Lionel Trilling[17] talks of the 'Horror', presenting him as a devilish creature who, disguised as a friendly character, wants to murder Lucy's soul,

> The sunny comedy had darkened with Lucy's response to the temptation of celibacy; it becomes terrifying with Mr. Beebe's happiness at Lucy's sure movement toward the benighted army.

John Sayre Martin[18] doesn't blame Mr. Beebe, but the blindness to sexual passion preached by the morbid side of religion ("Christianity") which prevents him from understanding people better. Oliver Stallybrass[19] talks of the interpretation given by many readers who attribute Rev. Beebe's change to Forster's strong anticlericalism. Stallybrass also talks about a more plausible explanation given by Jeffrey Meyers[20], where Mr. Beebe is said to be se-

cretly attracted to George. This view can be based on several points in the story, such as the statement that, for rather profound reasons, he is not attracted to the other sex.

From all these hindrances we can see that, though this is the only novel that has a real 'happy ending', it holds also some bitter implications, like the blood that now and then falls in our photographs. Many persons are hurt, and Lucy is not that pretty child any more. She doesn't belong to Summer Street and to Windy Corner, the place whence she got her strenght and her joy. 'When it came to the point, it was she who remembered the past, she into whose soul the iron had entered.' (p. 227)

Let's now stop and examine the trends of humanism and skepticism in connection with A Room with a View.

If we think of Lucy and George, and of the future of their relationship, we may consider this a real happy-ending. Personal relations have triumphed over darkness. Together they will work to build a better life. Mr. Emerson — representant of the liberal values — is one single man, but George and Lucy are two. If they choose the road that leads to heroism they may help create a new society where people are taught from the beginning to value their 'human' condition, where hearts count more than minds. Also, their union promises to be permanent. In this novel there is not the ghost of loneliness, present in later works. There's no comment about the fragility of personal relations concerning their marriage. There's where it resembles fairy-tales the most. They are not together until they cease loving one another, or until they divorce. They're linked for ever. In this work permanence can be found in personal relations. There is order in their universe. It is an extremely optimistic book, if we think it has been written by Forster. But we would be lying if we stated that doubt, questions and that suspiscion we have decided to call skepticism is absent in

the novel.

It is true that Lucy escapes from darkness and seems to be marching towards the world of the developed heart. But if things have turned out hapilly it is not so much by Lucy's merit. The barriers which separated her from George were not important, if we consider the Honeychurches and their good will towards people. The one thing she has had to fight against is the 'enemy within,' and she has failed. Critics use to refer to the part played by good luck in her story. Still, rather than mere good luck, we have gods — Pan, Phaeton and Persephone,— the Comic Muse, a prophet (Mr. Emerson) and a 'Miracle' (Charlotte), all working for her. These supernatural, fantastic and philosophic powers have been conclaimed here to fight against the implications of skepticism the author is determined not to deal with here. In Howards End, in a concert where Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is performed, we have the presence of goblins which, walking slowly over the world, convey the message of "panic and emptiness." Then Beethoven's hand sends them away, and everything seems to be right again. But we are aware that these goblins may return whenever they choose. Also here, the mighty hand of the author commands an army of fantastic creatures who 'force' things to turn out well. Yet we are aware that the goblins may return — as they will, in other novels. Here one character has entered darkness, Cecil Vyse, who is still arrested in his skepticism and in his aesthetical view of life. Charlotte also lives in her world of darkness. Lucy and George have been rescued, but we are aware of the strong forces which would have pushed them towards darkness, were it not for the hand of the author, who has surrendered to the strong temptation of having things end pleasantly. In this first novel, though we have strong symptoms of the problems raised by Forster's skepticism, our last impression is that of hope in a better time.

3.2 - WHERE ANGELS FEAR TO TREAD

The questions we have dealt with in A Room with a View have to do with people's attitudes towards life. The whole novel is about Lucy's choice between a life of passion, where people are in danger of being hurt, and a life of security, where people are never hurt because they are never involved. This reminds us of the analogies about Italy, symbolizing instincts, and England, standing for the intellect. This comparison is going to be carried further in the second Italian novel, Where Angels Fear to Tread. People like the Italian who has been stabbed at the piazza can be said to lead an active life. They throw themselves in waves of emotions, love and hate, laugh and cry. People like Charlotte, who opt for security, have their lives marked by omissions. Activity and passivity are defined in philosophy as values. Passivity is known as a negative form of value: the one who never acts neither helps nor hinders the flow of life. Activity, a positive form of value, influences this flow, which some people call 'fate', and others 'future.' The question we are going to face in this next novel is "Shall we interfere?" Does a person have a right to keep quiet when his heart tells him to act? And, on the other hand, how can we be sure about the endless implications one simple action can bring along?

In Where Angels Fear to Tread we will find several different sorts of persons. All of them are going to have their chance to act. Some are reckless and, like the title implies, rush in where angels fear to tread. Others are blind; they act without even realizing that what they do can bring muddle and tragedy into their lives. There are also the ones who can see all implications to one single action so clearly that they simply don't have the courage to do things. Let's turn now and examine the story, so as to deal with the theme in less theoretical grounds.

Several characters we have met in A Room with a View reoccur — or rather, they 'continue,' at another stage of their development — in this novel. Phaeton is given a larger role. Now he is Gino Carella, the embodiment of all natural values. Cecil Vyse is back as Philip Herriton, a young man in danger of falling into darkness through skepticism. Lucy and Charlotte, who have already shown to be similar — the only difference being that Lucy has luck and is rescued, whereas her cousin becomes a bitter woman — are here joined in the making of Caroline Abbott. Also in their circumstances, both novels are similar: in both cases we have two English women in Italy. Both belong to traditional upper middle class. One of them falls in love with a young man who does not belong to their social group. But characters react differently from what they do in A Room with a View, their reactions bringing along several consequences, and also the new questions we are going to deal with. These novels can be called 'symmetrical,' both starting at the same point and then walking to opposite directions.

The two English women who are leaving for a one-year trip to Italy live at Sawston, a traditional suburb celebrated for its public-school that 'aims at producing the average Englishman, and, to a very great extent, it succeeds.'[21] Neither of them likes the empty and insipid charitable lives they are forced to lead there. They are looking forwards to the trip as an escape from what they consider a suffocating place. Lilia Herriton is an unsophisticated woman of thirty-three. Her greatest attributes, the brightness and sociability of her temper, are being gradually smothered since she started living with her late husband's family, the Herritons. They don't approve of her, and consider her vulgar and below their cultural level. But Lilia has a little daughter, Irma, and Mrs. Herriton wants her grand-daughter to be raised properly, under her stern guidance. She suggests this trip to Lilia so as to separate mother and daughter and exert a more direct

influence over the child. The old woman has two surviving children: Harriet, a religious fanatic who has 'bolted all the cardinal virtues and couldn't digest them ' (p. 13) , and Philip, an unsuccessful young man who takes his time laughing at the world. Mrs. Herriton represents the false values cherished by people who place conventions above emotions. She represents everything Mr. Emerson has been fighting against during his whole life, and is not fit to raise a child, as we can see if we think of Harriet and Philip. But Lilia doesn't think about this, so glad she is with this chance of spending a whole year away from Sawston, and leaves her little daughter with the Herritons.

Philip, who — like Cecil Vyse — possesses a Meredithian sense of humor, is delighted as he thinks of Lilia visiting the cultural centers he loves so much. Nevertheless, despite his growing propensity towards sarcasm and irony, there is still one part of him which holds ideals, and, shyly, he trusts the power of Italy to work miracles in people. He almost dares to hope it will stimulate Lilia and make a better person of her. He does his part advising her to go off the tourist track and spend some time at the smaller towns, and also to 'love and understand the Italians, for the people are more marvellous than the land.' (p.5) Again the Comic Muse finds it her duty to hold a mirror up to the humorist's face and, within a few days, the Herritons are told that Lilia, in a little town called Monteriano, has got engaged to a 'member of the Italian nobility.'

Mrs. Herriton takes it as a personal offense and, guessing that there is not much nobility in Lilia's fiancé, sends Philip as her messenger in order to fetch her back home. From this point on we can realize how much the plot of this novel owes to James' The Ambassadors. In both cases we have intelligent men who are operated by people who are not as clear-sighted as they are. Both are in charge of a rescue they do not particularly care

for. Like Strether, in James' novel, Philip prefers the role of spectator, seeing life at a distance rather than entering it. Also like Strether, he will get gradually involved in the action, up to a point where — like Cecil in A Room with a View — he will realize that life is greater and mightier than the idea he makes of it. He will learn from this experience: originally the observer who intends to get his share of fun from the episode, he will turn into the one who achieves salvation, through suffering. It is his own soul, not Lilia, which he starts rescuing as he enters Monteriano. But to reach salvation he is bound to enter hell first. The development of this character is marked, all through the novel, by clear references to Dante's Divina Commedia. When Lilia leaves for the Continent Philip, looking bright and clever, quotes 'Here Beginneth the New Life,' (p. 8)[22] not knowing that it is for him that a new life is beginning. As he approaches Monteriano, through a wood of olives and violets, the city is openly compared to Dante's purgatory. One has to travel eight miles down into the Middle Ages so as to find the town, on a hill, which seems to 'float in isolation between trees and sky' (p. 26). Monteriano is surrounded by seventeen towers. John Sayre Martin[23] reminds us that, looking at one of these towers later in the story, Philip will remark that it 'reached up to heaven, and down to the other place' (p. 99) and will wonder whether it is not a symbol of the place. Anyhow, the novel represents Philip's "Divine Comedy", and he starts at the base of the tower, for his first visit to the place represents his entrance in Dante's Inferno.

As he gets to the station Philip is tired and bored, and decides he is not going to make things any easier for Miss Abbott, Lilia's companion in the trip. Caroline Abbott is known as a respectable member of Sawston, and, though she is ten years younger than Lilia, the Herritons trusted her to look after their silly relation. The scene which ensues is, at one time, embarassing and pathetic

for the characters and hilarious to the reader.[24] Caroline has the terrible task of telling him about Lilia's fiancé. Rather than belonging to the nobility, Gino is a young man of twenty-two (eleven years younger than Lilia), son of a dentist, native to the place. He doesn't even have a job. This is only the first blow to Philip. When he argues with Lilia, trying to dissuade her of the marriage, she accuses him of being a great fake, pretending to be liberal and unconventional, and being always the first to behave like his mother as soon as the established rules are menaced.

Philip's next step is trying to blackmail Gino. The Italian, when he knows of the large amount the Herritons are willing to give him, is greatly tempted to accept, and it is with regret that he explains to Philip that they are already married. Then, unable to resist the funny expression on Philip's face, he starts laughing and playfully pushes him to the bed. Philip takes this as an act of extreme aggression. Next morning, as he leaves for England, he is a different person. He has started his drift towards darkness. Gino's quoting of the opening lines of the Inferno,[25]

> Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
> Mi ritrovai per una selva oscura
> Chè la diritta via era smarrita - - - (p. 29)

can be applied to his case. Because of a woman he has never cared for, and the son of a dentist at Monteriano, now he feels as if lost within a dark jungle. Or, if you will, he is broken because life has killed Romance,

> Romance only dies with life. No pair of pincers will ever pull it out of us. But there is a spurious sentiment which cannot resist the unexpected and the incongruous and the grotesque. A touch will loosen it, and the sooner it goes from us the better. It was going from Philip now, and therefore he gave the cry of pain.

It is that part of him which could still dream a little that he

feels he is losing. From now on Philip tends to resemble more and more his mother. He has good reasons for feeling so wretched, since this travel has destroyed everything Italy meant to him. When he first visited it, Philip discovered a world and a way of living completely different from the mode he was used to. People there were warm and sincere, and all seemed equal, as if enjoying 'that exquisite luxury of Socialism — that true Socialism which is based not on equality of income or character, but on the equality of manners.' (p. 42) Things in Italy awakened his sense of beauty, and he earnestly meant to take this beauty to Sawston. Though he failed in this noble intention, he could, at all events, return to Monteriano whenever he wanted. It was the wonderland he had discovered and which would always belong to him. There he could drink with friends at the Caffé Garibaldi, shout in the streets and say whatever came to his mind without having to think first. But now Italy has died, and with her the most beautiful part of his soul.

As for Lilia, her marriage does not last long. She and Gino are separated by their different cultures and, therefore, by a whole set of values. She marries him because she is physically attracted to him, and also because she sees in this new life an escape from Sawston and the Herritons. She has been unhappy for years in England and wrongly assumes that she will find happiness in a place that is the opposite of what she has been used to. She behaves, though, like the English woman she is. She has lots of plans for her young husband. She wants him to contact the most important people in town. These acquaintances are to grant him an honorable job, In the government, perhaps. She is willing to have frequent tea-parties, and to change several little flaws in Monteriano's social life. But Gino's plans concerning his future don't fit with hers. He intends to spend the mornings with friends in town, having a siesta after lunch and going to the Caffé at

night. Since she has got money, he doesn't see the reason why he has to work. 'No one realized that more than personalities were engaged; that the struggle was national.' (p. 58) Each follows the values of his/her country, each has his own "ratial memory." If she has married him for sex and freedom, he has married her for money and to have children. What they establish is not a relation, but a personal clash, where the will of the stronger wins. Very soon it is settled that the stronger is Gino, and Lilia becomes more of a prisoner than she has ever been. Caroline Abbott, as she helped them with the secret wedding, had relied on a strong physical attraction to back their marriage up, and this was true as far as Lilia was concerned. But Gino — though a symbol of manhood and sensuality in the novel — is no more attracted to his wife than he would be to any other charming woman. He has married her for rather practical reasons. Now he wants a son. Gino is the first of Forster's characters to convey the "Continuance Theme",

> His one desire was to become the father of a man like himself, it held him with a grip he only partially understood, for it was the first great desire, the first great passion of his life. Falling in love was a more physical triviality, like warm sun or cold water, beside this divine hope of immortality: 'I continue.' (p. 60)

Lilia gives him the son he wants so much, but dies giving birth to it. Lionel Trilling[26] calls it 'the first of the sudden, unmotivated deaths in Forster's novels.' He is right, because the reader is told of the death in an abrupt way. This procedure is repeated in several novels. But, actually, in the universe of the novel, her death is neither sudden nor unmotivated. Lilia's situation reminds us one more time of Lawrence. Like Mrs. Morel, in Sons and Lovers, Lilia is forced to live in a place she doesn't belong to, and whither she has been led into in the hope of self-completion. The parallel stops here, for while Mrs. Morel

is strong enough to survive (even if she has to destroy everyone around her,) Lilia is weak. Forbidden to leave the house in order to take solitary walks (Gino tells her how dangerous they are) she doesn't stand loneliness. She suddenly seems to grow older, stops caring about her appearance and lies in bed for almost one year before she dies. Her death, therefore, cannot be called unmotivated, since it illustrates the outcome of an unsuccessful intercourse between people who have been raised in different cultures.

According to the usage in such occasions, the Herritons behave becomingly when they know of her death. They are sorry for what has happened and all dress in black for a while. Nevertheless, they do not want to tell Irma, Lilia's daughter, about the baby, though the girl ends up by knowing about it through a post-card she gets from Gino. She is happy to have a little brother, and talks about it everywhere, thus disclosing the inconvenient piece of news Mrs. Herriton has thought better to conceal from Sawston.

When Miss Caroline Abbott hears about Lilia's death she feels responsible for it. She cannot help the feeling that, were it not for her past allegiance, Lilia would not be dead now. 'To her imagination Monteriano had become a magic city of vice, beneath whose towers no person could grow up happy or pure.' (p. 78) Now she believes that Sawston, though wearisome and dull, is still a respectable place, and wants this baby to be raised in it. This would be her way of finding redemption. One year before, as she interfered in Lilia's life impelling her to marry Gino, her intentions had been good. Now she acknowledges her lack of ability to foresee all the possible consequences of this act of recklessness. Romantically, she has trusted passion to overcome all barriers. As she tells Philip, she has been drunk with rebellion at Monteriano, and 'wanted to fight against all the things (she) hated — mediocrity and dullness and spitefulness and society.' (p. 69) Now, in order to be redeemed, she finds it her duty to provide for the

baby. This is Caroline's second blunder. Again she wants to meddle in complex situations she is not able to understand. She is too careless as she labels things as Good or Bad, and also too radical in her judgements. Now, for instance, she sees Gino as Evil, because she rates him according to English patterns, not realizing that he has behaved accordingly to the norms he is used to. She links him with the idea of sin, and finds him devilish in his belief that he has been a good husband. She thinks him false because he has hung Lilia's picture on the wall and acts as if he misses her. What she doesn't realize is that , in his own way, Gino is sincere, and that he is the first one to believe in all this farce. Finding that she is justified in her desire to separate the child from its father, the girl goes to Mrs. Herriton and, using the old woman's very weapons, declares she is willing to raise the baby. Mrs. Herriton, not willing to be accused of neglecting a relative, or of not doing her moral duty, sends Philip again to Italy — this time he goes with Harriet — to bribe the father and fetch the child. Philip, rather skeptic now, wonders about Caroline's reasons to behave in such a strange way. 'Insincerity was becoming his stock explanation for anything unfamiliar, whether that thing was a kindly action or a high ideal.' (p. 79) Anyway, he goes, expecting nothing from the enterprise but his usual share of fun.

> The expedition promised to be highly comic. He was not averse to it any longer; he was simply indifferent to all in it except the humours. These would be wonderful. Harriet, worked by her mother; Mrs. Herriton, worked by Miss Abbott; Gino, worked by a cheque; — what better entertainment could he desire? There was nothing to distract him this time; his sentimentality had died, so had his anxiety for the family honour. He might be a puppet's puppet, but he knew exactly the disposition of the strings. (pp. 82-3)

There are no prospects for Philip of getting better; he is sinking

in what Forster uses to call Darkness when, suddenly, he is saved by a miracle. 'Miracles' do occur frequently in Forster's novels. We have already witnessed one in A Room with a View, when Charlotte changes abruptly by the end of the novel. Very often "miracles" are operated by fantastic creatures, such as Pan or the Comic Muse. Philip's rescue, though, is not performed by any sort of supernatural being. A simple kind word and a bit of tenderness are responsible for it: when Philip reaches Monteriano he finds out that Miss Abbott is already there. She has come to make sure he and Harriet would actually try to get the baby. She tells him that she has met Gino, by chance, at a public garden on top of one of the towers that surround the city. She refers to his friendliness, and of how hard it was to resist it. She has had to concentrate very hard to remember that he is a thoroughly wicked man, and a murderer as well. Philip, who sees clearer than that, is forced to defend 'the betrayer of his life's ideal.' (p. 62) In the course of conversation she comments that Gino has asked about him, and expressed his regret for having been so rude to him in the past. Here the miracle: this simple remark has the power of making the world 'suddenly right way up. Philip smiled, and was shocked at himself for smiling, and smiled again. For romance had come back to Italy; there were no cads in her, she was beautiful, courteous, lovable, as of old.' (97) The miracle is accomplished. Later on, that night, he meets Gino at the Opera, and the Italian introduces him to his friends as someone who is more than a friend; he is Fra Fillippo (Brother Philip) who has come for a visit. For Philip, who has always been friendless, beauty suddenly comes back to life. Now he has found his Italian brother, and has been accepted as part of the land he likes so much. Now he doesn't want Gino to allow his baby to be raised at Sawston, by his mother. He wants the child to grow free in this sunny land, not with Mrs. Herriton, who would spoil it as she has spoilt her children.

By now Caroline has convinced herself that she is the only person who realizes how dangerous the Italian is. He has conquered Lilia and herself two years ago, and done the same to Philip now. Her motto is 'I don't go by what I saw of him, but by what I know of him.' (p. 79) She is denying her developed heart and refusing to trust her intuition when she goes to talk with Gino, 'ready to do battle with the powers of evil.' (p. 110) There is a great deal of surrealism in the scene where they meet. The Italian enters the room and, not realizing that she is there, starts talking to himself and smoking. Her horror starts turning into panic. She sees everything, in the dark room, distorted. The smoke of his cigarette seems a mist and, as it involves her, she starts screaming and somehow the mystic crisis comes to an end. Then she realizes that all the time he has been talking to the baby, in the tones one uses to address a grown-up friend. She also understands that it is not for this pretty baby she has been fighting all the time. Hers was a theoretical child, a means through which she could achieve redemption. Gino touches the baby with his boot, thus making the child scream. He remarks that, as long as children cry aloud everything is well, the only trouble being when they cry silently. It is time the baby gets washed and, instead of bargaining about it, Caroline ends up by helping Gino with the task. Feeling his love for his son, she acknowledges she is in the presence of something great, and that the links which bind the man with the child are stronger than her conceptions about what is good or what is evil. They are creatures of Nature, and it would not be fair to judge them according to the patterns of Sawston. 'The man was majestic; he was part of Nature.' These are her thoughts as he kisses the baby and then raises it in his arms by a window which opens to a wood of olive trees and violets. He gives her a chair in the terrace and places the baby on her lap. As he kneels by their

side the scene is compared to the 'Virgin and Child, with Donor.' (p. 122)

Now she knows it would be wrong to separate father and son. Yet, she feels distressed because of the Herritons, whom she has forced into this absurd crusade to Italy. She goes to Santa Deodata — a church named after a saint who spent her whole life in utter immobility so as to purify the world. Like Philip, the Saint has never accomplished anything. She represents the negative form of value we have been talking about in the introduction. At Santa Deodata she meets Philip and tells him she has changed sides again. The fact that he understands her attitude surprises her. By this time the young man is already rather interested in her. From the time he has made peace with Gino and with the world he realized she is very charming in her peculiar way. What follows next is probably the most important discussion in the novel, where Caroline and Philip try to establish whether people ought to interfere, in life, or not. Caroline believes one has to behave according to what one believes right. Three times she has changed the course of action in the novel. She has helped Lilia to marry Gino, which she now thinks was an error. She has not been wise enough to take into account all the personal and cultural barriers they would have to go against before they could touch one another. And this lack of perception has been the cause of Lilia's death. She has been wrong for the second time blaming Gino for all the bad things which followed, and judging Monteriano as evil and Sawston, by contrast, as something pure. Now, as she changes side one more time, she again believes she is right. Her one regret is that, though always ready to act, she lacks the skill to see things clearly. She considers Philip to have this gift. He is able to see life as a whole; he is the only one who has 'a general view of the muddle.' (p. 129) While she tends to see things either as Good or as Evil, he is aware that things are never completely

right or completely wrong. Like Rickie Elliot, in The Longest Journey, Philip suffers from the 'Primal Curse, which is not — as the Authorized Version suggests — the knowledge of good and evil, but the knowledge of good-and-evil.'[27] For him this is actually a curse because, as in the case of Strether or Hamlet, the realization of the complex implications to each single movement hinders him from action. Miss Abbott blames him for his omission. She believes he should choose a position, and then cling to it: either he wants the child to be raised by a loving father who will give it a bad education, or he wants the baby to be raised at Sawston, where no one likes it, but where it will receive a good education. Since he is capable of seeing things clearly, he seems the best person to make the decision. But his remark is that he is not one of those people who are born to do things. He is fated to 'pass through the world without coliding with it or moving it.' (p. 131) Besides, he doesn't think it necessary to intervene in Gino's case. He trusts the Italian is not going to give up his baby. They are going to meet for one more time and have coffee at the Caffé Garibaldi. Then they will separate, like friends, and he will return to his mother like a 'respectable failure,' like Santa Deodata. Caroline thinks it would be safer if he took one position, and tried to persuade Harriet of his point. Caroline has forced Mrs. Herriton to accept a child she is not interested in; Mrs. Herriton, in her turn, has convinced Harriet to go and save this child from the powers of evil. And Harriet actually believes in her mission. Caroline would feel better if Philip talked to his sister, but he finds it unnecessary.

From this point on the novel enters another stage, action turning into what critics use to call the "horror." As a first step we have the omen, when Caroline expresses her feeling that 'every little trifle, for some reason, does seem incalculably important today.' (p. 133)

As he had expected, he and Gino meet and the Italian declines his offer. Philip is secretly happy and proud of his friend. It is reassuring for him to realize that, even for a greedy young man, such as Gino, there are things in life that money cannot buy. He and Harriet are to return to Sawston that evening. Miss Abbott is to go earlier.

It starts raining, and the night comes extraordinarily dark. Atmosphere turns denser and action runs fast. Harriet suddenly disappears, and Philip gets a note telling him to fetch her by the road, near the gates of the town, on his way to the station. In her room he finds a prayer book where Philip reads, 'Blessed be the Lord who teacheth my hands to war and my fingers to fight.' (p. 136) Philip is alone and scared, having the feeling something bad is going to happen. He shouts for his sister all the way down the dark road. When she finally appears, she has the baby with her. Philip is filled with sorrow. His one comment is 'Poor Gino. He's no greater than I am, after all.' (139)

The child doesn't seem to be well. It's face is all wet and, after lighting several matches in the dark, they realize it is crying silent tears. 'It was as if they were travelling with the hole world's sorrow, as if all mystery, all the persistency of woe gathered to a singular fount.' (p. 140) Apparently, the suffering of the child infuriates the great god Pan, for there is an accident. In the dark, their carriage clashes with Miss Abbott's, and overturns, the baby falling off into the road and dying in the mud. Philip, his arm broken, gropes for the child in the dark while his sister, hysterical, laughs and tells she has stolen the baby.

Thinking of Miss Abbott and her advice, Philip feels he is responsible for what has happened. 'People have been wicked or wrong in the matter; no one save himself had been trivial.' (144) Philip knows he is the one who has to tell Gino what has happened.

The magnitude of what had just happened, together with the pain in his arm, make it easy for him to talk to his friend. He is ready to take his punishment. Gino, who has not even realized that the baby is missing, has sent the maid to prepare its milk. When Philip tells him, he takes the news quietly. Then he is gradually seized by anger, and one more time we are reminded of the message about passion the dying Italian was to tell Lucy in A Room with a View. Gino becomes devilish in his pain. Philip, who has come ready to accept anything, even death, from the Italian, fights for his life as the other starts beating his broken arm. Both men, one through suffering, the other through physical pain, go back to the level of instincts, and it is a primitive fight they fight. Gino breaks the lamp and, symbolically as well as literally, they enter darkness. Now they are neither English nor Italian anymore, but two animals fighting for life. Philip, deprived of the varnish given him by tradition and civilization, feels his senses sharpened by pain. He is able to see in the dark, to listen to the enemy's slightest movement and — the first instance of telepathy in Forster — to perceive what passes through Gino's mind. Despite all this he is eventually caught by the other, who is his superior where instincts are concerned. Gino grasps him again by the broken arm and tortures him for a long time before Philip faints. And it is then that the second miracle happens. Again the text demands a different sort of reading, because now it verges on the symbolic. When Philip wakes he sees Caroline with Gino in the room. Miss Abbott is transfigured. She is no more a plain and good girl, for she has turned into a goddess. Through pain, he looks at her eyes, which 'were open, full of infinite pity and full of magesty, as if they discerned the boundaries of sorrow, and saw unimaginable tracts beyond. Such eyes he had seen in great pictures, but never in a mortal. Her hands were folded round the suferer, stroking him lightly, for even a goddess can do no more than that.' (150)

She is compared again to the Virgin. And, when the maid comes with the milk for the baby, she makes Gino give it to Philip, and drink what is left himself. Through this gesture they accomplish the union required from the beginning of the novel. Like brothers, they form a whole and achieve completeness, one standing for intelligence and for the mind, the other for Nature and for the body. And what is more important, they reach the rarest stage in a novel by Forster, when they touch one another emotionally. If they are brothers, Miss Abbott, woman, goddess and the Holy Virgin embodied, is also — through the milk she makes them share — their spiritual mother.[28]

At the closing of the novel Gino and Philip part as friends. Philip goes back to England, but is to return in the Summer. Caroline also returns to Sawston. She tells Philip she has been in love with Gino for a long time and, as a result, he gives up telling her of his love. But besides all that, we are still left with the big question, "Shall we interfere?" This is the dangerous subject which leads us into a field where even 'angels fear to tread.' Because of it a child has died. And, 'round the Italian baby who died in the mud there centered deep passions and high hopes.' (p. 144) This child has been used as a banner by several people. As she steals it, Harriet is performing what she considers her Christian duty. In her muddle, she will never realize that hers is a religion which doesn't take real people into account, a religion that lacks love and joy. For Mrs. Herriton the baby represents a social duty. For Caroline, a means of redemption. For Gino, the hope of continuance. For Philip, a way of judging Gino's worth. The child has died because Caroline interfered when she wasn't meant to interfere, and also because Philip withdrew when he was expected to do something. The baby dies in the clash between Philip's carriage and Caroline's. But the real cause of its death has been the clash between Caroline's

and Philip's ideas.

Let's return now to our examination of the trends of skepticism and humanism, and see what is left in terms of doubt and hope, optimism and pessimism, in this novel. The great triumph of humanism, in Where Angels Fear to Tread, is the fact that Philip is saved. He is rescued from darkness and skepticism. Cecil Vyse is lost, but Philip, his continuance, has found redemption. According to Dante's poem, he has passed through the stages of Hell, Purgatory and Paradise. His first travel to Monteriano, when he comes to rescue Lilia, represents his entrance into Hell. He loses "Romance" and enters the 'vast armies of the benighted', who live in darkness. For the next two years, in Sawston, he lives in hell. The crisis, where he feels responsible for the death of the baby, his suffering and the realization that he has been wrong, represent the Purgatory. And, finally, his rescue through the miracle, when Caroline becomes a goddess, and through his friendship with Gino, mark the beginning of a better life, represented by Dante's Paradise. We have a foreshadow of this deliverance when he first feels that Gino cares about him. When his Italian friend expresses his regret for being rude to him, in the past, he is on top of the tower which seems to reach 'up to heaven and down to the other place.'

Philip has become a better person. He has realized that life is 'even greater than he supposed, but it (is) even less complete.' (p. 155) He is not willing to laugh at people anymore. Yet, somehow, he seems still unable to act. He is still arrested in his aesthetic view of things. Like Cecil Vyse, in A Room with a View, he can't help looking at life through Art. If Cecil sees a picture by Da Vinci instead of Lucy, for Philip, Caroline is 'a goddess to the end.' (p. 160) In the end of the novel, thinking of her, he looks at the moon and remembers the fair myth of

Endymion[29].

The fact that Philip sees Caroline as a goddess gives room to two different sorts of interpretation. In the first, we see him still arrested in his stereotyped and artistic vision of women. Whenever he compares her to the Holy Virgin and to the Mother, she happens to be near Gino, to whom she is attracted. Therefore, if she is transfigured, it is through physical attraction, not through beatitude. He only takes her for a goddess when she is feeling like a woman. What we can expect of him is a bachelorhood marked by a life long reverence towards women, who are goddesses and, as such, unapproachable. A man cannot have the moon, as well as he cannot have the Holy Virgin or his own Mother.

But if we look at the novel in its symbolic aspect, we cannot criticise Philip for seeing her as a goddess, since she is meant to be a goddess. Only a goddess could have appeased Gino in his wrath, and built a friendship between a man and the murderer of his son. From this we may conclude that, whatever Philip's problem is, it is shared by the author. Forster is also arrested in this vision of women either as artistic objects or, as Jung puts it, 'terrible mothers.'

But Philip is not the only one who can be related to the myth of Endymion. Caroline can also be compared to the moon, or rather, with Selene, the goddess who appears in Endymion's dreams disguised as the moon. She loves him, but is also afraid of him. She doesn't want to become the object of his inconstant passion. Therefore, she asks Zeus to make him sleep forever so that, while he dreams of her, she can kiss his closed eyes. This is the case with Caroline. She complains because men use to take her not as a woman, but as a remote idealization. But she cannot realize that there is a cause for that. And the cause is her

lack of inclination towards life. She doesn't actually want to be involved. In the beginning of the novel she considers her trip to Italy a "flight" . There she intends to see things and experience powerful emotions so that, when she returns to Sawston, she can have interesting things to think about. That's exactly what happens. She has her Platonic love affair and then recedes to her charitable life. What is a pity, because at certain moments she has almost grown heroic.

After a balance of the outcome of the attempts at personal relations we have in this novel we easily realize that there is not much left. Gino and Lilia's relation fails completely, not only because they belong to different groups,which, for centuries, have cherished distinct values and ideals, but also because they don't actually care for each other. They have used one another as a means of achieving what they wanted, each trying to change the companion so as to fit his/her idea of a successful marriage. The fact that, when everything is over, Gino does not even realize that there has been something wrong, makes the failure even more complete.

As for Philip and Caroline, we have already analysed the reasons why they are unable to touch. Alan Wilde[30] states that 'despite of their growth (Philip and Caroline) have not been able to attain full stature; the most difficult thing to achieve — true love and lasting relationships and through them complete involvment in life — is not yet, perhaps never will be, within their grasp.' (p.25)

The relation between Gino and Philip is the only one which ends successfully. Together they achieve completeness, Philip with the power of seeing everything clearly, and Gino with the gift of experiencing emotions in all their intensity.

If we make a comparison between A Room with a View

and Where Angels Fear to Tread we will realize that things, in the latter novel, seem to be a little more complex.

In A Room with a View we have the story of Lucy and George and their attempt at personal relations. Due to the interference of the supernatural, it proves a successful attempt. The only barrier which tends to hinder their relation is Lucy's reluctance to make her own decisions about life, or, as Forster calls it, 'the enemy within.'

In Where Angels Fear to Tread we have three attempts at personal relations instead of one. And we also have three different sorts of barriers preventing people from touching other people. Firstly, we have the marriage between Gino and Lilia, which is a complete failure due to the cultural barrier. No supernatural creature comes to rescue her, therefore she dies. Lilia's baby also dies, because of a barrier we could call 'clash'. This child seems to lay on a cross-road, attracting the attention of several different people, each beholding life in a different way. They all converge to this central point, inadvertently killing the child. Then we have Philip and Caroline, and their mild attempt to connect. They almost succeed, but then fail, again because of the enemy within. Gino and Philip succeed, but again, as in the previous novel, they are helped by the fantastic and the supernatural.

Our ratio is not a very positive one, after all. We have two deaths and two failures against one successful relation. In A Room with a View the skeptical trend is carried by Lucy's 'enemy within', by Mr. Beebe and by Charlotte Bartlett. Mr. Beebe and Miss Bartlett in many ways balance one another. He is a goat disguised as a sheep, she a goat with the heart of a sheep. To do battle with Lucy's tendency towards darkness we have Mr. Emerson, the embodiment of all liberal values. In Where Angels

Fear to Tread we don't have a guide, like Mr. Emerson. We have one question about action and all the implications one single movement can eventually suggest. We have also less interference from the fantastic, and the problems which tend to prevent people from touching people are dealt with in a more detailed way. Still, Humanism is present through Gino and through Nature. We are reminded of what René Dubos uses to call the 'navel chord' which connects man and Nature.[31] We are reminded of the sentence which defines Gino, 'The man was majestic. He was part of Nature.' As part of Nature, he doesn't deny his instincts, and is not afraid, like Philip or Caroline, of being hurt by other people. He is open to life, and therefore open to personal relation. It is through him that the one successful connection in this novel is established, because he is the one person we find, in the book, who is willing to touch other people.

We wouldn't go as far as saying that Where Angels Fear to Tread is more pessimistic a novel than A Room with a View. It would be more accurate to state that it is more complex, that its scope is wider. Now we are going to examine The Longest Journey, which is quite different from everything we have been discussing in the Italian Novels. Here we are talking about slight barriers which tend to prevent people from reaching their goals. From now on we will be introduced to the ideas of nihilism, chaos and loneliness. In spite of the bitter aspects of A Room with a View and Where Angels Fear to Tread, the universe in the Italian novels is a universe of order, where the values which are held as supreme, such as truth, are never questioned. People have to suffer in order to establish a personal relation; but, as soon as they succeed, they may expect it to last for ever. Lucy and George will live happily for ever after, like in fairy tales. Philip and Gino will never quarrel again. Because, in the Italian novels, we have order and several values we are supposed to trust.

Let us turn, now, to our next novel, and see what changes.

NOTES ON CHAPTER THREE

1. The Writings of E.M. Forster (London, Hogarth Press, 1938), p. 97. Taken from Oliver Stallybrass' introduction to A Room with a View (Penguin Books, Suffolk, 1978.)

2. E.M. Forster: "Notes on the English Character." In: _____. Abinger Harvest (Penguin Books, Bucks, 1974.) p. 15.

3. Forster is not the first to talk about the effects of Italy on the English character. Crews, in his book, reminds us of the importance of Italy in Shelley, Browning and Romantic literature in general. Also Freud, in a comment about Sándor Ferenczi's essay "Versuch einer Genitaltheorie," discusses the influence of Mediterranean climate on people from the colder areas of Northern Europe. Playing with the resemblance between the word "Genitalien" (genitals) and the title of a travel book by Goethe "Reise gen Italien" (Journey into Italy) he compares the descent into Italy with the descent into the level of primitive emotions, or a plunge into the self. The scheme works well in Forster. English characters submit to frequent descents into that country, in an attempt to connect their intellectual life with the acceptance of their instincts and emotions. Only those who link the crude passions of Italy with the detached righteousness of England are able to develop till they reach a balance between heart and mind, id and superego.

4. Walt Whitman: "Song of Myself." R.B.W. Lewis, in The American Adam (The University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1966) points to Whitman as the creator of the New Adam, who is going to be the American Hero. Next Lewis proceeds to the analysis of the different phases in the development of this hero. He is pure and innocent, free and brave up to the moment when Melville and Hawthorne raise the question about how easily such a naïve character could be destroyed if he met the world as it actually is. Also in Forster this realization can be felt. In the Italian novels characters who represent Nature are totally open to life. In the next works, though, they are aware of how painful it can be to throw oneself into waves of emotion.

5. Quotations are taken from A Room with a View (Penguin Books, Suffolk, 1978, second printing.)

6. Henry David Thoreau: Walden. Mr. Emerson misquotes the passage from Walden's chapter on "Economy," which runs, 'I say, beware

of all enterprises that require new clothes. If there is not a new man, how can the new clothes be made to fit? If you have an enterprise before you, try it in your old clothes.'

7. Thomas Carlyle: Sartor Resartus (The Taylor Repaired). This book is divided into two parts. In the first we have the basis of Carlyle's transcendental philosophy in the idea that 'Through a suit of clothes one can find the nakedness of reality.' Language is defined as the clothing of thought, the body as the clothing of soul and the Universe as the clothing of God. In the second part we have Carlyle's autobiography and the description of how, parting from the 'Everlasting No' he, like George, reached the 'Everlasting Yea.'

8. Alan Wilde, p. 60.

9. Mr. Oliver Stallybrass (Notes on A Room with a View, Penguin, Suffolk, 1978) tells us that the expression 'the tactile values of Giotto' comes from Bernard Berenson's The Florentine Painters of the Renaissance (1896). In Forster's reading list the comment about the book is 'Oh so badly written.' Mr. Stallybrass gives us some extracts from the section on Giotto: '... every time our eyes recognise reality, we are, as a matter of fact, giving tactile values to retinal impressions...to realise form we must give tactile values to retinal sensations... The rendering of tactile values once recognised as the most important specifically artistic quality of Giotto's work, and as his personal contribution to the art of painting, we are all the better fitted to appreciate his more obvious though less peculiar merits...' Lucy has probably heard praises to this book, maybe by Miss Bartlett or any other people who pretend they are able to discuss painting.

10. Forster and Lawrence treat their subjects in very different ways; one is moderate, while the other is impassionated. But despite this diversity they usually share the same opinions about things. It is also amazing the extent to which their symbols combine. Both use images such as water, a determined flower, mud, railways, moonlight, the Orion constellation, rain and many others. Both use Italy as a symbol of the "natural self" (we can find that in Lawrence's The Lost Girl and also in Aaron's Rod. In the latter work the towers of Florence are used in very similar ways to what we have in A Room with a View.) In Sons and Lovers we have William's collar, and in A Passage to India there is Aziz's collar-stud. In Maurice, as in Lady Chatterley's Lover, there is a gamekeeper; in both cases he is the lover who belongs to a lower social class. Forster and Lawrence share the same ideas about sex, and in both cases we have examples of attraction between people from different social groups.

11. Crews: p. 90.

12. 'The Celestial Omnibus' (in: Collected Short Stories, Penguin, Bucks, 1970) is a fantasy about a little boy who enters a carriage that leads him to the lands of literature. He becomes friends with all sorts of authors and characters. But when he goes home and tells his parents about the trip no one believes him. He tells his story to a man who is known as a scholar, Mr. Bons, and invites him to go with him on his next trip. When they reach the magic land, where they find Milton, Keats, and many other authors, Mr. Bons orders the boy to be quiet, telling him he is not worth talking to such giants. He cuts such a poor figure making gods out of everything that he is eventually thrown out of the carriage, dying as he falls over some rocks.

13. Trilling: p. 86.

14. John Sayre Martin: E.M. Forster — The Endless Journey (Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, 1977) p. 94.

15. The Comic Muse is borrowed from Meredith's An Essay on Comedy and the Uses of the Comic Spirit, written in 1877. Since we are referring to Meredith, it is interesting to notice the resemblance always discussed by critics about Cecil and Sir Willoughby Patterne in The Egoist, Lucy being his Clara Middleton.

16. Cecil is not going to be abandoned by Forster; reoccuring in other novels (as Philip, Rickie, Maurice and Fielding) he will carry out the questions raised by George, in the beginning of the novel, and then forgotten in A Room with a View.

17. Trilling: pp. 93 to 97.

18. John Sayre Martin : p. 104.

19. Oliver Stallybrass: Introduction to A Room with a View (Penguin, Suffolk, 1978) pp. 17 & 18.

20. Jeffrey Meyers:"Vacant Heart and Hand and Eye: the homosexual theme in A ROOM WITH A VIEW"(in: English Literature in Transition, vol. 13, 1970, pp. 181 to 192.)

21. Forster: The Longest Journey, p. 48.

22. From Dante's "Vita Nuova." All page references to Where Angels Fear to Tread are taken from the Penguin edition, Suffolk, 1970.

23. John Sayre Martin: p. 21.

24. Talking about Forster's style, Lionel Trilling (Trilling, p. 10) says that 'Forster is not only comic, he is often playful. He is sometimes irritating in his refusal to be great.' Indeed, very often in his novels — like in Aziz's judgement, in A Passage to India — in the most serious circumstances the narration suddenly swerves into comedy.

25. In the middle of the journey of our life/ I realized I'd lost my way/ Inside a dark wood.

26. Trilling, p. 56.

27. Forster: The Longest Journey, p. 175.

28. Lionel Trilling (Trilling, pp. 42-3) has an interesting passage about the "mother figure" in Forster. He divides the 'Modern Demeters' into two groups: there are the real mothers and the spiritual mothers. Real mothers don't seem to share men's yearning for continuance. They seldom care about their children, and even if they do, they don't have much in common with them. In Where Angels Fear to Tread we have, as an example, Lilia Herriton, who seldom thinks about her daughter. In Howards End Mrs. Wilcox is Margaret's spiritual mother, though she doesn't have much in common with her own children. The same occurs to Mrs. Moore, in A Passage to India. She is Aziz's spiritual mother, and cannot reach her own son, Ronny.

29. Endymion is a shepherd who has fallen in love with the Moon. Forster is probably referring to Keats' poem, and not to the Greek myth (where Endymion is a demi-god). In either case, though, the Moon-Goddess is unapproachable, thus suggesting the symbol of a mother-figure. In her M.A. thesis The Persistency of "Endymion", (UFSC, June 1976) Futin Buffara Antunes compares the moon to Keats' mother, who has abandonned him when he was a child. She says that, "in Jungian terms, such experience could be sufficient cause for the personal image of the mother to fuse with the 'impersonal' archetype of woman in her destructive aspect, or what Jung terms the 'terrible mother.' "

30. Wilde, p. 25.

31. René Dubos, Um Animal tão Perfeito. São Paulo, Ed. Melhoramentos, 1974. (p. 99)

4. CHAPTER FOUR: THE LONGEST JOURNEY

In works such as Ibsen's An Enemy of the People or O'Neill's The Hairy Ape society is presented as a huge machine which responds to those who press the right buttons, but destroys naïve characters, such as Yank or Dr. Stockmann, who don't know how to handle the big machinery. Also in Forster society is portrayed as a big engine. More than that, life itself is presented as a complex matter, where each single action may lead people into the most unexpected consequences. There are the reckless, who have no idea of danger, and the cautious who are afraid of action. By now we have already examined two novels written by Forster. In one of them we have Lucy, who has proved unable to deal with the complex 'mechanism' of life. Were it not for the interference of other people she would surely have entered "the vast armies of the benighted." Also Philip Herriton, haunted by his aesthetic views, drifts towards destruction till the moment he is mysteriously saved by the Mother-Goddess. Had these novels been written by Ibsen or O'Neill, both characters would have been destroyed. But in Forster we have, like in Shakespeare, charms and enchantment. Pans, driads, demi-gods and elves suddenly manage to change or stop the course of the machine. Theirs is a sound cause: they act in name of liberal humanism and personal relations and, through 'Miracle', perform the unusual rescues. This is true of the Italian Novels. In The Longest Journey, though, we have a different sort of experiment, and a young man is left by himself to press the buttons of the big machine. He will be helped by his friends, but is not to expect any help from Fantasy. If the mighty finger of the author has interfered at the critical moment and saved his children from destruction, now it is willing to give reality a chance. As Dr.

Crews has stated in his book, Forster stops avoiding the 'perils of humanism'. We must be prepared, now, for a change in the tune of the work. Barriers to personal relations, faintly hinted in the Italian novels, are from now on to be fully analysed.(This is the reason why we have made a point of noting that A Room with a View will be better understood if treated as Forster's first novel, and not the third.) The author remains faithful to his belief in humanism, but his search for truth will prevent him from relying on Fantasy any further. In the Italian Novels we have a plea for humanism. In The Longest Journey the negative implications of the theme of personal relations, which he has avoided up to now, will be finally discussed. Gradually they are going to turn into his major theme.

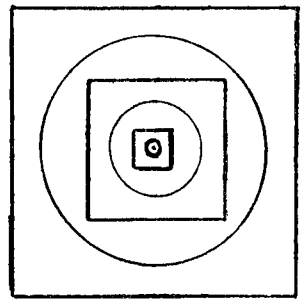
Our hero — we should rather say 'anti-hero' — is Frederick (Rickie) Elliot, a sickly young man who has inherited from his father's family a hereditary lameness. Frail, lonely and extremely romantic, Rickie has great trouble in separating what is real from what is imaginary. K.W. Gransden compares him to Ernest Pontifex in Butler's The Way of all Flesh: "each is a 'roman à clef' in which the central figure is a shy, weak, introverted, timid and muddled idealist."[1] During his childhood, spent between a loved mother and a father who despises him for being also a limp person, Rickie creates a world of make-believe. Amid solitary talks 'in which one part of him asked and another part answered'[2] he dreamt of the world where real people could 'do in warm life the things he had pretended.' (p. 30) His first contact with other boys happens when he is sent to public-school, where he is mocked and tortured by the healthy children.[3] But now, as the story opens, he is at Cambridge, whose 'genius locci' tells the 'perky boy that he is not everything, and the limp boy that he may be something.' (p. 64) A group of young men discusses philosophy in Rickie's room, which is crowded with objects that are going to be used as

leit-motifs in the novel. On the table there are several used tea-cups (symbolizing experience) and, on the walls, a picture of Stockholm and another of Sir Percival (the purest of all knights, who goes in search of the Holy Grail.) There is also a photograph of Rickie's mother.

The young men are engaged in a discussion about what is "Real" and what is not. They are talking about a cow — a hypothetical cow, created for didactical purposes. A young man states that the cow will only be real as far as there is someone to look at it. Another student, Ansell, holds that the cow is there anyway, even if no one is aware of its existence. What they are actually doing is confronting Berkeley's idealism and G.E.Moore's liberal humanism. To Berkeley "to be is to be perceived," whereas Moore, Bertrand Russell and the Bloomsbury party believe things to exist in themselves.[4] Rickie, who hasn't an opinion about the subject, is trying desperately to make up his mind. But, a romantic rather than a humanist or an idealist, he is taken to some green pastures. Either way attracts him; either he is in a field 'where no man came nor need ever come,' (p. 8) or, if you will, he has only to peep into a field and 'click! it would at once become radiant with bovine life.' (p. 9) He would soon be lost amid cows and green fields, were it not for the arrival of a beautiful woman, Miss Agnes Pembroke. She and her brother have been invited by Rickie, who has forgotten to meet them at the station. The girl enters in bright spirits, at the very moment when someone, playing Wagner in another room, changes from E flat into D sharp. This is fatal to Rickie, who immediately identifies her with some mysterious empress.

His friends find an excuse and leave the room, all but Ansell. And when the girl greets him, Ansell behaves exactly as if she were not there. This upsets Rickie who, later, complains about his nasty behavior. He goes to Ansell's room in order to

scold him, but finds his friend sitting with a strange drawing in front of him. It is a square with a circle inside it; another square is inside the circle, and the pattern goes on indefinitely.



Rickie is irritated, and knows he is right. He is not as wise as Ansell, still he is sure one ought to be polite with people. Besides, he is impressed by the girl, always so nice and beautiful, entering through Wagner while the sun was striking in the water... Ansell simply answers that the girl has not been there at all, and that the visit has not been real. Forgetting his anger for a while, Rickie tries to trap his friend in one of those corners where Ansell's philosophy don't seem to fit. Thus he asks him how is it that, if he has striven all day to prove that things have an existence of their own, he could now deny the existence of a handsome and healthy young woman. The reply amazes him,

> Did it never strike you that phenomena may be of two kinds: <u>one</u>, those who have a real existence, such as the cow; <u>two</u>, those which are the subjective product of a diseased imagination, and which, to our destruction, we invest with the semblance of reality? If this never struck you, let it strike you now.' (p. 22)

But Rickie is not struck by anything. He cannot make the distinction between phenomena which have a <u>real</u> existence, such as Moral Goodness (an attribute Moore takes from Plato) and the timeless

qualities that exist independent from thought or interpretation[5] and the 'subjective product of a diseased imagination.' Ansell is right as far as he alleges that Rickie has never seen the real Miss Pembroke, but a stereotype built out of music, light and imagination. In silence, Ansell goes on drawing circles inside squares. 'Are they real?' asks Rickie. 'The inside one is, the one in the middle of everything, that there's never room enough to draw.' (23)

John Sayre Martin[6] interprets the diagram as a Mandala,

> an age-old symbol of unity and harmony in the material and phenomenal worlds. The circles symbolizing — as in Christian iconography — the celestial and visionary, and the squares the mundane and the practical; the total configuration points to Rickie's desire for a total, integrated reality.

To achieve completeness a Mandala has to be formed with circles and squares. Rickie's life lacks the squares. He has difficulties to perceive reality. Like Cecil Vyse and Philip Herriton, he has a tendency to assimilate life through the filter of an aesthetic view where everything is given a symbolic value. He lives in a world of art, but lacks the practical and common-place things, like in his childhood, when he had imaginary friends but lacked the real ones.

During his vacations Rickie spends some days with the Pembrokes, at Sawston. We readers know already what Sawston and public-school mean in Forster, therefere we know the sort of behavior we may expect from Agnes and Herbert Pembroke. If Rickie has only circles of 'celestial and visionary' in his Mandala, the Pembrokes have only the squares of the 'mundane and the practical'.Both materialism and the visionary are appropriate at certain times and in certain places, but neither represents an ultimate truth, therefore Rickie and the Pembrokes are incomplete.

Agnes and Herbert stand for the typical Englishman pre-

sented by the author in his essay "Notes on the English Character," symbolizing 'solidity, caution, integrity, efficiency. Lack of imagination, hypocrisy.'[7]

Herbert Pembroke, much older than his sister, is a master in one of the schools at Sawston, and his chief function is that of organizer('if no organization existed, he would create one. If one did exist, he would modify it.' (p. 48)). He is one of those people who possess an 'undeveloped heart, but not a cold one.'[8] Having a warm but undeveloped heart is the greatest of all tragedies, because it is the characteristic of those who, instead of possessing 'the knowledge of good-and-evil,' pass through life believing in absolutes such as GOOD and EVIL, and forcing the world to adapt to their simple equations. Like Harriet, in Where Angels Fear to Tread, they lead people into catastrophe. They are extremely dangerous because their hearts are warm, and they intend to do good and think they can help other people. Harriet caused a baby to die. Mr. Pembroke is in charge of the education of hundreds of children. He will be accused, later in the novel, of distorting their heads and hearts with 'sham food, sham religion, sham straight thoughts.' And when these children break down he doesn't feel guilty, because he believes school to be the world in miniature. Those who are not able to face it are still less able to face reality.

> Perish each laggard! Let it not be said
> That Sawston such within her walls hath bred.(162)

Public-school, in Forster, represents the reverse of Mr. Emerson's theories. If Rickie invests with reality the products of his imagination, these people of the undeveloped heart sin the other way round, because they deny the existence of the inner life. As soon as their comfort is involved, they give themselves the right to settle what is correct and what is not.[9] The author is bitter and sarcastic toward Mr. Pembroke and public-school because, in

their blindness, they spoil the most sacred of all his symbols, which are children, representatives of the future of England. In Forster's fiction the past is represented by Nature and the figure of the yeoman. The present is portrayed through the muddle of the big city, where people's homes are destroyed to give way to blocks of buildings. For the author, London and England are marching towards chaos, and the only hope of salvation are the children. Thence his anger, as he sees their minds distorted by well-meaning people with warm but undeveloped hearts, such as Harriet Herriton and Mr. Pembroke.

During his visit Rickie is introduced to Gerald Dawes, Agnes' fiancé. He is an athlete (a species usually praised by the author) who has been Rickie's classmate in the times of public-school. He is one of those who took the greatest delight in torturing the weak boy. Their meeting is an awkward one, for 'the bully and the victim never quite forget their first relations. They meet in clubs and country houses, and clap one another on the back; but in both the memory is green of a more strenuous day, when they were boys together.' (p. 43) Rickie is embarassed, finding his persecutor so handsome and strong, engaged to the empress; Gerald, jealous because the weakly youth is at Cambridge, makes a point of showing his contempt for those who have time to lose at the 'Varsity'. Rickie doesn't like the way Agnes and Gerald treat each other, both so frivolous and talking amenities, and finds it very easy to realize that there is no true love between the two. 'It was dreadful: they did not love each other. More dreadful even than the case of his father and mother, for they, until they married, had got on pretty well. But this man was already rude and brutal and cold (...) Poor Agnes; why ever had she done it? Ought not somebody to interfere?' (p. 45)

A few moments after this reasoning Rickie, by chance, witnesses a kiss between the lovers. It is the first time he is

introduced to something as strong as passion. Through them he acknowledges the strength of the emotions real life can afford. He identifies with the couple and vicariously experiences sex. Trapped inside his circles of the imaginary, and always in search of the Real, he takes this moment of passion and physical attraction as something concrete. He believes he has found Reality. And there goes his imagination again, 'In full unison was Love born, flame of flame, flushing the dark river beneath him and the virgin snows above. His wings were infinite, his youth eternal; the sun was a jewel on his finger as he passed it in benediction over the world.' (pp 45-46) Immediately the lovers are turned into gods. All the short-stories he has written up to now, and the glory of imagination suddenly become dim next to the glow of reality. Gerald-the-Bully dies to give place to Gerald of Romance. As for Agnes, she has always been an empress. They become the 'peg' (p. 66) where all the beauty of the universe could be hung on. Priest and high-priestess of passion, their love is even more sacred to Rickie because it is never fulfilled. Ratifying Trilling's comments on the sudden deaths in Forster[10] Gerald dies during a foot-ball game. A tribute to his being an athlete, all female servants start crying at Agnes' house. 'They had not liked Gerald, but he was a man, they were women, he had died.' (p. 58) Agnes, behaving accordingly to the rules of Sawston, keeps calm and steady up to the moment when Rickie, pathetic, quixotic, his hair disheveled, bursts into the room and beseechs her to mind and to suffer. Rickie believes in symbolic moments one has to go through in life, where one has to mind, even if it hurts, because through such moments people achieve greatness. Through him, for one single moment in her life, Agnes manages to be great. She sees things steadily and as a whole, absorbs life in all its grandiosity. He makes her realize that, for her, the greatest thing is over.

Rickie makes scant reference to what has happened in the

letters he sends to Ansell. He doesn't think his friend would understand him at all. 'Ansell could discuss love and death admirably, but somehow he would not understand lovers or a dying man.'

As he returns to Cambridge he is a little tired of this world of theories. He has a feeling the place he likes so much is becoming a little narrow now, with those clever people who think so much and experience so little. While he is with some friends at the tram there is a small accident, and its wheels fall off. Everybody laughs, but now, having seen two sudden deaths in his short life — Gerald's and his mother's — he knows how perishable everything is. In his room, the one place in the world he can call his own, his name is painted above the door. Through the painting the ghost of his predecessor's name can still be seen. One day, he knows, his name will also be blotted out of the wall. Eventually, he himself will be erased from the book of life. Since he doesn't want to have children, because of his lameness, he is scared of the prospects of not leaving anything or anyone behind, through which he could continue towards infinity.

Here there is a leap of two years. 'As for the cow, she (is) still going strong, though a little academic as the years (pass) over her.' (p. 67) Rickie and Ansell are sitting in a meadow, each wearing a garland of buttercups and cow-parsley. The former is complaining about Cambridge being so tiny. It doesn't think of the great world, has lost touch with the times and doesn't satisfy the great thinking mass of men. Ansell, who doesn't think Cambridge has ever intended to touch the 'times' asks him (1) to define a great thinking mass; (2) to estimate the worth of a general feeling; (3) to explain where the great world is. Like John Marcher in "The Beast in the Jungle," Rickie is still chasing "real" life, which he thinks can only be found if you reach the place called "The Great World". If he only knew where the great world lies he

would be there, not here on the lawn, talking with obtuse Ansell. Ansell states that, for him, the 'great world' is nothing but a series of small societies, Cambridge being one of them. Some are good, others bad; the bad societies usually say 'I tell you to do this because I am the Great World,' or 'I tell you to do that because I am the Great World in miniature.' He criticises Rickie for mixing GREAT, which has no meaning, with GOOD, 'which means salvation.' (p. 68) But the actual reason why Rickie is so upset is that, within a few weeks, he will have to leave Cambridge (Ansell has got a Fellowship, but he hasn't) and another name is to be painted on the wall, where his is now. He is going to leave the GOOD society to enter the GREAT world, and that's why he is so interested in knowing what it is like. He is also thinking about the irony of friendship, 'so strong it is and so fragile. Nature has no use for (friends). Dutiful sons, loving husbands, responsible fathers — these are what she wants, and if we are friends it must be in our spare time.' (p. 69) By this time he remembers he has to meet Agnes, who has come to visit him with another lady. Ansell doesn't want him to go, and does all he can to arrest his friend, talking and ragging aimlessly. 'The thought of two ladies waiting lunch did not deter him; stupid women, why shouldn't they wait? Why should they interfere with their betters?' This is only one of the several passages that show Ansell's misogynism.[11]

Agnes is clearly determined to marry Rickie, but he somehow considers his love for her as an offence to Gerald. 'She was a goddess still. But he had dethroned the god whom once he had glorifyed equally.' And he sincerely hopes that one day his god may be bright again. This Gerald, now, doesn't have anything left in him of the boisterous boy who has bullied him once. Agnes, though, wants to marry. She manages to take him into a dell, his favorite place whenever he wants to day-dream, kisses him and

extracts a promise of marriage from him. Rickie makes a last effort to be faithful to Gerald, and warns her passionately to 'Never forget that the greatest thing is over. I have forgotten: I am too weak. You shall never forget. What I said to you then is greater than anything you will get from me.' (p. 80) Of course the scene is plaintive, comic and pathetic; of course he is at least as attracted to Gerald as he is to Agnes. But this is not the point. The point is that he has been in love with a dream formed of three persons, Gerald, Agnes, and himself. For one brief moment he has experienced one crude and real sort of emotion. Gerald, the moment and the emotion have gome, and Rickie makes the greatest of all mistakes, thinking that he and Agnes will be able to recapture that moment. [12]

Ansell is strongly against the marriage and, when Rickie leaves Cambridge, he writes him two letters reminding him of the time when they agreed that a woman always separates a man from his friends.

Let us stop here for a while and go back to chapter one, when we have stated that The Longest Journey has been built according to the symphonic pattern. In the first part of a symphony, we have said, there is the statement of two themes. One of the themes is the search of Reality. We have already discussed it clearly for a long time. We know, by now, that our protagonist is in search of reality, and that he is unable to diferentiate what is true and what is not. Our second theme is a more complicated one. It is the theme of Woman, present in the title of the novel, The Longest Journey, which is part of a line of Shelley's poem "Epipsychidion." Rickie being an Oedipal youth, and Ansell, consciously or not, a homosexual, both agree that men are born to be bachelors and that women's goal in life is to separate a man from his friends. Ansell says that '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.' Before Rickie has fallen in love with Agnes both men admired the passage by Shelley that runs:

> 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.[13]

The Longest Journey is the most passionate of the novels by E.M. Forster, and it looks as if the author did not resist the temptation of making it a mirror of his own emotions. In this work he agrees with his characters in their opinions about women. According to Forster marriage draws a curtain which separates the married couple and the rest of the world. Agnes is actually going to be treated as the enemy which separates Rickie from his friends, and this makes us think of the paradox in Forster's view of woman. Through the reading of the Italian novels, and later in Howards End, it is clear that we can call Forster a feminist. On the other hand, in The Longest Journey, Maurice, and through certain slips in A Passage to India, we can easily realize that the misogynistic and distorted view several characters have of woman is shared by the author. More than that, Forster himself acknowledges that, sexually, he cannot help thinking of women as inferior beings, in an interview with Peter N. Furbank, which resulted in the book E. M. Forster: a life. The reason for this paradox, complex to analyse, can at least be acknowledged and understood. Rationally, as a defender of all minorities, he defends women in some novels as in others he defends Indians, homosexuals or the poor. Also he ident -

ifies with women, and sympathizes with their 'souls.' But, at the same time, he rejects them as wives or lovers and fears them as possessive mothers. They are the 'enemy', the ones who cause him to be lonely. The theme of women, or the 'anti-marriage theme', preaches that a woman separates a man from his friends. Either if we agree with it or not, the point is that it has to be taken on account, because otherwise several of the symbols and leitmotifs won't fit at the end of the reading. Like the distortion in Forster's reading of the poem "Epipsychidion" and the flaws in the building of a character such as Ansell,the novel is also full of inconsistencies. This does not mean that, in the long run, we need to reject Forster as a credible witness of human condition. It only implies that we are in for several little flaws and that sometimes the author will address us on personal (unconscious) rather than artistic or philosophic grounds. These inconsistencies are ultimately part of the conflicts that make him struggle for articulation as an artist. Our only problem here is that, as readers, we are lost. We cannot trust the author because he has his limitations; we cannot trust Ansell because, though meant as a guide, he has the same problems the author has. We cannot trust Rickie because he cannot see anything clearly. We are by ourselves, and we will have to find a middle way of reading the novel critically (not altogether at Forster's word, but never falling into speculative extremes either.)

Let's turn now back to the story. Rickie is determined to marry Agnes so as to recapture that instant of 'reality' he has lived through the kiss he has witnessed. Ansell (either jealous or jealous and prophetic) tries to prevent him, but it is too late. His friend is determined to connect the squares and circles in his mandala. Through Agnes he thinks he will connect the GREAT and the GOOD, Cambridge and Sawston, theory and experience, inner and outer life. He will not only keep his friends, but also

widen his horizons and achieve self-completion. She seems interested in his work as a writer, and encourages him to publish some of his short-stories.[14] Probably Shelley is not such a wise man as he once believed him to be, after all.

Rickie is not the first to try this connection of the real with the imaginary. Mr. Anthony Eustace Failing, a socialist philosopher married to Rickie's limping Aunt Emily, has written many essays on the theme of 'Brotherhood of Man.' His theory is that people are much more alike than they think, and that if we put two different persons together, they will eventually find a way of getting along. But somehow Mr. Failing (from his very name we know what to expect from his theories) fails to establish the connection. 'For all his tact, he would often stretch out the hand of brotherhood too soon, or withhold it when it would have been accepted.' (p. 104) Like Rickie, apparently he has some trouble in interpreting what is real. His wife, who has loved him because he seemed so intelligent, stops loving him for the same reason. He dies, disillusioned, after a long sickness. But all this belongs to the past. Now his widow, Aunt Emily, has become an old woman who reminds Rickie of his father, 'the same affliction, the same heartlessness, the same habit of taking life with a laugh, as if it were a pill.' She invites him and Agnes to visit her at Cadover, her house which lies in the country, in Wiltshire. At present she is engaged in writing a piquant introduction to some essays of her husband, that are going to be published under the title of " What we Want." With her lives her protegé, whose name is Stephen Wonham.[15]

The first time we see Stephen he is sopping wet in the rain. Flea Thompson, the shepherd, having to meet his girl-friend, leaves Stephen to take care of the sheep, saying he will return in two hours. Four hours have elapsed and, as Stephen stands in the rain planning how to change Flea into a foot-ball, the sentence runs, 'Gallantry, charity, and art pursued their various missions, perspirating and muddy, while out on the slopes beyond them stood the eternal man and the eternal dog, guarding the eternal sheep until the world is vegetarian.' (p. 90) Gallantry here refers to London, well-educated people and social conventions; charity, to the distorted religious values, the 'petty selfshness' mentioned by Philip Herriton which is so often taken for 'petty unselfishness.' Art is still taken as life for those who are weak or at a loss. But Stephen is there on the hills, representing the shepherd, the guardian of Nature. Stephen looks like a character out of Fielding. Like Tom Jones he possesses a great heart, is always getting into trouble and, like Gino, belongs to Nature. Though neither of them knows about it (another Forsterian twist), Stephen is Rickie's natural brother, son of his mother and a Wiltshire farmer. Stephen's father was a simple but intelligent man. He used to say 'read all the books you can get hold of; but when it comes to the point, stroll out with a pipe in your mouth and do a bit of guessing.' (p. 232) This implies that he is able to connect science and imagination, thought and action. Raised in the country and son of a man who succeeded in finding a balance in life, Stephen is to be the most perfect character we find in the novel. Rickie's mother and the farmer have lived in Stockholm for a while, and the young man has died in an accident. Her husband asking her to come back, she has returned to England and left her baby with the Failings. The picture of Stockholm which belongs to Rickie once belonged to his mother. And Stephen, though he doesn't know who his parents are, has in his room a picture of the Demeter of

Cnidus, Demeter symbolizing the Mother Earth. He is not curious about the past, his only feelings being those of wonder and thankfulness for being alive.

> At night — especially out of doors, — it seemed rather strange that he was alive. The dry grass pricked his cheek, the fields were invisible and mute, and here was he, throwing stones at the darkness and smoking a pipe. The stones vanished, the pipe would burn out. But he would be here in the morning, when the sun rose, and he would bathe, and run in the mist (...) what lucky chance had heated him up, and sent him, warm and lovable, into a passive world? He had other instincts, but these gave him no trouble. (...) But the instinct to wonder at the night was not to be appeased. (p. 240)

The son of a coutry man, he embodies all the qualities representative of Nature and Peasantry: he is the remainder of the glorious past of England, and stands as a promise of a better future. Stephen is Wiltshire, as Rickie is London. According to Mr. Failing, the philosopher, 'there is no such thing as a Londoner. He's only a country man on the road to sterility.' (p. 246) This brings on the Continuance theme. Stephen, as fertile as the land, is compared to the Spirit of Life. One day, wanting to draw him, Mrs. Failing traces the sketch of a sheep.[16] The eternal shepherd, he is guarding his sheep for a better time. Rickie, the Londoner, like his name painted on the wall, is fated to extinction.

The train in which Rickie and Agnes arrive is one of the few products of industrialization which have reached Wiltshire. Near Cadover there is a strong uneveness at a level-crossing where many accidents have already happened. This time two children are playing there, and the train runs over one of them. At night, when he is told of the disaster, Rickie refuses to believe that, while Agnes and he were so happy, his train has killed a child. Mrs. Failing, wanting to have her share of fun, starts a discussion

about what would have happened to the child's soul. She finds it a good idea to confront Stephen's agnosticism, which he acquired reading cheap pamphlets, with his brother's sophisticated notions from Cambridge. Rickie is still shocked because he has been involved in the death of a child. As for Stephen, he has witnessed the accident. Indeed, it is he who has saved the other child, though he never takes the trouble to tell this to other people. For several times he has asked Mrs. Failing to build a bridge at the level crossing. The old woman's behavior enrages him,

> 'There wants a bridge,' he exploded. 'A bridge instead of all this rotten talk and the level-crossing. It wouldn't break you to build a two-arch bridge. Then the child's soul, as you call it — well, nothing would have happened to the child at all.' (p. 101)

This is the simple and practical voice which annoys Mrs. Failing. Rickie, who has spent his whole life searching for 'reality' has now found it in Stephen, and does not even realize that.

Neither of the brothers seems attracted to the other. The old lady forces them to go for a ride together. Stephen is tortured with the prospect of having to spend the whole day 'being civil to this anaemic prig.' (p. 114) Rickie will be separated from Agnes for hours. In other circumstances an interesting character such as Stephen would have attracted him. Not now. He realizes he is changing, and is thankful to Agnes for that. Now he doesn't think he has the obligation to be kind to everyone. '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.' (p. 113) Besides, he finds Stephen rather coarse in his anger towards Flea Thompson, the shepherd. He wonders how it is that a gentleman can be so unkind to an inferior. What he fails to realize is that Stephen would never consider himself 'superior'

to anyone else. As they stop by a public-house his brother becomes friends with a soldier, and both start talking in a rough slang. Rickie, 'as each new wave of vulgarity burst over him, sunk his head lower and lower and wished that the earth would swallow him up.' (p. 118) It is strange that he and his Cambridge friends, so liberal in theory, could be so easily shocked by the 'empirical freedom that results from a little beer.' (118) All his life has been a chase of this reality, and now he shrinks from it. Drunk, Stephen starts mocking Mrs. Failing and Rickie, disgusted, leaves him and goes back to the house. Stephen, glad to be released from him, ends up by knocking the soldier down. Delighted, he goes after Flea Thompson, who knocks him down. Thinking about the surprises of life he remembers one day, when he was a child, when a flock of sheep, without shepherd or dog, advanced ominously towards him. In terror, he ran from them, and they kept following him, like in a nightmare. When he got home, all torn and scratched, Mr. Failing's one comment has been 'Pan ovium custos,' meaning 'Pan, the one who takes care of the sheep'.[17] (Stephen interprets the sentence as 'A pan of eggs for custards,' and thinks that Mr. Failing looks quite silly, sometimes.)

As he reaches Cadover, Rickie is quite cross. So is Aunt Emily, who intended them to spend the whole day together. He ends up by having an argument with the old lady. She takes it seriously, and since she 'did not mind giving other people a chill, provided it was not infectious' (p. 130), she decides to tell him the truth concerning Stephen. This happens that same afternoon. It is a Sunday. He is reading Shelley, and, as he has a feeling he is nearer truth than the poet, the church bell rings ominously, while Mrs. Failing approaches. They start walking through the Rings (a valley called the Cadbury Rings.) The Rings have a peculiar form: a bank of grass encloses a ring of turnips, which encloses a second bank of grass, which encloses more turnips, and in the middle

of the pattern there is a small tree (102). Mrs. Failing suggests that they walk to the tree in the middle of everything, while the bell goes on with its tune. She comments that the place is full with ghosts and that the central tree is considered a sanctuary for the devil, where his worshippers come to dance on Sunday afternoons.

Rickie is a little annoyed with what he considers one of the delusions of the old lady, who keeps referring to the Wonham boy as 'your brother.' He wants to return to Agnes, who is waiting at the farther barrier, 'waiting to receive them as they had traversed the heart of the camp.' (p. 135) According to John Sayre Martin[18] she cannot enter the Mandala because she is herself an illusion. Kindly, he explains to Mrs. Failing that Stephen is not his brother. Through her reaction, as they reach the tree — the central point of the pattern, reality or the sanctuary of the devil — he acknowledges the truth. He is filled with terror and strives to leave the place, but misses the exit. As in a labyrinth, he is arrested within the circles formed by the turnips, like, in his whole life, he has been arrested within the circles 'of the celestial and visionary.' He loses control over himself, 'he was gazing at the past (...) which gaped ever wider, like an unhallowed grave. Turn where he would, it encircled him. It took a visible form: it was the double entrenchment of the rings,' (136)where one child has died and the other has been rescued.

He faints, and it is Stephen who comes to help him. Rickie's impulse is to tell him the truth, but at that moment Agnes arrives. On the way back, as they pass by the level-crossing, he tells her what he has just learnt. Agnes has made a point of behaving like an unconventional woman during their visit. But now, as real danger approaches, she stops pretending. Like the member of the world of public-school she is, she acts promptly so as to salvage this wreck. Diplomatic, she goes to Mrs. Failing — who is

already repentant, thinking of the annoyance the affair may bring — and together they settle that neither Stephen nor anyone else is to know about the secret. Mrs. Failing sends Stephen to spend some days at the sea. Then, appeased, she goes upstairs to persuade Rickie to keep silent too. But he is not willing. He may be obtuse and blind to things, but he is a noble person. He realizes this is one of those rare symbolic moments, and tries to explain this to Agnes,

> 'It seems to me that here and there in life we meet with a person or incident that is symbolical. It's nothing in itself, yet for the moment it stands for some eternal principle. We accept it, at whatever cost, and we have accepted life. But if we are frightened and reject it, the moment, so to speak, passes; the symbol is never offered again.' (p. 142)

This is Cambridge talking to Sawston, the GOOD society talking to the GREAT world, timeless values confronting the arbitrary values settled by man. There is no media for communication between them. In times of peace she would have smiled and let him talk his harmless nonsense. But now it is time for action. She doesn't want her friends at Sawston to gossip about Rickie's natural brother. As for Rickie, he doesn't particularly care about Stephen. He thinks the boy is the son of his father, it never strikes him that Stephen is the son of his beloved mother. Rickie merely feels he has the duty of doing what is proper. But Agnes checks him with a long series of logical arguments. There would be a scandal, which would affect their engagement; Stephen has already left for the beach, therefore they can't do anything now; the 'symbolic moment' has passed and, in intention, he has kept faithful to it. He has done everything he could. As he starts agreeing with her, Stephen calls him, from the other side of the window. He has come to say good-bye to the sickly fellow and to see if he is better. Agnes embraces him. Stephen calls again. 'If he

calls one more time, I'll answer,' he thinks. The 'shepherd' calls for his lamb still one more time; but Rickie, like Saint Peter, for three times denies the symbol.

In a last attempt to recapture dignity, he decides to write a letter to Ansell asking his advice. Agnes says this is a good idea, and that she is sure Mr. Ansell would keep their secret. But isn't this really unnecessary? Haven't they already picked out the important points by themselves?

This marks Rickie's first step towards darkness and unreality. Woman, the enemy, has already separated a man from his friends, from his ideals and killed his dignity. As we have already remarked, the novel is divided into three parts. The first part is called "Cambridge." It shows Rickie's happy life and also his regret because he cannot find Reality. He wishes his world were formed with less theories and more action. The second part is called "Sawston," and starts when Rickie goes to live with the Pembrokes. Under their influence, he quickly builds a stereotype of Stephen. He projects on the young man all his resentment against the hated father. Agnes — who in the mist of all the turmoil had forgotten to make it clear that Stephen is the son of Rickie's mother — finds it better to leave things as they are. 'He had labeled the boy as <u>bad</u> and it was convenient to revert to his good qualities as seldom as possible.' (p. 145) It hurts Rickie that he, the continuance of his mother, should be lame and fated to destruction, whereas Stephen, son of evil, would probably continue into infinity.

Away from Cambridge, separated from his friends and having rejected Stephen, Rickie starts a new life at Sawston, with Agnes and her brother Herbert Pembroke as his companions in the longest of all journeys. Mr. Pembroke is offered a place as the headmaster of Dunwood House, one of the most important

boarding houses at Sawston. But it is demanded that the headmaster has a good housekeeper to look after the children. Thus he proposes marriage to a certain Mrs. Orr, but she refuses. He thinks of asking Harriet Herriton (the one who stole the baby, in Where Angels Fear to Tread, and is also a member of Sawstonian society.) But a respectable man cannot go offering himself everywhere, for people would notice. If Agnes and Rickie hastened the marriage, she could work as his housekeeper, while he would become a clergyman, which is something really dignified. As for Rickie, they could find one thing or the other for him to do. And that's how Rickie marries and becomes a teacher of Latin at Sawston Public-School. He thinks this will be a sound opportunity to see real life. That's what the last publisher who refused his book of short-stories has advised him to do: 'see life.'

Rickie and his few belongings go to the Pembrokes' house. In order to addapt to the decoration of the place, the portrait of his mother goes to the study, the picture of Stockholm to the passage, and the picture of Sir Percival to the drawing-room.

> There comes a moment — God knows when — at which we can say, 'I will experience no longer. I will create. I will be an experience.' But to do this we must be both acute and heroic. For it is not easy, after accepting six cups of tea, to throw the seventh in the face of the hostess. (p. 67)

His tea-cup of experience tastes like gall, but Rickie is neither acute nor heroic to reject it by now. In order to escape a world of circles, he has reached another world, formed only of squares, where he can hardly breathe. Lionel Trilling[19] compares life to a tunnel of horrors where characters enter bare and naïve to emerge, at the end, all scratched, but chastened and triumphant, having achieved experience. But Rickie, he says, doesn't manage to pass through events. 'He does not achieve knowledge — indeed,

he begins with knowledge and loses it as he goes into life — but a kind of dignity.'

Rickie's first class starts with

> Pan ovium custos, tua si tibi Maenala curae,
> Adsis, O Tegae, favens. (p. 164) [20]

Soon he receives his first important task. One of the pupils, a repellent big-eared boy called Varden, who is as mistreated by his classmates as Rickie has been one day, is attending as a day-boy. He lives with the same Mrs. Orr who has rejected Mr. Pembroke's offering of marriage. Believing that all children must be boarders, so as to acquire 'esprit de corps,' Mr. Pembroke summons Rickie to drop heavily on the boy, until he becomes a boarder. Rickie is also advised to avoid a certain teacher, Mr. Jackson, who is a 'reactionary' and a 'humanist.' Were it not for his brilliant intellect, Mr. Jackson would have been fired a long time ago. This Cambridge man who works at Sawston is also the cousin of Widdrington, one of Rickie's best friends. Mr. Jackson is also a disciple of the late Mr. Failing.

Ansell, to whom Agnes takes to referring as 'poor' Mr. Ansell, doesn't answer Rickie's letters anymore. Would he think that his old friend is not real any longer? Rickie himself has a bad feeling about this, and starts praying 'to be delivered from the shadow of unreality that had begun to darken the world, (...) and that his wound might heal as he labored, and his eyes re-capture the Holy Grail.' (p. 157)

Ansell is presently with Widdrington at the Reading Room of the British Museum, working on his second dissertation.[21] He is still working with the Mandala, but now he associates it to the basis of Hegel's dialectics. The philosopher introduces us to a trilogy: thesis, antithesis and synthesis. The thesis stands for the absolute, for the potentiality, for the capacity people

have to do things; the antithesis symbolizes an idea, a concept. Neither the basic capacity for action nor an idea can stand alone. They have to come together, and this union is called synthesis. Like squares and circles (reality and imagination) form a Mandala, so capacity for action and an idea of what to do , together, result in activity. In Where Angels Fear to Tread Philip has the capacity to do things, but keeps procrastinating; Caroline, who can act, doesn't have the notion of what is right and what is wrong. Both are incomplete. Neither attains the synthesis.[22]

Widdrington (Mr. Jackson's cousin) has spent some days at Sawston and now is telling Ansell about Rickie. He has found their friend rather unhappy, and thinks they should do something in order to help Rickie. Widdrington complains about the uselessness of intellectuals, who think so much and do so little, who see things clearly but don't know how to behave.

> 'If we were different people,' he says, 'something might be done to save him. (...) We stand aside — and meanwhile he turns into stone. Two philosophic youths repining in the British Museum! What have we done? What shall we ever do? Just drift and criticise, while people who know what they want snatch it away from us and laugh.' (184)

Widdrington is talking about people like Philip Herriton, and complaining about their useless theoretical humanism. But Ansell does not share his opinion. He is willing to use the things he has learnt while working on his dissertation. He is waiting for the moment of the synthesis: he knows he has the capacity for action, but is waiting for the right moment to go to Sawston and rescue his friend,

> 'Do you suppose that I didn't want to rescue him from that ghastly woman? Action! Nothing's easier than action; as fools testify. But I want to act rightly. (...) When the moment comes I shall hit out like any

> ploughboy. Don't believe those lies about intellectual people. They're only written to soothe the majority. (p. 184)

As he talks, Ansell also makes us think of Nietzsche[23] and his ideas about the desire for power. This desire is greater than old values such as Truth, Religion or Knowledge. It leads the Superman (the one who is able to link thought and action) beyond the notions of Good and Evil. Ansell has decided he is going to save Rickie. This is his goal, and it doesn't look as if he is going to have scruples concerning the means through which he will reach his end. But he still lacks his antithesis, the idea of "what to do." He keeps watching for this opportunity which never comes and which, in lack of a better name, he calls the "Spirit of Life." We readers know that Stephen has been compared to the Spirit of Life, several times, in the novel.

As he leaves the reading room Ansell passes by a statue of the Cnidian Demeter. Remembering that Rickie is soon going to have a son, he feels uneasy, for 'here were powers he could not cope with, nor, as yet, understand.' (186)

Rickie, who has failed with his work, his ideals and his marriage, turns now all his hopes to the child. He can't think of anything else,

> 'In the midst of lessons he would grow dreamy, as one who spies a new symbol for the universe, a fresh circle within a square. Within the square shall be a circle, within the circle another square, until the visual eye is baffled. Here is meaning of a kind. His mother has forgotten herself in him. He would forget himself in his son.' (187)

The child of the Londoner is a girl, and her lameness is far worse than her father's. The baby dies within a few days. The death of the child apparently infuriates the great god Pan, for

there follows an unexpected wave of hostility at Dunwood House, which culminates with the climax of the Varden case. The ugly boy — now a boarder, through Rickie's interference — has been tortured a little too roughly, and nearly dies. The case turns into a scandal, goes to the papers, and the boy is soon to leave Sawston. Rickie, who once has been so shocked over the death of the child at the level-crossing, doesn't seem to feel responsible now. Had he been a little stronger and joined Mr. Jackson in his defense of the child, maybe together they could have managed to make things better at Sawston. He pays a visit to the boy, who is convinced that 'school is the world in miniature' and that we are to forgive our enemies and never to wish them evil. Rickie tries to point out that the world is not as dark as this, and that children should learn how to love instead of to forgive. But it is too late for Varden. The symbolic moment has passed, and again Rickie has missed it. He is deteriorating. 'The same routine, the same diplomacies, the same old sense of only half knowing boys or men — he returned to it all; and all that changed was the cloud of unreality, which ever brooded a little more densely than before.' (p. 180)

By this time Agnes has become a good friend of Mrs. Failing. Rickie realizes that she is legacy-hunting. She manages to turn the old lady against Stephen, so that he will be disinherited. When he knows about it there is a terrible discussion and, for a moment, he feels a curious tenderness towards Stephen, which soon passes as he thinks of his dead baby and of his mother, who are never to rise again. At night he has a nightmare. He hears his mother crying and saying 'Never mind — come away — let them die out — let them die out.' Waking up he goes to the window, to look to the 'frosty glories of Orion,' with whom he identifies.[24]

Going back to our considerations about the symphonic pattern of The Longest Journey, in this second part we have the

climax of the novel and the clash of the two themes. Woman, the enemy, standing here also for the world of public-school, is to be subdued by Ansell, the friend who comes to rescue Rickie's soul. The completeness suggested by the Mandala — which Rickie wrongly supposed he would reach through marrying Agnes — is finally achieved when Ansell meets Stephen. Again, like in Where Angels fear to Tread, we have the union of mind and body, Ansell standing for Culture and the intellect, Stephen for Nature and the heart. Their meeting is a queer one. Stephen, disinherited and banished from Cadover, has at last been told the truth about his birth. He doesn't care about the revelation, but comes to tell Rickie that they are brothers. 'A man, if he has a brother, may reasonably visit him.' Ansell (who by now has failed with his second dissertation, again because of 'too much Hegel,') has come to Sawston to see whether the place will suggest him some line of action. When they meet Ansell is sitting on a bench, reading an essay by Mr. Failing. The topic is "Seclusion". People are not to close themselves to the outer world. They are to look around them and contact other people. Stephen comes and sits on the bench, greeting Ansell, who doesn't answer. He is too busy reading about communication. Stephen tries again, saying 'Nice morning!' Ansell looks at the morning, which is gray, and answers 'No. Why?' Stephen throws a clod of earth at him, and they start fighting, destroying Agnes' lobelias. Thus the circles and squares of the Mandala are finally united. They become friends, and Stephen tells Ansell everything about him and Rickie. Agnes, who thinks that Stephen has come to try to blackmail Rickie, offers him a cheque. Ansell, in a speech which is the climax of the novel, delivered under the moulds of classical rethoric, tells to all the students who are assembled in the dining-hall that Rickie has a brother. His language, which reminds us of Anthony's speech in Julius Caesar, finally opens Rickie's eyes. Also, Ansell tells him that Stephen is the son of

Rickie's mother.

Like Orion, Rickie has recovered his sight. Like Sir Percival, he has recovered the Holy Grail. He leaves Sawston and the Pembrokes and returns to his friends.

The first part of the novel, called "Cambridge", can be represented by Ansell, the intellectual of the group; the second, "Sawston," by the Pembrokes. The first stands for the circles of the theoretic, the secondfor the squares of materialism. The third part, called "Wiltshire", is represented by Stephen and Nature. The Mandala is complete, but we don't know whether Rickie is ready to face reality. He still has the same problem: unable to see things as they are, he keeps creating stereotypes. Stephen, the son of the hated father has now become the continuance of the beloved mother. He gives Stephen a photograph of their mother. Stephen, who realizes what is going on, tears it up. He also realizes that Rickie is responsible for Agnes' being such a contemptible woman, and tells the brother he wants to be seen as a person, not as a symbol,

> 'Don't hang on me clothes that don't belong — as you did on your wife, giving her saint's robes, whereas she was simply a woman of her own sort, who needed careful watching. Tear up the photographs. Here I am, and there you are. The rest is cant.'(266)

But Rickie can't stop, not now that the Beloved has raised from the dead. Again he thinks of that dream, which has been a vision. 'Tonight also he hurried to the window — to remember, with a smile, that Orion is not among the stars of June. "Let me die out. She will continue," he murmured, and in making plans for Stephen's happiness, fell asleep.' (p. 250)

In the legend, after recovering his sight, Orion dies. Rickie has recovered his inner life and has started writing again. According to the myth, the time has come for him to die.

Several elements in The Longest Journey seem to follow a sort of circular movement. In the beginning of the novel Rickie used to say he hated no one. Now he doesn't hate anyone again. He has come back to his friends and to his old life. He even has the same old problem, this lack of ability to deal with reality. Now he is leaving, by train, to visit Mrs. Failing. His train also performs a circular movement. It passes Ansell's home, goes around the lane, and then passes Ansell's home again. As the train returns, and while Rickie is waving good-bye to his friends, Stephen jumps in and says he is going with him. Rickie is angry, because he knows that Mrs. Failing will not receive Stephen in her house. But the boy doesn't care. He is used to sleeping in the open, and longs to see Wiltshire again. Rickie finally agrees, but asks him to promise he will not get drunk while they are away. Rickie has not given up his plan of turning Stephen into a perfect man, worthy of the memory of their mother.

They reach Wiltshire, and start talking about the place. Rickie knows his brother loves this land, and belongs to it. He says, kindly, 'I wish you could live here.' To what Stephen clumsily retorts that he is only used to it. Then they pass the Chadchurch, and Stephen says, 'I see the old spire. I don't mind seeing it again.' Rickie suggests that they go to the cathedral, but Stephen tells him of his religious ideas, 'I have not been inside it, and I never will. Sorry to shock you, Rickie, but I must tell you plainly. I'm an atheist. I don't believe in anything.' 'I do,' says Rickie.[25]

Finally they separate. Stephen goes to see his friends and Rickie goes to dine with his aunt. It is a terrible meeting, Mrs. Failing trying to convince him to go back to Agnes. Like the bundle of clothes waiting for Rev. Beebe outside the Sacred Lake, conveying the meaning that 'To us shall all flesh come in the end,' Mrs. Failing tells him to beware of the earth,

> 'We are conventional people, and conventions — if you will but see it — are majestic in their way, and will claim us in the end. We do not live for great passions or for great memories or for anything great (...) and I tell you solemnly that the important things in life are little things, and that people are not important at all.'

This is the opinion of people like Charlotte Bartlett and Mrs. Herriton; these are the values of Forster's people of the undeveloped heart. Rickie pities his aunt and leaves with Leighton, the butler, to join Stephen. He is thinking of Mrs. Failing and comparing her world to Stephen's. And he sees his brother as a hero. 'Against all this wicked nonsense, against the Wilbrahams and Pembrokes who try to rule our world Stephen would fight till he died. Stephen was a hero. He was a law to himself, and rightly.' (p. 278) As they reach the tavern he finds his hero drunk. A normal person might be drunk. But it is the end of everything for a hero.

And it is then that Rickie dies. If we think of heroes in Conrad, we will remember that they usually die at the end of the novels. Theirs is a noble death. At the last moment their eyes are opened and they are able to look back at the whole of their lives. Sometimes they are even capable of emitting a judgement about it, like Kurt's famous 'The Horror!' This doesn't happen to Rickie, who dies even more deluded than he has been through his whole life. His comment is 'May God receive me and pardon me for trusting the earth.' When the butler asks him what is the problem he answers, 'Gone bankrupt, Leighton, for the second time. Pretended again that people were real.'

Stephen is drunk by the level-crossing, and a train is approaching. Wearily, Rickie goes and saves him. Then he tries to save his own life, too, not that he cares about it, but because it is a man's duty. But the train passes over his knees, his weak

point, cause of his lameness and also of his living in a world of unreality. Mrs. Failing writes about him to a friend as 'one who has failed in all he undertook; one of the thousands whose dust returns to the dust, accomplishing nothing in the interval. Agnes and I buried him to the sound of the cracked bell, and pretendded that he had been once alive.' (p. 281)

But the novel doesn't end here. After the symphony, there comes a coda. We are taken to Stephen's home, some years after Rickie's death. Mrs. Failing has died, leaving Cadover to some distant relatives. Agnes is married again, and now she has a son. Rickie's Pan Pipes has been accomplished. Now it is going to be published, with an introduction written by Mr. Pembroke. A bridge has been built at the level crossing. Stephen has come back to his Wiltshire. Now he is married and has a daughter. He still feels that same wonder, at night, at being alive. That's why he is going to sleep under the stars tonight. His little daughter is going with him. She wishes good-night to her mother and to the stone lady with the shattered knee, Stephen's Demeter. As they find a good place to sleep,

> He gave her one hand, and she was asleep before her fingers had nestled in its palm. Their touch made him pensive, and again he marvelled why he, the accident, was here. He was alive and had created life. By whose authority? Though he could not phrase it, he believed that he guided the future of our race, and that, century after century, his thoughts and his passions would triumph in England. (p. 288)

Whom should he thank? Would Rickie know the things he has given him? Stephen doesn't know. Anyway, 'he bent down reverently and saluted the child; to whom he had given the name of their mother." (p. 288)

One is never sure, throughout this novel, about how ironic Forster is being towards Rickie. This mixture of sarcasm and love in the treatment of the character makes it clear that the author here identifies with his creation. Anyway, life is hard on Rickie. No hero has tried as hard as he has, still he fails. His strife is nobler than Lucy's or Philip's, but here we don't have that ordinated universe of make believe we have in the Italian novels. Rickie has faced real life, and has proved unable to handle the big Ibsenian machine. Like Mrs. Failing implies, as she gets near the small tree at the center of the Mandala, there are people who believe that this central point can be compared to a sanctuary to the devil. Reality, to Rickie, proves to be devilish, because he is not prepared to face it.

The main problem with Rickie is that he does not keep faithful to the lessons he has learnt at Cambridge. As soon as he enters Sawston he surrenders to those who are stronger and smarter than he is. He avoids Mr. Jackson, who is a Cambridge man as himself, and who is trying to make of Sawston a better place. He agrees to be used as a puppet in the Varden case, and all the time is aware that he is betraying his ideals. He has failed, and his death is the greatest of all failures. He dies convinced that he was wrong as he trusted the Earth. He dies believing that his aunt is right, and that people 'don't live for great passions or for great memories or for anything great.' From childhood, he never knew what is real and what is not. And now, as he dies, he is as blind as ever. His last words, 'Pretended again that people were real,' show us that, all along, he has been using the word "reality" , but what he really means is "perfection." He is disappointed because people are not perfect, because they do not correspond to the heroes, goddesses and empresses he has in his imagination. Shelley has defined this mistake as a tendency to project eternal values onto simple

human beings. What Rickie really wants is not to find reality, but perfection. He wants Stephen to be a hero, whereas he is merely a man, the most 'real' man he could find in the world, full of qualities and also possessing many faults. As he finds his brother drunk by the road, real but not heroic, the walls of his imaginary world fall and he is annihilated by the weight of the thing he has been chasing all through his life. As he walks to the East, in order to regain his sight, Orion is also walking towards death. The same thing happens to Rickie. As he marches towards reality, without being ready to face it, he is walking towards destruction.

In the letter she writes to her friend, Mrs. Failing refers to Rickie as one who has failed in all he undertook. She also writes that he has never been actually alive. Mrs. Failing is right as far as she says that Rickie has failed, but no one can accuse him of not being alive. Few people have respected life as much as he has. Rickie believed in the 'symbolic moment,' when one has the opportunity to achieve full stature as a human being. He believed in personal relations, in poetry, in romance and in heroism. He has been much more alive than people like his aunt, who pass through life believing that 'the important things in life are little things, and that people are not important at all.' This makes us think of the question about what sort of character does survive in Forster. We have already decided that people like Aunt Emily do not count, because they cannot be said to be alive. They belong to the dark armies of the benighted, together with Charlotte Bartlett and Caroline Abbott, who are afraid of being hurt. Rickie has been destroyed by his successive stereotypes. Ansell survives, but somehow he seems to be outside the world. He is not as detached as Philip Herriton, who never acts. If Philip is the continuance of Cecil Vyse, maybe we can say that Ansell is a more perfected Philip. He is the

symbol of Culture. He is articulate, and manages to reach a synthesis. Yet, somehow, Ansell looks more like a guardian angel than like a human being. The one moment in the novel where he actually seems to be alive is during that flaw, where he betrays his jealousy. Anyway, we can say that he is one of the characters who are skilful enough to survive and to handle the social machine. The only one, though, who keeps all the qualities of a complete human being, is Stephen. And this happens because he belongs to Nature. He is neither arrested in the theoretic circles of the intellectual, nor in the squares of the mundane. He is free, and it is through him that we get to the note of hope at the closing of the novel. Through his little daughter, he carries the continuance theme on. As the shepherd who 'guides the future of our race' he is in charge of Nature and of all the values which make of man the most precious element in the universe. He carries the torch of Humanism on.

If we think of this novel in symbolic terms we will see that this note of hope we have in the coda is only possible through Rickie. Beyond his failure there is Victory. He has saved his brother, and this triumph has cast his image, like in the myth of Orion, among the stars. He is to remain there in order to guide those who are trying to find their way.

If we keep to the text, though, and avoid the symbolic, we will realize that this is the first time a developed-hearted person has died, in Forster. Gino's child belongs to Nature. Danger belongs to its environment, and it does not survive. Lilia, though possessing a bright temper, does not care about the inner life. Neither does Gerald. But Rickie, in so many ways one of the saved, dies. This is the great difference between the Italian Novels and the ones we have from The Longest Journey on. In the first two novels we have analysed, the good are rewarded and the wicked punished. In Rickie's universe, though, there is no Order, and only the strong survive.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FOUR

1. K.W. Gransden: E.M. Forster (Oliver & Boyd, Edinburgh, 1970), p. 8.

2. Quotations from The Longest Journey are taken from the Penguin edition, London, 1976.

3. Here we find several auto-biographical elements, the hard times at public-school and also the happiness he finds at Cambridge. More than that, one feels that there is much self-criticism in the way Forster treats Rickie's romantic evasions. The young man's lameness, which prevents him from feeling like other boys, and also from having children, can also be related to Forster's homosexuality.

4. Moore's main attacks on Berkeley's doctrine can be found in the essay "The Refutation of Idealism" (1903), included in Philosophical Studies (1922).

5. Ansell makes the distinction between the things that ARE REAL (timeless qualities, expressed through abstract names: Philosophy calls them Goodness or Truth; Forster refers to them as Romance, Poetry or Beauty,) and the things that ARE NOT REAL. For those who possess the developed heart (idealists, philosophers, and Cambridge) timeless qualities are the real thing; for those who possess the undeveloped heart they do not count. Forster's main criticism of society is that people are taught to care about unimportant things and to give arbitrary values to what is really important.

6. Martin, p. 30.

7. Forster: Abinger Harvest , pp. 13 to 25.

8. Idem, p. 30.

9. The reason why Forster is so hard on his people of the undeveloped heart is that, through them, he is not criticising only a type of people. He is also criticising a part of every human being. One of the examples of what critics use to call the 'diabolism of E.M. Forster' is the way in which he makes his readers furious against undeveloped-hearted people and then, at the right moment, throws a comment reminding us that everybody has an undeveloped-hearted side.

10. Trilling, p. 56.

11. Frederick C. Crews (Crews: pp. 56 to 58) analyses the possibilities of attributing to Ansell 'a basically homosexual temperament' based on his grudge against women and on his behavior towards Rickie. It is left for us to guess whether this 'basic homosexuality' is a slip of the author's or if the character has been consciously created as a homosexual. In either case his behavior interferes in the weaving of the plot. Ansell is obviously intended to be a sort of spiritual guide to the readers, who are supposed to trust him blindly. He is to function as the spirit of Culture. Built to be a symbol, he suddenly starts having a life of his own. And we have both Ansell, the voice of truth, whose goal is to point Rickie the way to reality, and another Ansell, passionate and jealous. By now we are lost, not knowing whether Ansell's restrictions to Agnes come from the knowledge that, through a false vision of the girl, his friend can be led to trouble, or whether they come from his disgust of silly women 'who keep interfering with their betters.'

12. Rickie makes a point of saying he doesn't hate anyone. He only hesitates when people ask him whether he hates his father. On the other hand, he worships the memory of his mother. His friends think him a little effeminate and too delicate. Therefore, as he empathises with the emotion Gerald and Agnes feel, probably it is because, unconsciously, he is attracted to Gerald, and not to Agnes. Gerald has all the characteristics the Oedipal man demands from his rival. Being virile and having hurt him in the past, he has all the qualities to become a father-figure. Learning to love his rival the Oedipal man can also stop hating the father. And, accepting the father, he can also assimilate the virility and manhood the father suggests to his son. But Gerald is dead, and Rickie has the hope of making him live again, through Agnes, if they succeed in recapturing the magic moment.

13. Here Forster (and also Ansell and Rickie) distort the meaning of the poem in order to suit their own purposes. They interpret it as an anti-marriage manifest, whereas, if read in its whole, the poem should be seen as an invitation to poligamy. In this passage, when he talks of the 'sad friend', and 'jealous foe', Shelley is complaining because his wife, Mary Shelley, did not approve of his platonic love for Emilia Viviani. The damsel soon marries an ugly but rich noble and, in his deception, Shelley writes to a friend: "I can't stand my poem anymore. The person I have praised was a cloud, never a goddess. I think we are always in love with something. The error, and I confess it is not easy for us, simple mortals, to avoid it, consists in projecting the image of what is perhaps eternal onto what is nothing but mortal." This shows that, in many

ways, Shelley is as blind to reality as Rickie. (The quotation from Shelley's letter is translated from the Portuguese edition of Ariel ou A Vida de Shelley, by André Maurois.)

14. One of the short-stories written by Rickie is Forster's "Other Kingdom." Apparently Pan Pipes, Rickie's book, published at the end of the novel, is Forster's Collected Short-Stories.

15. In an interview to the Paris Review (in: Writers at Work) Forster says that he has chosen the name Wonham because it is a country name.

16. According to the tradition of Latin and Greek poetry, important at Cambridge in Forster's time, sheep represent the agrarian ideal of Pastoralism, the notion of an age when man's head was happily united with the body.

17. Here Mr. Failing is comparing Stephen to Pan, both being responsible for the sheep. We cannot help thinking of the other great Shepherd of history, Christ. Lawrence comments in his letter that Forster invests Pan with the attributes of Christ. All three are Saviors. Christ saves people's souls; Pan and Stephen save Nature. Christ saves mankind; Stephen saves England. He keeps Nature safe to the day when the Englishman decides to come back to it.

18. Martin, p. 36.

19. Trilling, pp. 69, 70.

20. A loose translation of the passage would mean something like, "Pan, thou who keepest sheep, guard well those who are under thy sight."

21. One wonders what is the reason for Ansell's failure, since he is being judged by Cambridge. Either his theories are not as faultless as we think they are (i.e., Cambridge realizes that Ansell is not as impartial as he seems to be), or his ideas are too daring, even to open-minded people. They accuse him of putting too much Hegel into the dissertation. This implies that he is a radical who goes to the hindmost questions concerning religious, philosophic or social grounds. Disciples of Hegel, known as Hegelian leftists, have originated ideologies such as Marxism and Nazism.

22. Another implication of Hegel's dialectics which has to do with Forster is the parallel Thesis/Soul; Antithesis/Body; Synthesis/Man. This reminds us of the link between the English (mind) and the Italian (body) and reports us to the Freudian sections of the adult psyche: id(body, antithesis), superego (thesis, mind) and ego (synthesis, balanced man.)

23. In his Der Wille zur Macht Friedrich Nietzsche states that the effort made by the scholar to create his theories ends up by wearing down his vitality. The solution to this problem is in the development of one's desire for potency/power.

24. Orion is a hunter who gets blind. An oracle announces that, if he walks to the east and turns his eye-sockets towards Helius, he will regain his sight. What the oracle doesn't tell is that, after this, Orion is going to die in an accident. Artemis, who has taken him for an enemy and transfixed him with an arrow, sets Orion's image among the stars. Another myth related to Orion is the fable of the rising Sun. Like the hunter, who is blinded and then recovers his sight, the Sun is also hidden during the night to return by the following Dawn. (Information taken from Robert Graves: The Greek Myths, vol. I)

25. Throughout the novel Stephen's agnosticism has been presented as something childish, probably because, like Mr. Emerson, he is so religious in his disbelief. Rickie's religion, which he is never willing to discuss, is made of a deep faith. His simple 'I do,' in this scene, weighs more than Stephen's whole speech.

5. CHAPTER FIVE: HOWARDS END

The motto of Howards End is "only connect." If we turn to the novels we have already examined, we will find some successful connections. When George Emerson and Lucy Honeychurch meet they establish a sort of relation where each gives and receives something. After this meeting George becomes less gloomy, and Lucy less naïve. We have also Philip Herriton and Gino Carella. Gino, as a symbol, is immutable; but their union — the junction of id and superego — helps Philip become a better person. Finally, with Stephen and Ansell, we have completeness through the union of heart and mind. There are, though, several instances when the connection is not achieved. Philip and Caroline have failed because both are arrested in their aesthetic views of life; Gino and Lilia are separated by their different cultural environments; Rickie and Agnes fail because they belong to different worlds, Cambridge and the world of public-school. All these cases go against Mr. Failing's theory that two different persons can eventually learn to live together. One thing all these failures have in common is the presence of stereotypes. Philip sees a goddess in Caroline; Rickie sees an empress in Agnes. Lilia does not see Gino, but sees in him an escape from the repressive life she leads at Sawston.

Now, with Howards End, we have again the proposal for a connection. This is the most difficult and daring attempt we have faced up to here, because what the novel tries to establish is a link between Materialism and Humanism, between inner and outer life.

We know already what Forster's opinions are about public-school and his people of the undeveloped heart. We also know that

all his sympathies go to the liberal tradition represented by Cambridge. Nevertheless, here we feel that the author is determined to give Mr. Failing a chance, and try an actual connection between people from these opposite groups. It is left for us to discover why he longs for this connection: to save his undeveloped-hearted people? To assure a better future for England? To make of his liberal humanists more complete persons? Maybe for all of these reasons?

Let's start by collecting some data about the most important groups we find in the novel. First of all we have the Schlegel sisters, Margaret (who is twenty-nine years old) and Helen (who is twenty-two). They have been raised by their father, a philosopher who taught them to believe in the 'inner life of personal relations.' Mr. Schlegel was a German best described as 'the countryman of Hegel and Kant, as the idealist, inclined to be dreamy, whose Imperialism was the Imperialism of the air.' (p.28) He has fought for the Fatherland against Denmark, Austria and France. After the victory, realizing that his country had become an imperialistic power, Mr. Schlegel moved to England, where he married "Die Engländerin" and had three children, Margaret, Helen and Tibby. He and his wife die, leaving their children a good amount of money and a sound cultural basis. We might call Margaret and Helen developed-hearted people, members of the 'inner life' or liberal humanists, but it will suit our purposes best if we simply call them 'intellectuals.'

The task of the intellectual is to preserve the inner life of personal relations, reminding people that Man is more than a mere part of a big machine:Man is to be seen as an end, both individually and socially. The intellectual is the one who has the task of reminding people that there are things such as romance and poetry in life, that Man can be heroic and touch the sublime. So important is this task that we tend to forget that intellectuals are not perfect beings. Forster is aware of their

faults, and so are Hegel and Nietzsche, as we have seen in The Longest Journey. Few are the persons who, like Ansell, are capable of reaching a synthesis, of connecting thought and action. These are the attributes of the Superman, who has not been born yet. Up to now what we have found are incomplete persons, such as Caroline, who is able to act, or Philip, who thinks. Lionel Trilling, in his essay on Howards End[1], has some good comments about the problem with intellectuals,

> One of the complications of the intellectual's life is his relation to people who are not intellectuals. The very fact of being articulate, of making articulateness a preoccupation, sets up a barrier between the intellectual and the non-intellectual. The intellectual, the "freest" of men, consciously the most liberated from class, is actually the most class marked and class-bound of all men.

As the "freest of men," the intellectual ought, in theory, to be able to touch other people. We know that this doesn't happen.He is able to 'understand' all sorts of people, but not to interact with them. The real connection is usually left to people like Gino or Stephen, who belong to Nature and are really free from prejudice. They are neither blind, like undeveloped-hearted people, nor engaged in theoretic speculations, like intellectuals. They are not afraid of emotions, and are always ready to make new links with people.

If we examine the three members of the Schlegel clan we will learn a lot about the sorts of people we can find in a group of intellectuals. First we have Tibby, who represents the worst kind of deformity which can originate among people whose function is to think. Tibby is a narcisistic young man with an over-developed ego, completely closed inside his little world. He doesn't care about people as long as they don't interfere with

his affairs. He has a sense of beauty and his own interests, such as the reading of Sir Walter Savage Landor's Imaginary Conversations.[2] Tibby is only sixteen, but promises to become another Cecil Vyse when he turns older.

Then we have Margaret Schlegel. She is the closest we ever get in Forster to the ideal intellectual, the one who is able to touch other people. She has some limitations, but is aware of them. It is Margaret who will try the connection with the world of the 'outer life.' We have already witnessed, through Rickie and Agnes, the union of members of different groups. Their marriage brings out the worst side of their personalities and ends up in tragedy. But these are not the circumstances with Margaret. She knows what she is doing, and is aware of danger. Also, Forster is willing to help her. We know that this connection is a painful one to the author, who will have to pass beyond his own grudges and beliefs. Forster seems determined to point out, impartially, both the faults and qualities of Materialists and Intellectuals. His goal is a union where the good side of each may emerge. Thus we would have, in a way, the "Fosterian Superman," the practical dreamer or the idealistic businessman. Of course he fails. Half of the time he keeps faithful to his goal; the other half, though, he forgets his purposes and denigrates his undeveloped-hearted people, here represented by the Wilcoxes. This makes a mess of the book, fills it with contradictions, but also makes it extremely interesting. The theme keeps escaping the control of the author, till the point his scope gets incredibly wide. At the end we hardly know whether the author is being too kind or extremely sarcastic towards the Wilcoxes. Instead of giving us a detailed description of the qualities and faults we can find both in Schlegels and Wilcoxes, Forster only conveys a vague idea that Wilcoxes have several virtues — which, at the moment, he cannot remember very well — and that Schlegels have some faults,

too.

Helen Schlegel, younger, prettier and more passionate than Margaret, is a great device in the novel. Forster says all he wants against materialism through her, and then accuses her of being too reckless and ardent in her opinions.

The second group we have in Howards End consists of the Wilcoxes, foils to the Schlegels. Action is their motto; steadiness, the quality they praise the most. The father, Henry Wilcox, is a successful businessman who extracts rubber from Nigeria. He is one of those who make of England the great imperialistic power of the beginning of the century. Wilcoxes stand for progress. They are always surrounded by motor-cars and all sorts of engines. They don't write letters: they send telegrams, for time is money. Wilcoxes form the backbone of capitalistic social structure. They are religious and honorable as long as these qualities don't interfere with business. One is never sure whether they don't realize the importance of emotion or whether they are afraid because it may lead into self-judgement. Margaret likes them because they work hard and are responsible for the progress of England. The author doesn't seem to share her enthusiasm about modern times. Let's have a glimpse of a moment that can be called Historic, because it represents the dawn of pollution in England, when Charles Wilcox goes for a ride in his brand-new car,

> ...he turned round in his seat and contemplated the cloud of dust that they had raised in the passage through the village.It was settling again, but not all into the road from which he had taken it. Some of it had percolated through the open windows, some had whitened the roses and gooseberries of the wayside gardens, while a certain proportion had entered the lungs of the villagers.[3]

Written in 1910, the novel marks the beginning of a new era, where

the times of Pan and of the elementary forces are over. This leads us to the third group, the Howards.

If intellectuals represent a minority that always existed, and if Wilcoxes stand for this new society which is blooming with Progress and Capitalism, the Howards are a memory of the way things have been in the past, when the country belonged to the strong countryman. Intellectuals — Margaret, Philip Herriton, Stuart Ansell — seldom marry and have children. Wilcoxes seem to breed like rabbits (Charles Wilcox has one child per year). The Howards are a sort in extinction. The one survivor of the family is Ruth Howard, who has lost her family name by marrying Henry Wilcox. Symbolically, this represents the passage of England from the hands of the yeoman to the businessman. Her uncle, Tom Howard, has loved a woman who refused to marry him. He has died a bachelor, without having children. After his death his home became known as Howards End, because it marked the end of the Howards, the end of the country people who have resisted the Normans and Romans to be conquered by the Wilcoxes. Now Ruth Wilcox is soon to die and Howards End is likely to be abandoned. There are several levels of symbolism attached to this old farm house. It represents England. The question is What is to happen to England? Or, as Lionel Trilling puts it, Who shall inherit England? It also represents Nature. We have already realized that personal relations last longer and are more readily accomplished when people are close to Nature. Gino and Stephen are creatures of Nature. Lucy has been raised in the country, and so Mrs. Wilcox. What is to happen to people without Pan, and without Howards End, the small farm house which represents Nature? Is the great god Pan actually dead? Is no supernatural creature to come and save man at the crucial moment?

As the story begins Wilcoxes and Schlegels are already in contact with one another. They have met in a trip to Germany

and the Wilcoxes have invited Margaret and Helen to spend some days at Howards End. Margaret cannot go because Tibby has got hay-fever[4] and she is looking after him. But Helen goes. Howards End , a lovely place, provides the background of nature. It is a pity that, like Tibby, the Wilcoxes are allergic to hay, with the exception of Mrs. Wilcox. She likes to hold a wisp of hay in her hands while walking in the garden. Helen is at once enticed by the family and by the glamour of their life. They are active people, always good-humored and seeming so sure about things. They have the gift of making life look a very simple matter. Part of Helen's brain wants to react, saying that people ought to fight for things such as equality, freedom and truth, but she doesn't feel like quarreling with these handsome, athletic men. Falling in love with a family and with a way of life which was unknown to her, unused to that quality of 'masculinity' she finds in Howards End, she concentrates all the attributes of the Wilcoxes on the younger son, Paul. They fall in love for some hours. Then their relatives intervene, and the result is muddle, panic and emptiness. Paul is not meant to fall in love. He is too young and, besides, he is leaving for Nigeria. Helen realizes that behind the illusory manhood and competence there is an insecure young man. And this scares her. As she tells Margaret later, 'It is all right for us to be frightened, or for men of another sort — father, for instance; but for men like that! ' (p. 26) By 'men like that' she means those who are in charge of the future of their country.

Margaret's reaction, when she knows that Helen has fallen in love, is the opposite to Charlotte's, in A Room with a View . Her first reaction is to say to her sister that she has not done anything wrong, and that there is no offense in falling in love. But Helen is hurt because of what has happened, and this disappointment with the Wilcoxes is going to influence her way of seeing life. From now on she will tend to be a radical. Wilcoxes and all

they represent will be linked to frailty and hypocrisy. She condemns Wilcoxes because they make their false outer life of 'telegrams and anger' seem the real one, whereas she is now sure that the true life is the inner life of personal relations. Margaret agrees with her, still she doesn't deny this 'outer life.' She realizes it is necessary, and believes it is formed of 'values of the second rank,' such as persistency, grit and self-control. Margaret doesn't think in terms of 'which is the real life?', as Helen does. For her, like in the Mandala, reality is formed out of the combination of inner and outer lives, as the world is formed of Wilcoxes and Schlegels.

Some months after the Wilcox affair, the Schlegels go to the Queen's Hall to listen to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony. With them are Aunt Juley, a friendly and typical English lady, and their German cousin, Fräulein Mosebach. The symphony, here, can be seen as an allegory of life itself. Hundreds of persons are assembled in the audience, listening to the orchestra. The music, though, conveys a different meaning to each of them. Aunt Juley listens to it vaguely, and is slightly tempted to 'tap surreptitiously;' Fräulein Mosebach is stiff on her chair, not so much because of the music, but because its composer is 'echt Deutsch.' Tibby, always so lonesome and self-centered, cares only for the counterpoint. He knows every single sound produced by the drums by heart. But it is Helen who takes the symphony more seriously. In the first movement she has a vision of heroes and shipwrecks; then, during the Andante there is a sweet humming, and all seems peaceful in the world. But , with the third movement, come the goblins which scare her so much,

> ...as the music started with a goblin walking quietly over the universe, from end to end. Others followed him. They were not aggressive creatures; it was that that made them so terrible to Helen. They merely observed in passing that

> there was no such thing as splendour or heroism in the world. (p. 32)

What frightens her is this contrast between the calm and peace in the third movement and the sudden chaos that follows. Breaking the harmony of a world of order they bring the awareness of — panic and emptiness. This has to do with George's complaint that 'Things won't fit,' and also with Mrs. Moore's realization, in the Marabar caves, that there is no ultimate goal in life, that man has no use for things such as splendor, poetry and heroism. It is then that something quite strange happens. Beethoven blows and the goblins disappear. One is tempted to believe they have never been actually there. In fact, people who are used to deceiving themselves are sure the goblins have been an illusion.

> 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,[5] would say yes. Beethoven knew better. The goblins had been there. They might return — and they did. (p. 33)

This can be compared to what we have in Forster's novels. In the symphony we have alternated periods of order and chaos. Beethoven chooses to make things all right in the end, and builds the ramparts of the world up again. So does the author, in all of his novels. We can take, as an example, what happens to Rickie in The Longest Journey. His death is marked by failure and disillusion. Still, the novel ends with a note of hope. Like Beethoven, Forster chooses to make things all right in the end. Nevertheless, those who, like Helen, do not delude themselves, know that the goblins have actually been there, and that they may return.

For Margaret the symphony represents 'music.' Therefore, she simply listens to it. She doesn't allow herself to be

carried away by her imagination. She refuses to mingle the symphony with images. It is made of sounds, and she loves it for the sounds alone. Her point is, 'What is the good of the arts if they are interchangeable? What is the good if the ear if it tells you the same as the eye?...I wonder if the day will return when music will be treated as music.' (p. 38)

What Margaret accomplishes is a hard and difficult deed. She never allows herself to build up stereotypes. She is able to listen to music for hours and is delighted with the pleasure given by its sounds. She is also able to look at human beings and love them, not caring about their imperfections. She is capable of accepting people's weaknesses. Here she differs from Helen and from Forster, who seem ready to divide the world between sheep and goats. The author is not as tolerant as his character: he could never bear living with his people of the undeveloped heart. He would be destroyed, like Rickie and Mr. Failing. But Margaret, who simply listens to music, and who is tolerant of people's faults, is, in many ways, like Nature, who accepts her children as they are.

The fourth group we find in the novel are the Basts. We meet Leonard Bast for the first time during the symphony. He is Lawrence's favorite among Forster's characters, probably because he is painted in drastic colors. A sentence by Nietzsche suits him well: 'And if thou gaze long into the abyss, the abyss will also gaze into thee.'[6]

Like Mrs. Wilcox, Leonard is descendent from country folks. He is the symbol of what happens to the yeoman who is taken to a big city and doesn't know how to survive there. He is soon turned into a tool to be used in the big industrial machine controlled by people like the Wilcoxes. Leonard makes us think of Mr. Failing's remark that 'a Londoner is nothing but a country-man on the road to sterility.' Looking at his mournful eyes

Margaret, 'noting the spine that might have been straight, and the chest that might have broadened, (will wonder) whether it (pays) to give up the glory of the animal for a tail coat and a couple of ideas.' (p. 109) Leonard works as a clerk to the Porphyrion,[7] an insurance company.He rents a furnished basement where he lives with Jackie, an ex-prostitute with whom he is going to get married as soon as he is of age. Jackie, coincidentally, has been (when very young) Mr. Wilcox's mistress. After he abandoned her she has become a whore. Now she is thirty-three, and her beauty is fading fast. Her last chance in life is marrying young Leonard Bast. Their function in the novel is clear: he represents the yokel who is turned into a clerk in order to make Wilcoxes richer and more successfull; she represents the results of the eventual escapades from respectability people like the Wilcoxes indulge in occasionally, without even realizing they are hurting other people.

The only things that actually belong to Leonard are his books. He cherishes them, they represent his pathetic pursuit of beauty. Working the whole day so as to be able to pay the rent, which is always late, and always afraid of falling in the abyss, Leonard is left with two hours a day to improve himself. He goes to art for didactic purposes, because he wants to improve. As he reads Ruskin, for instance, he thinks of how he can adapt what he has been learning to practical purposes. Once he thinks of inserting an adaptation of Ruskin's description of a cathedral in Venice, in a letter to his brother. Ruskin's sentence runs: 'Let us consider a little each of these characters in succession, and first (for of the shafts enough has been said already), what is peculiar to this church — its luminousness.' He changes it so as to describe his own flat: 'Let us consider a little each of these characters in succession, and first (for of the absence of ventilation enough has been said already), what is peculiar

to this flat — its obscurity.' This illustrates the unprofitableness of culture for most of those who are near the abyss. He finally changes the sentence to 'My flat is dark as well as stuffy.' Today, in order to afford the money to listen to Beethoven, he will have to go home on foot. But there is always something to distract him in his pursuit. If we do the same we have done with the others, and analyse what Leonard's reaction to the music is like, we will see that he doesn't react at all. He is worried because his umbrella has just been stolen from him. Helen, so shocked with the goblins that she decided to go home before the Brahms, has left inadvertently with Leonard's umbrella. Margaret invites him to go with her to Wickham Place after the concert and fetch it, and then realizes he is suspicious . He is afraid they have prepared a trap for him. Margaret's first reaction is to resent him. She is used to trusting people. Sometimes she is disappointed, but this is part of the game. She remembers her father used to refer to these eventual ill-successes as a 'rent to the ideal, to his own faith in human nature.'

> He would trust strangers. If they fooled him he would say,'It's better to be fooled than to be suspicious ! — that the confidence trick is the work of man, but the want-of-confidence trick is the work of the devil!' (p. 41)

Then, looking at his anxious eyes, seeing that he is at one time afraid of her and trying to hide this fear in case she is an honest woman, she understands him. Margaret then realizes that 'to trust people is a luxury in which only the wealthy can indulge, the poor cannot afford it.' (p. 35)

She talks to him, in order to make him feel easier, while they walk home. As soon as he takes the umbrella he runs away, still scared. But Margaret's talk has impressed him: the way she pronounces foreign names correctly and links independ-

ent ideas into a single sentence. He wishes he could speak thus.

> He would have died sooner than confess any inferiority to the rich. This may be splendid of him. But he was inferior to most rich people, there is not the least doubt of it. He was not as courteous as the average rich man, nor as intelligent, nor as healthy nor as lovable. His mind and his body had been alike underfed.

This meeting with Leonard makes Margaret realize that if she is able to think and talk so brightly, if she has reached the inner life of personal relations, it is because she stands upon a firm island of money which separates her from the abyss. That is why she dare not deny the outer life and its values of the second rank which are, simultaneously, the basic ones.

At this point we have already met all the characters which are going to interest us in the novel. We have Helen, fighting passionately to assert that the only life which counts is the inner life of personal relations, and Margaret, who is looking for a balance. We have also the Wilcoxes, who only care for the outer life, Leonard and Jacky on the edge of the abyss, and Mrs. Wilcox symbolizing Nature and Howards End. By another of these 'extreme coincidences' the Wilcoxes move to an apartment in London which stands opposite to Wickham Place. Helen is abroad, in Germany. Paul in Nigeria, and the Wilcoxes are away in an excursion. Only Margaret and Mrs. Wilcox are left in the city, and they become friends.

Margaret, who is used to having her house full of friends, invites Mrs. Wilcox to a luncheon party at Wickham Place, which is a failure. Margaret's friends (among them is Miss Adela Quested, whom we will meet in A Passage to India) start discussing arts and politics, while her new friend keeps

quiet, smiling politely. Mrs. Wilcox is a simple woman, and we wonder whether her life can be called a success. She doesn't seem to have any opinions about things; as a wife she is submissive and thinks that 'it is wiser to leave action and discussion to men.' Once she has told her husband she felt the need of a more 'inward light', and never talked about it again. Mr. Wilcox assumed she has found it somewhere. But, if we think of her children, as afraid of emotion as their father is, we may presume she has not found it. She doesn't look a successful mother, either. Still, in spite of all this, Mrs. Wilcox conveys to Margaret the idea of wisdom and greatness. This woman, at all events, has reached proportion. She has established links with her family, and also with the earth. She has connected. She doesn't think skillfully, she is not an intellectual, neither a businesswoman. Still, she IS. She seems to know how to love and how to feel. She has sensitivity and intuition. Like Nature, she seems to accept and understand everything. The one thing she really needs is Howards End. She belongs to the place, and to the wych-elm which symbolizes the past. And if there is a look of sadness about her, it is because she knows that this past is soon to end.

This great love she has for her home is what makes Mrs. Wilcox so shocked when Margaret tells her that Wickham Place is soon going to be put down so that a new group of buildings can be raised. Her drastic comment surprises Margaret, 'To be parted from your house, your father's house — it oughtn't to be allowed. It is worse than dying.' (p. 79) They have this talk while they are shopping for Christmas, and Mrs. Wilcox expresses her desire to give Meg a present. Probably it is the knowledge that the Schlegels are soon going to lose their home which first makes her consider giving them Howards End. Mrs. Wilcox is sick, and knows she is going to die. Her husband, by now, is a very rich man, and wouldn't miss the farm so much. She

feels that Margaret would be able to love and understand the place. With her, somehow, the Howards, Nature and the past would remain alive.

When Mrs. Wilcox dies she leaves a note to her husband asking him to give the place to Margaret. As it is natural, he doesn't even think about it. It has been settled a long time ago that the house was to belong to Charles, their elder son. Mr. Wilcox attributes the note to his wife's illness.

> To them Howards End was a house : they could not know that to her it had been a spirit, for which she sought a spiritual heir. (...)Is it credible that the possessions of the spirit can be bequeathed at all? Has the soul offspring? A wych-elm tree, a vine, a wisp of hay with dew on it — can passion for such things be transmitted where there is no bond of blood? (p. 94)

Mrs. Wilcox's death is suggestive of hope. After she is buried the elms are mysteriously pollarded, so as to allow the new leaves to sprout. 'Perhaps the last word would be hope — hope even on this side of the grave.' (p. 98) Like Mrs. Moore, Mrs. Wilcox is now a spirit who will help Howards End to live again. Meanwhile, though, the house is to be left abandoned. The time has come when England belongs to the Wilcoxes. The businessman never tells Margaret of his late wife's will, and sends her, as a compensation, Mrs. Wilcox's vinaigrette.

Two years elapse, and the time is approaching for Schlegels to leave Wickham Place. Wilcoxes and Schlegels — though they meet very seldom — are on friendly terms. Helen still dislikes them, but they don't seem to realize that. Margaret, who has always found Mr. Wilcox a friendly and attractive man, still believes that some tributes ought to be paid to the man of action. Margaret's is a strange position. She likes activity, likes to feel

that people are working. But she doesn't like the results of this activity so much. She doesn't like to see that her home is going to be destroyed. Though she likes the comfort brought by modern life, she doesn't like to see that her city is changing. More than that, people themselves are changing. 'Mr. Wilcox had forgotten his wife, Helen her lover; she herself was probably forgetting. Everyone moving. Is it worth while attempting the past when there is this continual flux even in the hearts of men?' (p. 129)

By this time Leonard Bast — whom they have already forgotten — comes back. He has disappeared for two days and Jacky, finding the Schlegel's card inside a book, comes to see whether her husband is not with them. Next day he goes himself to Wickham Place, in order to apologize. He explains that he has been walking aimlessly all the Saturday night. Still in chase of beauty, he has read Stevenson's Prince Otto and, like Richard does in the end of the book, he decides to go back to the earth. Taking the message literally, and thus mistaking 'the sign-posts for the destination' (114), the grand-son of peasants walks all night in order to see the dawn, and the revelations which it is likely to bring along. But, again, he is distracted by a problem of the 'outer life,' hunger: the cigarettes he has had instead of dinner do not suffice. When the dawn arrived — it was gray — he was so tired he couldn't appreciate it. Margaret and Helen are impressed and moved. They invite the young man to come back and have tea with them. But Leonard has learnt, through previous experience, that if they met again the spell would be broken. 'No,' he answers, 'it is better not to risk a second interview. I shall always look back on this talk with you as one of the finest things in my life.' (p. 115)

That night the two sisters go to a dinner party, followed by a debate where Mr. Leonard Bast is mentioned several times, and then turned into a symbol. The topic of the discourse becomes " How can a rich person help the Basts of the world? " When

dinner is over, while they are walking back home, they meet Mr. Wilcox and tell him about their discussion about Mr. Bast. They ask him to give his contribution on the subject. Mr. Wilcox's ideas are direct and crude. He believes in the survival of the fittest. Being himself strong, and always afraid of emotion, he prefers thinking of the poor as a huge impersonal mass. If Leonard Bast has not reached a better position — Democracy has given him a chance to do that — it is probably because he is not worth it.

Amid all these discussions Leonard has lost his individuality. He becomes the symbol of the poor and of the oppressed. One has the feeling that, if he had met Gino, Stephen or even Mrs. Wilcox, they would have treated him as a man, not as a tool in a big machine or entertainment during a dinner.

During their talk the Schlegel sisters comment upon Bast's job, and mention the Porphyrion. Mr. Wilcox then tells them that this company is going bankrupt, and that it would be better for Bast if he left it and went to a better job. Margaret and Helen decide they are going to talk to Leonard about that.

There comes a time when Margaret and Helen have to decide whether they are going to attempt a closer relation with the Basts or not. Margaret thinks it is better not. She tries hard not to behave like people who use to dangle intimacy and after withdraw it. She never plays at friendship and, somehow, senses she would not be able to achieve a lasting personal relation with Bast. She agrees with him when he says that a closer contact would spoil things. It is easier, for Margaret, to attempt a connection with the Wilcoxes than with the Basts, not only because Wilcoxes belong to the group who stands upon islands of money, but because she likes Mr. Wilcox. She admires Leonard Bast rationally, and wants to help him. But her attraction to Mr. Wilcox comes from her heart,[8] not from her mind, and this makes the connection easier.

'He and she were advancing out of their respective families towards a more intimate acquaintance.'(p. 147) And, indeed, within a few weeks, Mr. Wilcox proposes marriage to her.

This union between a Wilcox and a Schlegel — the business man and the intellectual — can be approached on different levels. The first one is the symbolic, where the almost ideal intellectual — daughter to the countryman of Hegel and Kant — attempts the most daring of all connections. Margaret, who sees life as a whole, will join Henry Wilcox, who sees it steadily. We know that the ideal of completeness in Forster includes seeing the world 'steadily and as a whole.' She knows how to think; Henry knows how to act. Her values are the values of the inner life; he praises the qualities of the outer life. She tends to the circles of the 'celestial and visionary'; he, to the squares of the 'mundane'. Together they may achieve completeness. Like Rickie — though better equipped — she will become an experiment: 'she had outgrown stimulants, and was passing from words to things.' (p. 244)

Then, apart from the symbolical, we have the personal grounds. Margaret is attracted to him and (though the author fails to make this clear, and keeps talking of 'comradeship' and 'affection')it looks as if she actually loves him. We never enter Mr. Wilcox's mind, but he probably loves her too, though he would never talk about this, since he associates emotion with weakness and morbidity. When he asks her to marry him it is in a moderate and businesslike way. Margaret answers in the same tone, in order not to force him against his own nature. So as not to break the defences he has built against the world she, 'who could have clothed the struggle with beauty, held back, and hesitated with him.' (p. 155)

Though she respects Mr. Wilcox's awkwardness, she hopes

that one day he will succeed in accepting his own emotions, thus building the 'rainbow bridge that should connect the prose in us with passion.' (p. 174)

> How wide the gulf between Henry as he was and Henry as Helen thought he ought to be! And she herself — hovering as usual between the two, now accepting men as they are, now yearning with her sister for Truth. Love and Truth — their warfare seems eternal. Perhaps the whole visible world rests on it, and if they were one, life itself, like the spirits when Prospero was reconciled to his brother, might vanish into air, into thin air. (p. 215)

Lastly, we come to the problems and inconsistencies in this marriage. Both Forster and Margaret convey the idea that the first Mrs. Wilcox has achieved a connection. And, in many ways, she has. She has lived with her husband for several years, in spite of their differences, and this is a connection. But we readers know she didn't seem to be a happy person. We have the impression that she and her husband have never really known one another. After her death, Mr. Wilcox has not even realized that Howards End was important to her. Now we have the same problem with Mr. Wilcox and Margaret. Though they seem to like one another, they do not succeed in establishing a complete personal relation. They don't like one another for what they are, but somehow 'in spite of what they are.' Henry treats Margaret as a silly girl, as he is used to treating women. He 'allows' her to play at personal relations, and to keep her queer friends, as far as these don't interfere with her duties and with important matters. Margaret, on the other hand, treats him like a spoilt child. She does all he wants because what he considers 'important matters' are to her nothing but 'virtues of the second rank', and she would not trouble to bother about them. If they never quarrel it is not because they have establish-

ed a successful personal relation: they never quarrel because they never touch. And they would have passed through life like this, joined by their emotions,[9] but separate as human beings, if nothing intervened in the calmness of this routine. But something intervenes, and again it is Leonard Bast.

Following Mr. Wilcox's advice, Bast has left the Porphyrion and gone to a bank, where his salary was not as good as the one he used to get at the insurance company. One month later the bank reduced its staff, and the last to arrive were the first to be fired. Helen has found them starving and on the brink of losing their basement, because the rent was late. Meanwhile the Porphyrion has recovered, and is now as strong as anything.

Evie, Mr. Wilcox's daughter, gets married, and Helen refuses to go to the party. But then, late at night, when most of the guests have already left, and the ones who were to stay for the night are going to bed, Helen arrives, in her old dress, and with the Basts. She is furious, and wants Mr. Wilcox to find Leonard another job. She considers that he, Margaret and herself are responsible for what has happened to the young clerk. She wants something to be done in order to rescue Bast from the abyss, though she knows Mr. Wilcox will never acknowledge he has taken part in Bast's decay. He prefers to think in general terms, and to see Leonard as one of those who have proved unable to survive. But Helen is a humanist, to whom he is more than a particle in this huge gray mass known as 'the poor'. Here the difference: for Henry there have been poor always, and people should not try to fight against this fact. For Helen, though, Leonard is extremely great and important, because he is a human being. She has found him sick and hungry, while strangers were taking his Stevensons and Hegels from his rented shelf.She believes it is her duty to find him another job, and also to make Henry see the truth, in case he has not real-

ized it yet.

Margaret is taken aback. First of all, she is angry with her sister for arriving so dramatically and almost making a scandal in a party she has refused to go to. Secondly, she doesn't agree with Helen's way of seeing things in schematic terms. She doesn't like the way her sister speaks of mankind, as if people were 'puppets.' She has settled that Bast is a victim, and cast Henry in the role of the villain. She agrees that something must be done to help the Basts and that, wanting to help, they have caused him to fall into the abyss. But she is not willing to place all the blame on one single individual's shoulders. If Henry is wrong in having a general view of society, where no one is to be blamed for what is wrong, Helen is also unjust when she blames one person for all the crimes that do occur in society. "The businessman who assumes that his life is everything and the mystic, who asserts that it is nothing, fail, on this side and on that, to hit the truth.' (p. 182) Both Henry and Helen see stereotypes instead of people. Henry talks of the 'poor'; Helen of the 'Basts of the World.' Neither sees Leonard, the person.

Here we have come back to the difference between the sisters. Helen sees heroes and shipwrecks. She has villains and victims. She has fallen in love with Paul because he symbolized a family, a way of life, never a person. Now she sees Bast as a social cause. Margaret, who listens to music for the sake of its sounds, and never allows herself to indulge in a stereotyped vision of things, sees 'Leonard', a man who is in trouble, and has to be helped, and 'Henry', a man who has given advice which happened to be inaccurate. And here we have to settle who is right, Margaret or Helen. Through the tone of the novel, Margaret is the one who is supported by the author. It is implied that people ought to be seen as persons, and not as generalizations.

But here we have another paradox, because, structurally, they have actually been created as symbols. Jackie has not become a prostitute because of society, but because of Mr. Wilcox, and this is symbolic; Leonard has not lost his job through society, but through Mr. Wilcox, and this is also symbolic. It is not by chance that Mr. Wilcox's elder son gets married at the exact day when Leonard becomes of age (which leads him to marry Jackie). They are created to be symbols, and one cannot blame Helen if she sees them as such.

Anyway, let's come back to Margaret. She knows something must be done so as to help the Basts. She also knows that Henry is not able to connect. He has not built the rainbow bridge which would link Henry-as-He-Is and Henry-as-He-Ought-To-Be. Here she is, again, between Love and Truth. Ariel has not turned into thin air, and still the Basts have to be helped. The only thing Margaret can do is to behave like a diplomat: she goes to Henry and asks him to find a job for one of her protegés, to which he gladly agrees. Though she is a little ashamed of her methods, everything seems to be settled, up to the moment when, going to the garden, Mr. Wilcox sees Jackie there. Jackie recognizes him and Margaret realizes they had been lovers.

Margaret's first reaction when she knows about Jackie and Henry is to think of Mrs. Wilcox. Next she thinks of Henry, whose 'inner life had long lain open to her — his intellectual confusion, his obtuseness to personal influence, his strong but furtive passions. Should she refuse him because his outer life corresponded?' She thinks not, and hopes that, one day, her love will help him become a better person. Of one thing, though, she is certain: it's no use trying to help the Basts, anyway, because now Henry will not give him the job. Again she has to choose between Leonard and Henry, and, again, following her heart, she

choses Henry. She goes to him and patiently listens to his explanations: he has been abroad, and lonely, had met the girl and then, when everything was over, had suffered 'tortures of remorse.' Margaret pretends she believes him, but all the time she knows the truth. He has never felt remorse, and has never thought of Mrs. Wilcox. 'Unchastity and infidelity were as confused to him as the middle ages, his only moral teacher. Ruth (poor old Ruth) did not enter into his calculations at all, for poor old Ruth had never found him out.' (p. 241) Margaret also knows that he is not aware he is responsible for what has happened to Jackie. The one thing she knows is that the time has not come when he could connect by himself.

She writes a letter to the Basts saying there is no vacancy for him, and another to Helen telling her that 'the Basts are no good' and asking her to give up helping them. We understand Margaret and her reasons, but, at the same time, we can't help feeling disappointed. She is trying to pass beyond her condition of intellectual to reach that state we find in Nature, were emotion counts more than everything else. Between Love and Truth, she has chosen Love. Still, we feel that, as an intellectual and a humanist, she has gone against her commitment to Truth. Leonard has fallen in the abyss, and we cannot forget he has walked for a whole night in order to reach Beauty, Culture and Nature.

That night Helen makes love to Bast. Not to Leonard, a man, but to Bast, a cause.

Almost one year later Howards End, the farm, starts playing an important role in the story. By then Wickham Place has been put down, and its furniture is stored in Howards End. Tibby is at Oxford and Helen is in Germany. After the night she has spent with Bast she has left for Germany and never returned.

It is then that something quite strange happens. An old woman, called Miss Avery, is in charge of Howards End. People seem to think she is crazy. When the Schlegel's furniture arrives, Miss Avery distributes it through the house so as to make it look like an inhabited place again. Charles, who is supposed to inherit Howards End after his father's death, gets angry. He is suspicious of the Schlegels, and afraid they want to take the house from him. Therefore Margaret decides to go to Howards End and ask the old woman to undo her decoration. But Miss Avery doesn't look a senile old woman at all. She is the girl Tom Howard has loved in the past, and who refused his proposal of marriage. Now she represents the spirit of the place. Her task is to convey the omen that Howards End is going to be inhabited again. Miss Avery identifies Margaret, as she enters the house, with Mrs. Wilcox, which is also symbolic.

Margaret likes what she sees as she enters the house. Wickham Place seems alive again. Her books are in the right order on the shelves, and among them Miss Avery has placed her father's sword. The quality of 'femininity' she has always associated with her home fits well with the 'masculinity' of Howards End. Together, both houses seem to be alive again, the house of Culture inside the house of Nature.

Some days later she gets a letter from Helen, asking for some of her books. She is in England again, but doesn't want to meet Magaret. Margaret is worried, and Tibby suggests that maybe Helen is mad. Henry — the man of action — conceives a plan: Margaret is to tell Helen that the books are in Howards End, and that the house is abandoned. In the meanwhile, he would call a doctor and they would catch her as she entered the house. If she were really mad, they would help her. If she were not, they would ask her why she doesn't want to see them. Margaret doesn't think this quite fair to Helen, but she doesn't know what else

to do. Charles Wilcox is also against the plan. 'You may be taking on a bigger business than you reckon,' he tells his father.

As they are approaching Howards End Margaret has a glimpse of Helen, and realizes her sister is pregnant. Managing to get rid of Henry and of the doctor, she walks to the house. She is not thinking of judging her sister. She is more worried about her own behavior, trying to trap Helen thus. 'The want of confidence is the trick of the devil.'

First they are awkward, both afraid of having lost touch. Then, slowly, their intimacy seems to return. That's when a small boy appears, with a tin can full with milk. We have learnt, in Where Angels Fear to Tread, that milk is the element which stands for brotherhood and for the sealing of a personal relation. 'They looked at each other's eyes. The inner life had paid.' (p. 278) The small boy, whose name is Tom —it's the same name as Tom's, the last of the Howards — , says he will return in the morning to fetch the can. Margaret explains that they are not staying for the night, but the boy ignores the remark and leaves. This raises in Helen the desire to spend the night there, with Margaret. The following morning she is returning to Germany, and it would be good to stay with her sister, for one night, in this blend of Howards End and Wickham Place. It would be a beautiful way of saying good-bye to the past.

Margaret knows that this idea of her sister's is going to lead her into further trouble, but since it seems to be important to Helen, she goes to ask Henry's permission. But he does not seem willing to have the house where he has lived with his wife and with his family desecrated by a woman who has gone wrong.

Once, when having to make a choice between Love and Truth, Margaret has chosen love. Now she is again faced with

a choice, but this time it is a more difficult one, because now she has to choose between two sorts of love. Her relation with Helen is a triumph of personal relation, and she cannot abandon her sister. For more than one year she has been trying to make Henry connect, never succeeding. Now she decides she will provide him with all the connections, even if it breaks him: he has had a mistress; her sister has had a lover. He has betrayed his wife; Helen has betrayed no one but herself. He has ruined a young woman, and cast her to ruin other men. He is to remain a respectable member of society, whereas Helen is to be banished. Telling him this she leaves to Howards End, certain that he will find a way of twisting things so as to avoid the truth. Margaret acknowledges she has failed, and settles she is leaving with Helen for Germany the following day.

Margaret has behaved according to Trilling's idea of the actual intellectual, yet she fails. She has tried by all means to turn the man she loves into a complete person, yet she fails. Mr. Failing has built a beautiful theory, but it looks as if it is a dream which cannot be fulfilled. At least not in Forster.

But the novel doesn't end here: we are still left with the question of who shall inherit England. Were things to be left as they are, it would belong to the Wilcoxes. But Forster, like Beethoven in his symphony, stretches out his hand and, together with the spirits of Nature, changes the course of action. What we have, then, is tragedy:[10] as soon as Charles knows that Helen is going to spend the night at Howards End, he thinks she is going to meet Leonard there, and goes to save the honor of the farm. In the meanwhile Leonard, filled with remorse for not having 'kept perfection perfect' (220), unable to sleep at night, having terrible nightmares with the moon[11] and feeling as if a sword has entered his heart (this is the omen), decides to talk to Margaret. He is not willing to be forgiven, but to take his punishment. When he gets to the Wilcox's

home he is told by the maid that Margaret is at Howards End, so he goes to the farmhouse.

Leonard does not have the time to realize what is happening. Someone takes him by the collar and 'a stick, very bright, descended. It hurt him, not where it descended, but in the heart. Books fell over him in a shower. Nothing had sense.' (p. 302)

Charles has hit him with the blade of Mr. Schlegel's sword. It has not been his intention to hurt Leonard seriously. People like the Wilcoxes never intend to hurt the Basts of the world seriously, but they do; Leonard dies of a heart disease, between the sword of the intellectual and the merciless hand of the businessman. As he dies, he collides with the shelf, and is covered with the books, which represent the culture he has striven to achieve.

Charles is sent to prison for manslaughter. As for Mr. Wilcox, one cannot say that he is saved. The best word for him is 'broken.' He gives up business and motorcars, but seems to have given up life as well. Margaret takes him and Helen to Howards End.

Horror is not the end. Mr. Wilcox makes an agreement with his children, settling that Howards End is to belong to Margaret. Since she doesn't want to have children, after her death it is to be handled to Helen's child. Thus, symbolically, Leonard Bast will have come back to the Earth, as he tried that Saturday night when he waited for the dawn. His child's spine will be straight, and his chest will be broad. His eyes will not be mournful.

The big city is creeping towards the farm. The red dust can already be seen beyond the hills. Still, at least for one more generation, the future of the farm is assured. Somewhere in Wiltshire Stephen Wonham is sleeping under the stars, like the eternal shepherd, representing Man's hope to return to Nature.

The idea conveyed by Howards End is the same idea we have in The Longest Journey: both novels carry the hope that, one day, Man may return to Nature, [12]

> Of Pan and the elemental forces, the public has heard a little too much — they seem Victorian, while London is Georgian — and those who are for the earth with sincerity may wait long ere the pendulum swings back to her again. (p. 102)

In the Italian Novels people are controlled by the forces of Nature, and in The Longest Journey Stephen manages to go back to it. In Howards End, too, the house which symbolizes Nature is inhabited again. But the question about who shall inherit England has not been solved yet. Is it to belong to the Londoner or to the Wiltshire lad? To peasants, like the Howards and the Basts, or to industrials like the Wilcoxes? For the present it belongs to the Schlegels, but we know that the goblins may return.

Margaret's attempt to connect has not come out as a great success, after all. People who see life steadily, and people to see it as a whole, somehow, are not able to get along well together. This leads us back to the realization that only through characters who represent Nature a connection can be established. Gino, Stephen and Mrs. Wilcox are the elements which can help people to achieve a personal relation. Without them Man will be deprived of his humanity. He will be no more an end, but a tool in the big machinery, and condemned to lead the life Leonard Bast has led.

We are aware, at the closing of the novel , that the goblins may return. We have lost that characteristic of order and stability we were used to in the Italian novels. As Dr. Crews would have put it, Forster is growing more and more aware of the perils of his humanism.

NOTES ON CHAPTER FIVE

1. Trilling: p. 107.

2. Sir Walter Savage Landor was known as a lonesome man who loved to draw self-portraits. He once declared that 'he strove for none for none was worth his strife.' Dickens used him as a model for Boythorn, in Bleak House.

3. Page references are taken from the Penguin edition of Howards End (Middlesex, 1973).

4. Here hay-fever suggests that characters cannot be associated with Nature, meanning also that they cannot establish a true personal relation.

5. This reference to President Roosevelt foreshadows World War One, which can already be felt in 1910, when Howards End was published. We are not going to deal with the historical aspect of the novel, since our goal is to trace some comments about the symbolism related to the house and about the theme of the connection. Nevertheless, there are several instances when the latent hostility among nations is mentioned, mainly between Germany and England. Schlegels, neither 'English to the back-bone' nor 'German of the dreadful sort' stand somewhere in the middle of the quarrel. When Margaret was still a child this theoretical war already existed. One day her father received a German nephew at Wickham Place (their home),

> The haughty nephew would be at Wickham Place one day, bringing with him an even haughtier wife, both convinced that Germany was appointed by God to govern the world. Aunt Juley would come the next day, convinced that Great Britain had been appointed to the same post by the same authority. (Margaret's conclusion is that) either God does not know His own mind about England and Germany, or else these do not know the mind of God. (p. 30)

6. Nietzsche: Beyond Good and Evil.

7. Porphyrion is one of the Titans. His name, in Greek, means "dark-blue moon-man." Porphyrion can only be destroyed by a god

who possesses the "ephialtion", a magic herb that kills nightmares. Near the end of the novel Leonard Bast is going to have a nightmare and, as he wakes up, will be afraid of the moon.

8. Here we have to stop and talk about another unexcusable flaw, concerning Margaret's relationship with Henry Wilcox. Again, the cause of the problem is the fact that we have two Forsters in the novel, Forster-the-Mind, who talks through Margaret, and who seeks proportion, agrees with her ways of seeing life, and admires her because she is able to love people in spite of their weaknesses. And it is Forster-the-Mind who tells us that she loves Henry. Forster-the-Heart, though, who sides with Helen, is sure there is nothing in Henry which is worth of love, and makes a point of showing this to the reader. As a result we have the flaw, when the narrator tells us of Margaret's love, but we cannot find any hint of warmth in the whole book. Again we come to a dead-end. Lionel Trilling tries to solve things stating that Margaret is merely sexually attracted to Wilcox because she is more than thirty years old, and on the verge of becoming a spinster. But this is too weak an excuse. We have a gallery of spinsters in Forster, and it is easy to see that Margaret is not included in this category. In A Room with a View we have the Miss Allans, two sweet old ladies who are always kind and nice; we have also Charlotte Bartlett, who is bitter and ill-tempered; or Eleanor Lavish, who hides the dislike she feels for herself under a false eccentricity. All these women are old maids because they share the prejudice society has against unmarried people. I don't think this is the case with Margaret, because an 'old maid' is a stereotype, and she does not believe in stereotypes. The best solution, therefore, is to acknowledge there is a flaw in the novel, and then settle the way we are to go on with the reading of the book. We are free either to side with Forster-the-Heart, who sees Wilcox as a repulsive character, or to take Margaret's word that she likes Henry. Either position is valid: one is not obliged to 'infer' something which is not in the text (more than that, building upon the text is even going against a critical reading), and we don't have any 'proof' that she actually likes Mr. Wilcox. Anyway, I have decided to take the second road: I propose that we pay a coin so as to go on with the reading, and see where things are leading to. The coin we are going to pay is our good will: after acknowledging there is a problem in the building of the novel, let's just 'swallow' the flaw. We know that Forster is weak in his portrayal of heterosexual love. He cannot 'connect' sex and tenderness. Besides, he is going beyond his own limitations as he proposes a connection with an undeveloped-hearted man. It is to problems such as this we were referring to in the introduction, when we stated

the scope of the novel grew so wide that not even the author was able to control things. From now on we will pay this coin to Forster, and read — not what he says, but 'what he would have liked to say if he were able to.' This means we are to side with Forster-the-Mind, and trust Margaret, in spite of Forster-the-Heart. We have a sound reason for behaving thus: in case we do not accept Margaret's love for Henry we have either to stop reading the novel, because we have come to a dead-end, or to blame Margaret, the character, saying that she is taking sexual attraction for love. This would be unfair to Margaret. We can feel the physical attraction in the novel, but cannot feel love, and we know it is not the character who should be blamed, but the author. It is only after jumping over this gap in the literal reading of the novel that we can go on with our attempt, on a symbolic and allegoric level, to connect the intellectual with the businessman.

9. Here we have again the problem of the disjunction Mind/Body. Margaret and Henry cannot establish a personal relation because he does not possess a developed heart. Margaret's goal is to help him develop his emotions so as to realize the complexity of life and understand the value of a single human being. Therefore, they would be together not only because they are attracted to one another, but also because they can respect one another as human beings. Theirs would be a union of Minds and Bodies or, as Margaret puts it, we would have the connection of the 'beast' and the 'monk',

> 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. (...) She would only point out the salvation that was latent in his own soul, and in the soul of every man. Only connect! (...) Only connect and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation that is life to either, will die. (p. 174)

10. Critics use to say that Forster owes a lot to several other authors. They often refer to Jane Austen, Fielding and Henry James, but no one talks of Shakespeare. His novels are crowded with quotations, misquotations and puns belonging to Shakespeare. More than that, the tone of his sentences as the novels approach their climax, or the symbolic moments of revelation, makes us think of that author. Forster's elves make us think of Puck,

Ansell's speech reminds us of Anthony's speech. At the end of Where Angels Fear to Tread, as he talks about the several interests we have 'round the Italian baby who died in the mud', Forster uses the sad tone Escalus uses at the closing of Romeo and Juliet. We use to associate Philip Herriton with Hamlet because both tend to procrastinate. Another thing both authors have in common is the habit of touching, in one single work, the extremes of tragedy and the comic. The series of coincidences which lead to Leonard's death are both symbolic and dramatic, and again remind us of Shakespeare.

11. The moon, here, reminds us of the goddess in the myth of Endymion, and also of the Titan, Porphyrion, who can only be destroyed by those who have the herb that kills nightmares.

12. Nature in Forster is a concept which reminds us of Nature in Walt Whitman, that state where people are able to accept their instincts without malice or guilt. In both authors Nature is the media through which a perfect balance can be achieved between the Mind and the Body.

6. CHAPTER SIX: MAURICE

Our next novel, Maurice, will introduce us to a different kind of personal relation: a homosexual love affair. It is a story about homosexualism and about loneliness. Our main character is called Maurice Hall, and we have to take a special care not to treat him badly. We are in danger of being unfair and depriving him of his individuality if we identify him too much with E.M. Forster, his creator. Besides, one is always tempted to take him as a pretext for showing one's precarious cognisance of psyco-analytical theories. In fact, we are so tempted to talk about Maurice as a biographical piece, or as a homosexual treatise, that we forget it ought to be seen as a novel, too. Maybe the best way of avoiding all these problems would be to divide this essay into three parts: we could start with some paragraphs on Forster and the writing of the novel. Then we would turn to Freud and Breuer and discuss some points about homosexualism which are going to help us understand Maurice Hall better. And thus, next, we could return to our track, the analysis of personal relations.

I

When Forster was sixteen years old Oscar Wilde has been sent to prison for two years because it had been discovered that he was a homosexual. Maurice was written between 1913 and 1914, when homosexuality was still punished with prison in England. In 1928, fourteen years later, the world was not ready for Lady Chatterley's Lover, therefore we cannot blame Forster if he decided not to publish his work, as he says, "until my death and England's."[1]

The novel is largely based on his relation to Hugh O. Meredith, his friend at Cambridge. There is much of Meredith in characters such as George Emerson, Stuart Ansell and Clive Durham. While writing Maurice, Forster showed the novel to several friends. Hugh, for personal reasons, did not like it, and this hurt the author a lot. All his other friends thought it an excellent work, with the exception of T.E. Lawrence, who kindly refused to read it ,

> I wanted to read your long novel, and was afraid to. It was like your last keep, I felt: and if I read it I had you: and supposing I didn't like it? I'm so funnily made up, sexually. At present you are in all respects right in my eyes: that's because you reserve so very much as I do. If you knew all about me (perhaps you do: your subtlety is very great: shall I put it "If I knew that you knew?" ...) you'd think very little of me. And I wouldn't like to feel that I was on the way of being able to know about you.'[2]

The novel was revised by the author in 1960, when a final chapter was added. Forster was then 81 years old, and could very well have it published. All those who could be hurt by Maurice were already dead. But then he had another problem: the world had changed so much that the novel looked dated. After his death, the manuscript was found in a drawer, with a note: PUBLISHABLE — BUT WORTH IT?

II

Let's turn now to homosexuality and to the ideas Freud and Breuer have of it. This will help us understand some of the dreams and nightmares Maurice has, and also the reasons why he behaves as he does.

Since he is a child, Maurice has frequent fits of crying and often looses control over himself. He is hysteric. According to Breuer, hysteria has its origin in some traumatic experience which occurs in early childhood. Basically, it consists of the repression of a sexual instinct, causing tension, which is, sporadically, apparent through hysterical crisis. Maurice has a fit of crying in the beginning of the novel, when he feels he is alone, and several other crises through the novel. He thinks of commiting suicide twice. According to the Freudian theory of neurosis,hysteria is a symptom of a tendency to repress one's sexual instincts. If this repression occurs people enter a neurotic stage. The other extreme is perversion, where people find a way of releasing their instincts through an attraction to people who belong to their own sex.

Before he realizes he is a homosexual, Maurice is afraid of the dark and has frequent nightmares, which pass as he starts his relation with Clive. This relation, being platonic, allows them to release their sexual instincts without experiencing the feeling of guilt. Their relation can be seen, thus, as a kind of catarsis. It helps Clive to pass, later on, to a heterosexual stage, superating his aversion to women. Maurice, though, remains a homosexual. And, after they separate, he is left alone and starts a slow drift towards pruriency, where he is no longer able to control his sexual impulses. This happens while he tries to become a heterosexual, like Clive, and it is only when he finds Scudder, and decides to accept his own homosexuality, that he feels able to control his sexual impulses, and finds his own sort of balance.

This is the note conveyed by Forster in the novel.

III

In the beginning of this novel Maurice reminds us a lot

of Rickie Elliot. In fact, several times we are lead to think about Rickie's and Ansell's relation, in The Longest Journey. Maurice's father has died recently, and he is left to his mother, whom he loves, and two sisters, whom he ignores. He is as lonesome as Rickie, and his only friend is George, the garden boy. Maurice has been raised by 'undeveloped-hearted' people, and is on the way of becoming one of them. He has just finished elementary school, and both his mother and his teachers are proud of him. One day he is to become a man like his father, one of the pillars of undeveloped-hearted society. He has studied in this very school. Then he has been sent to Sunnington. Later on he married, begot three children and died.

Mr. Ducie, one of his teachers, takes Maurice for a walk along the beach. He wants to tell the boy about the mysteries of sex. Like Mr. Pembroke, he possesses a warm heart and believes he is helping the child. He traces some diagrams in the sand and talks about several things Maurice doesn't understand at all. Now and then he stops to make it clear that he is talking about a thing which is pure, simple and beautiful. When the lesson is over, they go on with their walk. Suddenly, Mr. Ducie remembers he has not erased 'those infernal diagrams.' (p. 20) 'Liar,' thinks the boy, 'he has told me nothing.' (p. 20)

When he gets home for the vacations he is told that the garden boy has been dismissed. Rationally, he doesn't care about it: he is a gentleman, and George was nothing but a servant. And when, some time later on, he starts crying without knowing why, he cannot realize it is because he has lost his friend.

There is a party, for him, that night. Dr. Barry, a sort of spiritual guide and ultimate authority to the family, is present. His mother is proud of him, he is going to follow the steps of his father. She calls him 'brave.' Maurice knows he is not brave.

He is afraid, at night, when he goes to bed. But this is a secret he has to keep from the world, so that people can admire him and call him 'brave.' It is not of the dark he is afraid. It is of his shadow, when it is projected on the looking-glass. The street lamp casts Maurice's shadow on the ceiling, and this shadow is reflected on the glass, making him afraid of the creature which is arrested in the other side of the mirror. Tonight, though, his sorrow is even greater than the fright, and he falls asleep whispering the name of his friend.

Maurice passes through public-school quite like his father, without attracting anyone's attention. It is then that he first realizes he feels a sort of 'adoration' for other boys. He starts having obscene thoughts, especially when receiving the Holy Communion. He passes through a spiritual crisis which reminds us of Stephen Dedalus in Portrait of the Artist as a Young Man. But Maurice is neither as intelligent nor as articulate as Stephen, and his problems, obviously, are more difficult to solve . He is not used to thinking, and his one worry is to hide this adoration from the world like he hides his fear. His preoccupation is that people do not realize he is not brave.

Two dreams mark his passage through public-school. In the first, he is playing foot-ball with someone he resents. With an effort, this person can be turned into George, running naked in the sun. But he cannot enjoy the presence of his friend because he is afraid that the other man may return, bringing the feeling of shame and guilt. He doesn't associate this creature with the man arrested in the mirror because he refuses to think about the problem. Maurice is "asleep in the Valley of the Shadow, far beneath the peaks of either range." (p. 27)

The second dream is a good one. He dreams of a face he can scarcely see, and of a voice that says, 'That is your friend.'

Then, suddenly, the world seems filled with beauty and tenderness.

For a lonesome boy who possesses a fertile imagination, this invisible friend becomes an important person. 'He was as certain that he hadn't a friend as that he had one.' (p. 26) For a while he tries to believe that his friend is Christ, but he knows it isn't. He is a man, whose face he is unable to recognize.

After he graduates from Sunnington — and now unlike his father, but with the approval of Dr. Barry — Maurice goes to Cambridge. A typical fruit of public-school, his first thought is to protect himself against the enemies one is sure to find in life. He spends his spare time planning how to destroy those who want to hurt him. But soon he realizes that these young men are so busy with their own affairs that they don't care about him at all. Slowly, he begins to awaken from his long sleep in the Valley of the Shadow. For the first time in his life he realizes that people are 'alive'.

> As soon as he thought about other people as real, Maurice became modest and conscious of sin: in all creation there could be no one as vile as himself. (...) God, being altogether too large an order, did not worry him: he could not conceive of any censure being more terrific than, say, Joey Fetherstonehaugh's, who kept in the room below, or of any Hell as bitter as Coventry. (p. 32)

During his first year he keeps to his old classmates from Sunnington, though he doesn't agree with them as much as he did before. He doesn't like the way they mistrust other people.

Once he and one of these friends, Chapham, are invited to a dinner at the Dean's. There they meet a young man called Risley, who is quite bizarre. Risley is a B.A. from Trinity, relative to the Dean. He is affected, talks too much and makes exaggerated gestures. Chapham looks at Maurice so as to invite him to make fun of this queer figure, but somehow he doesn't feel inclined to hurt

other people. He sees that Risley, though quite excentric, is bright in his own way. He has a feeling this queer fish can help him, though he doesn't know how. 'It was all very obscure, for the mountains still obscured Maurice. Risley, surely capering on the summit, might stretch him a helping hand.' (p. 36)

For more than one week he gathers courage and finally goes, in a starry night, to Risley's room at Trinity. He knocks at the door sooner than he has planned, and doesn't know what to do or what to say. When he enters he realizes Risley is not there, only a young man from his own college, called Clive Durham. Clive is looking for the March out of Tchaikovsky's Pathétique[3] to play it at the pianola. He invites Rickie to go to Fetherstonehaugh with him, where Maurice is first introduced to classical music.

Maurice and Durham[4] soon become friends. It is Clive, after all, who stretches him a helping hand. For the first time he has a real friend. Nevertheless, still a member of public-school at heart, he keeps studying Durham, trying to find his faults so as to have his weapons, in case the young man wants to hurt him. He is afraid because his new friend looks so intelligent. When talking with other classmates he shows a sharp vision of things; no matter what the subject they're dealing with is, he is able to put the falsities aside and to accept the rest. What hope is there for him, who is falsity all over? He cannot afford losing his friend, and it is with horror that he thinks of the possibility that Clive realizes he is a homosexual. Clive's highest goal in life is to be authentic. He has given up Christianity lately, and this shocks Maurice, who tries to bring him back to religion. Actually, Maurice has never cared about the subject, and his real problem is quite another: he has been told that Clive is all right as far as people interest him, but that, as soon as he gets bored, he changes his friends. Afraid that his friend may be tired of him, Maurice tries to pretend he is a clever

person. Therefore, he picks up a respectable word, the 'Trinity', and starts defending it. Clive makes fun of his friend's obtuseness, and, as far as he seems amused, Maurice is happy.

Clive is playful and tender, and touches him sometimes. In such ocasions he strokes the hair of his friend, and wonders whether Clive feels as he feels. At such moments he is 'as sure that he has a friend as that he hasn't one.'

One day Clive is gloomy and says he wants to talk to him about an important subject. Clive's speech is ambiguous, and Maurice is almost panicking when he realizes that Clive is not talking about homosexuality, but about the Trinity. He is so relieved, he shouts 'Oh, damn the Trinity!' And that's how, with a feeling of thankfulness, he gives up God and Christianity. Clive points to him that his belief has never been sincere, and he recognizes it. Then Clive states that there are people who actually believe, and that these persons are worth his respect. Dante's faith, he says, is sincere. He reads him the closing passage of the Paradise, where three rainbow circles are intersected, and between their junctions is enshadowed a human face. Maurice, thinking of his dream about the friend, asks whether the poem is supposed to be a dream. Clive's retort is 'Dante would have called it an awakening, not a dream.' (p. 49)

A great weight is taken from Maurice's heart during a translation class. They get to an unknown word which Mr. Cornwallis tells them to omit, because it is a reference 'to the unspeakable vice of the Greeks.' (p. 50) Clive is so angry that he says the man ought to lose his fellowship for ignoring such an important feature of Greek civilization because of his own prejudices. Maurice didn't know that this sort of subject could be mentioned, 'and when Durham did so in the middle of the sunlit court a breath of liberty touched him.' (p. 50)

Through his friend Maurice learns a lot about life and about feelings. He learns to trust people and, also, to trust himself. He starts thinking and forming his own opinion about things. He starts becoming a 'real' person. He acquires a developed heart.

During his vacations he tells his mother of his agnosticism, and is rather adolescent in his disappointment when she does not seem to care about it. 'It made him look at society with new eyes. Did society, while professing to be so moral and sensitive, really mind anything?' (p. 52)

By this time Maurice is almost twenty years old, and there is a young girl, called Gladys Olcott, in whom he decides to take an interest. He has become an attractive young man, and she agrees to go for a walk with him. He tries to behave exactly like other young men, but she senses something wrong and rejects him at once. When he returns to Cambridge he feels wretched. And so is Clive, as he arrives and asks Maurice about the girl. Clive puts his head against Maurice's knees, who again feels as certain that he hasn't a friend as that he has one. Maurice sighs and sobs, 'understanding nothing except that man has been created to feel pain and loneliness without help from heaven.' (p. 55) Someone calls from the corridor and they separate.

Maurice is right when he guesses his friend is like himself. That's the reason why people say that Durham is always changing his friends. As soon as he realizes he is attracted to a friend Clive tries to avoid his company. With Maurice, though, things are different. He senses his friend likes him. All through the term he has been watching Maurice, and now he is certain about Maurice's homosexuality. In their next meeting, while Maurice is starting for the theater with half a dozen other young men, Clive whispers that he loves him.

This is exactly what Maurice has been wanting all along, still he is too used to keeping appearances to be responsive. He is taken by surprise, and his first reaction is to say 'Oh, rot!' and to remind Durham that both of them are Englishmen. Clive leaves, and it is then that Maurice realizes what has happened. He goes after his friend, but for several weeks Clive keeps avoiding him. Clive is convinced he has made a mistake, and that Maurice is a normal man. He also feels very guilty. First he has taken Maurice's religion out of him, and now has attempted his purity.

As for Maurice, he has a terrible time. He realizes he has been false all through his life. Through suffering he leaves the Valley of the Shadow and decides to be more honest to himself from now on, to deceive himself less.

> After this crisis Maurice became a man. Hitherto — if human beings can be estimated — he had not been worth anyone's affection, but conventional, petty, treacherous to others because to himself.

We cannot condemn Maurice for being thus, not even for behaving to Clive as he does. His mind and his heart go opposite ways. The part of him which is made of feelings and emotions wants to be happy, wants (like in his dream) to run free and naked in the sun. On the other hand, the moralist in him, that part of him which depends on his mind, considers that 'in all creation there is no one as vile as himself.' Now, rationally, Maurice decides he is not going to be ashamed of his own self.

> Now he had the highest gift to offer — the idealism and the brutality that run through boyhood and joined at last, and twined into love. No one might want such love, but he could not feel ashamed of it, because it was 'he', neither body nor soul, but 'he' working through both.' (60)

Unable to sleep, he goes and sits by the window of Clive's room. Clive, who is asleep, calls his name. Maurice has been called

out of dreams, and now he knows that 'That is your friend.'

They choose to make of their relation a Platonic relation. They decide that their love 'though including the body, should not gratify it,' (p. 132), and this makes us wonder why. Probably it is for the same reason why Rickie feels so embarassed when he hears Stephen and the soldier talking in the tavern. It is very easy to be liberal and unconventional in theory, but as soon as theories are turned into action the moralist in us makes us feel guilty and ashamed. Freud calls it the repressive power of the Superego. Jung calls it the racial and parental consciousness. As long as Maurice and Clive keep their relation on Platonic grounds, this relation can be compared with the second dream, the dream about the voice which says 'That is your friend,' the good dream which conveys the feelings of beauty anf tenderness. If they cross the barrier of sex, though, they will experience the feelings of the first dream, where the man with an unknown face replaces the friend and introduces the idea of sin and punishment. As Mr. Emerson has put it in A Room with A View , 'The Garden of Eden is really yet to come. We shall enter it when we no longer despise our bodies.' Human beings are not ready, yet, to accept human nature as it is; not even those who possess a developed heart and a liberal mind.

In their own (peculiar? heroic? pathetic?) way Clive and Maurice succeed in establishing a personal relation. In their first day together they go for a ride in a side-car. Clive associates it with the personal relation and the sort of union they have achieved,

> Bound in a single motion, they seemed there closer to one another than elsewhere; the machine took on a life of its own, in which they met and realized the unity preached by Plato.[5]

The fact that they have to keep their love as a secret

places them in a peculiar position in society. While they are at Cambridge Maurice doesn't care about this. But, after they graduate, Maurice goes to Clive's home, Penge, every Wednesday night and also during the week-ends. It strikes him as strange that Clive's family seems to like him. They know him and are able to admire his qualities. But he knows that, if they knew all about him, they would not only reject him, but forget his qualities too. '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.' (p. 81)

Clive, though, seems to enjoy this position. He has strong restrictions to his family and to their ways, and keeps saying he doesn't like his mother as a person. He thinks the odd situation serves them right. 'He hated the worldliness that they combined with complete ignorance of the world.' (p. 90)

Both are misogynists. Maurice has two sisters, and one of them is very beautiful. One day he sees her sleeping. A poet or a painter could be easily inspired with the sight. That's the way Maurice sees it, though, 'She lay, the picture of health, in a big leather chair, with her hands dropped in either side and her feet stretched out. Her bosom rose and fell, her heavy black hair served as a cushion to her face, and between her lips he saw teeth and a scarlet tongue.' (p. 98) As for Clive, he pities his sister because she will never see 'that particular harmony of body and soul that I don't think women have ever guessed.' (p. 84)

There is one thing, though, that Maurice envies in women: they can bear children,

> An immense sadness (...) had risen up in his soul. He and the beloved would vanish utterly — would continue neither in Heaven nor on Earth. They had

> won past conventions, but Nature still faced them, saying with even voice, 'Very well, you are thus. I blame none of my children. But you must go the way of all sterility.' The thought that he was sterile weighed on the young man with a sudden shame. 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. (p. 90)

Clive, on the other hand, believes that 'For love to end where it begins is far more beautiful, and Nature knows it.' Though they are not going to continue either in Heaven or on Earth, though they will not meet eternity in Time, they can meet it in Intensity, and Clive proposes they may find another form of permanence, making of their whole lives a bright spot in the long road of Eternity. This appeases Rickie, and he feels happy again, for he has found his own sort of eternity. They would be together for their whole lives, and this is the best sort of permanence a human being may desire.

Up to here we have already analysed the usual barriers which tend to hinder a personal relation, or to destroy it, once it has been established: there is the cultural barrier, the enemy within, the clash of different ways of seeing life, the inability to escape a determined aesthetic view of things, the building of stereotypes and the difference of classes. Neither of these instances can be applied to Clive and Maurice, therefore they have plenty of reasons to believe that their relation is going to last. But another sort of problem does occur here, when Clive, without knowing how, suddenly starts caring about women.

When he realizes he is changing, Clive does everything in order not to betray his friend. He avoids looking at women and tries to think himself back to his previous state. He tries

to pretend that nothing has happened. He gets fever and stays for several weeks seeing very little of Maurice, who is also sick. As soon as he is better Clive decides to go to Maurice's house and to start everything again as if nothing had happened. But, while they are at table Maurice's sisters start talking about the difference between things as they are and things as they ought to be, and Clive breaks down. He faints and can't stop crying. Maurice is determined to take care of him, and this makes things even worse. Once Maurice kisses him and he gets hysterical. The touch of his friend is repugnant now.

As a last and desperate resource Clive goes to Greece. He has a faint hope that a miracle may happen. His last words to his friend have been some quite unintelligible complaints,

> Would that we had never been lovers! For then, Maurice, you and I should have lain still and been quiet. We should have slept, then had been at rest with kings and counsellors of the earth, which built desolate places for themselves. (p. 101)

He writes to Maurice saying that he doesn't love him anymore. He feels the same as Margaret when she referred to the 'continual flux in the hearts of men': 'When love flies it is remembered not as love but as something else. Blessed are the uneducated, who forget it entirely, and are never conscious of folly or pruriency in the past, of long and aimless conversations.' (p. 107)

When Clive returns he goes straight to Maurice's house. Maurice doesn't know he is back, and is not at home. Clive is received by his mother and his sisters, Kitty and Ada. He feels immensely attracted to Ada, who has Maurice's voice, his eyes, his mouth and his temperament. Ada seems to correspond. It is then that the telephone rings. It is Maurice.

when he knows that his friend has arrived, Maurice wants to talk to him on the telephone, but when Clive is going to talk they are suddenly disconnected. This can be applied to their relation, too. Neither of them is to be blamed, they simply have been disconnected. When they meet there is a terrible quarrel, and both feel very sick. 'Clive, in the midst of repulsion, realized what a triumph of love was ruining, and how feeble or how ironical must be the power that governs man.' (p. 112)

They look at one another for a while, and then begin new lives. For Clive there is the hope of a new dawn. Maurice is left with loneliness and with the awareness that nothing, not even a successful personal relation, can be trusted to last for long. Now he knows that the pain, the horror, and even his love for Clive might pass, yet loneliness is to remain. For a while he thinks of commiting suicide, but not even Death attracts him. Aware of ultimate loneliness, he simply lives on,

> Yet he was doing a fine thing — proving on how little the soul can exist. Fed neither by Heaven not by Earth he was going forward (...) He hadn't a God, he hadn't a lover — the two usual incentives to virtue. But on he struggled with his back to ease, because dignity demanded it. There was no one to watch him, nor did he watch himself, but struggles like his are the supreme achievement of humanity, and surpass any legends about Heaven. (p. 127)

Without his friend, Maurice finds himself again in the Valley of the Shadow. More than that, he cannot control his sexual impulses as easily as he did before, when he had Clive. He feels greatly attracted to people he meets by chance, in the streets, and this scares him a lot. Almost one year after he and Clive have separated Maurice's mother gets a letter from Mrs. Durham saying that Clive has become engaged to a young girl. This is

the crisis of Maurice's life. He thinks of the irony of the situation: Clive and himself have separated, but their families went on with the relationship. 'Their friendship had survived the heroic.' (p. 129)

It is then that tragedy begins to descend on Maurice. He and his family have a young guest at home, Dr. Barry's nephew, and Maurice cannot hide his feelings for the boy. When he was a child, and ignorant, he used to call it 'adoration.' Now he knows that the right word is lust. His yearning for sex grows to a point he cannot control it anymore. Once, when he is in the train, he realizes that an old man is looking at him with a lascivious expression. Thinking of what is to be his future, if he goes on like this, Maurice grows desperate. 'He was an average man, who could have won an average fight, but Nature had pitted him against the extraordinary, which only saints can subdue unaided, and he began to lose ground.' (p. 143)

He decides it is time to search for help, and decides to talk to Dr. Barry. The old man, who is a typical Englishman, seeing that Maurice is desperate, is kind and takes him to the dining-room. Maurice cannot talk, but the doctor gathers it is a sexual problem. Looking quite paternal, he assumes it is a venereal disease. When Maurice says it isn't that, Dr. Barry's expression turns from sympathy to contempt, He thinks the problem is impotence. When he realizes Maurice is talking about homosexuality, the contempt turns into abhorrence. 'Rubbish, rubbish!' is his contribution. He advises Maurice to marry and forget about the problem.

For Maurice it is not rubbish, but his own life. Still, he is impressed. Mr. Barry has always been their guide. Another of the several guides who possess a warm heart and good intentions, but who are unable to understand people. Maurice takes Dr. Barry's voice as the voice of Science. He starts thinking about

marriage. No doubt it would be nice to be at one with society and with the Law. Besides, he could have his own children and experience peace again.

By this time Clive telephones to invite him to his marriage. They are quite awkward and don't have anything to talk about, therefore Clive passes the telephone to his fiancée; the girl tells him she cannot think of anything to say. He is the eigth of Clive's friends with whom she is talking today, therefore she has already used up all her words. When he goes to buy them a wedding present he thinks of giving something expensive. But then, remembering he is the eigth on the list, gives up the idea.

He invites a young girl to go to a concert with him. It chances to be the symphony Clive has taught him to love, Tchaikovsky's Pathétique. As he is leaving he meets Risley, who tells the Philistine that Tchaikovsky was a homosexual. In a half amused, half friendly way, he gives Maurice the address of a doctor who uses to cure people through hypnotism. Maurice pretends he is not interested, but goes straight to a library and takes a life of Tchaikovsky to read. The episode about the composer's marriage makes him give up the idea at once. 'He was where he had been in the train, having gaining nothing except the belief that doctors are fools.'

Here we should stop for a while and consider part of an article Virginia Woolf has published in the Saturday Review of Literature[6], where she talks about Forster's style:

> If he were less scrupulous, less just, less sensitively aware of the different aspects of every case, he could, we feel, come down with greater force on one precise point. As it is, the strength of his blow is dissipated. He is like a light sleeper who is always being awaken by some-

> thing in the room. The poet is twitched away by the satirist; the comedian is tapped on the shoulder by the moralist; he never loses himself or forgets himself for long in sheer delight in the beauty or the interest of things as they are.

When she charges him of being excessively aware of the different aspects of every case, Mrs. Woolf is referring to what Forster calls the 'primal curse: the knowledge of good-and-evil.' There are people, like Virginia Woolf, who consider this a fault. Trilling talks of his 'irritating refusal to be great.' But there are those who seem to consider this Forster's greatest virtue, and I happen to be one of them. This insistence on being fair is responsible for most of the paradoxes we have in his work. These paradoxes lead us into the realization of several flaws in his novels. But they also widen the range of the themes which are being discussed. We have had an example in Howards End. That side of Forster which is scrupulous and fair—which has the knowledge of good-and-evil — sides with Margaret; and the part of him which tends to fall with all its force 'on one precise point' speaks through Helen. As a result, in spite of all the muddle, the novel grows richer. It can be seen through two different angles. The same occurs in Maurice. Forster is fair enough to remind us that Clive is not responsible for his change. The young man is good, sensitive, and hopes one day he and Maurice will be able to be friends again. But, simultaneously, that part of him which is passionate and has to do with Helen cannot forgive Clive for casting Maurice into the Valley of the Shadow again. What we have, from now on, is a mixture of both tendencies in Forster's treatment of the character, which is rather interesting, I think.(Let's now return to the story.)

Some months after his marriage, feeling rather safe

now, Clive invites Maurice to Penge. He has drifted apart from his friend in the hope that, after some time, he would recover his admiration for Maurice. But this never happened. Rationally he knows that Maurice is a great person, but the day has not returned when he could be able to feel that, too. Unable to rely on nobler emotions, Clive makes use of his gratitude and desire to help, which Margaret would have called, in this case, 'virtues of the second rank.' 'Though the quality of the past escaped him, he remembered its proportions.' (p. 143) He is a happy man now, and maybe, somehow, he can help his old friend to find his way.

> He and his wife loved each other tenderly. Beautiful conventions received them — while beyond the barrier Maurice wandered, the wrong words on his lips, and the wrong desires in his heart, and his arms full of air. (144)

Again, like in The Longest Journey, woman has separated a man from his friend.

When Maurice gets to Penge Clive is not there to receive him. He has had to do some political business elsewhere. Now Clive doesn't resent his mother or his family anymore. His contempt for society has ended, and now he has entered the nest it has prepared for him. Now he is in charge of Penge. He has also entered politics. We cannot help the feeling that he has turned into an undeveloped-hearted man.

Maurice spends the day with Clive's wife and his brother-in-law, Archie London. When they finally meet they are nice to each other and talk about politics. Next day is even worse. Clive leaves in the morning and he and Archie London spend the whole day hunting. Maurice feels attracted to the gamekeeper, a handsome young man with beautiful brown eyes. That night he sends a telegram to Mr. Lasker Jones, the doctor Risley has talked about.

Finally, making an effort, Clive goes to talk with Maurice. He is embarassed. It is Maurice's birthday, and he has forgotten it. He knows the visit has been a failure. It is then that, without knowing why, Maurice tells him he has turned heterosexual and is now interested in a girl. Maybe he lies bacause he doesn't want Clive to feel so bad, maybe because he cannot bear being pitied by the man who has once loved him. Clive believes it, and feels extremely relieved. He becomes natural at once, and they talk till a late hour. Clive says much that gives pain, when he jokes about the times when they have been idiots together. It is then that Maurice realizes he doesn't love Clive any longer. And he feels sad as he thinks of how fragile things are, in life. Two years ago they were determined to make of their lives a bright spot in time and in eternity. They have established a relationship and reached the heroic. And now he is left with nothing but loneliness. They were to be life long companions, and now, not only Clive, but he himself, have stopped caring for one another. 'He didn't care for Clive, but he could suffer from him.' (p. 148)

Without knowing why, after Clive has left, he goes to the window and shouts, 'Come!' Next day, when Clive's wife asks him about the girl he is supposed to be in love with, he thinks of the gamekeeper's beautiful brown eyes.

That afternoon he goes to the doctor. 'One could be absolutely transformed, Risley implied, provided one didn't care a damn for the past.' (p. 150) He is really willing to become heterosexual. He is not looking for happiness. 'During the long struggle he had forgotten what love is, and sought not happiness in the hands of Mr. Lasker Jones, but repose.' Their first interview is a success. Mr. Jones neither praises, nor blames, nor pities him. He puts Maurice into a trance and makes him see a picture on the wall. It is a person whose sex keeps

changing. When the doctor tries to force him to see a woman in the portrait Maurice starts crying. He says he wants his mother, and then wakes up.

Before he leaves, another appointment is fixed. Dr. Jones asks him to avoid contact with anyone who can possibly attract him.

Maurice has to decide whether he is going back to Penge or whether he is remaining in London. He decides it is better to go to his own home, but, at the last moment, he cannot resist and goes to Penge. This decision represents his unconscious choice for homosexuality. That night, half asleep, he shouts again 'Come!' and the gamekeeper enters through the open window. They make love, and Maurice crosses the barrier of sex.

Dr. Jones tries hard, in their next interview, to hypnotize him, but Maurice is not suggestible anymore.

The last part of the novel fails to convince the reader. We are already used to Forster's strong bent towards happy-endings, but this time he goes too far. In previous novels we have found incoherent stories and dramatic endings which do not fit the rest of the books. But, in all cases, these inconsistencies served to ratify the themes. Here even the themes are forgotten. Let's see what happens.

In schematic and symbolic terms we have again the couple Culture/Nature. Maurice's relation to Clive has been Platonic because both of them represent the Mind. They stand as the intellectual, who is arrested in the circles of theory. Clive can be compared to Cecil Vyse, Philip Herriton and Stuart Ansell, all so liberal in theory and unable to enter life. Scudder, the gamekeeper, represents Nature, and the capacity to connect. Like Gino Carella or Stephen Wonham, he is not guided by the rules of what is proper and what is not. Scudder finds it natural to make

love both to men and to women. Like Gino, he is a 'creature of Nature.' Therefore, on a schematic level, their relationship can be easily understood. It represents the closing of the Mandala. Again we have the union of mind and heart we have found with the pairs Gino/Philip, or Ansell/Stephen.

In terms of story and plot, though, the novel verges on fairy-tale. In this novel we have found chaos and loneliness, therefore we cannot pretend a god or an elf comes to save Maurice. And it is hard to believe that he has been so lucky: he has made love to a man he doesn't know, and ,therefore, cannot trust. Then he returns to London. The only thing we can expect of Maurice is that he goes on in his drift towards pruriency till the day he is to become like the old man he has found in the train. But this doesn't happen. Scudder, who is soon emigrating to Argentina with his family, comes to London in order to blackmail Maurice. They spend another night together and Maurice asks him not to leave England. As a result Scudder abandons his family. Maurice gives up his job and his social position and they start living together. Thus far there is nothing wrong. This ending, though a little too forced is easier to accept than, let's say, that sudden sequence of tragedies at the end of Howards End. But the problem is that Maurice, like George in A Room with a View, seems to have forgotten all the lessons he has learnt from life. He, who has been aware of ultimate loneliness, again believes that his relationship with Scudder is going to last for ever. In the universe of this particular novel neither God nor Permanence can be said to exist. Its theme is loneliness. And this time, in order to achieve his happy-ending, Forster has been unfaithful to his theme.[7] But, anyway, Virginia Woolf would have liked this closing. Forster has given up being fair, scrupulous and restrained. He has also given up being just to Clive. When they meet for the last time, at the closing of the

novel, Clive is clearly pictured as a member of the group that possesses undeveloped hearts. Maurice goes to him in order to tell his friend he is leaving with Scudder. 'It was the closing of a book that would never be read again, and better close such a book than leave it lying about to get dirtied.' (p. 213) Clive tries to give Maurice some sound advice. As a gentleman, he cannot afford to be mixed with people from another class. Besides, he is offended. Maurice has let him suppose that he was a normal man, and Clive has allowed his wife to be intimate with him. When he hears that Maurice has shared his body with the gamekeeper his impulse is to smite the monster and flee. Still, he gives Maurice some temperate advice and ends by saying that he is very sorry, and that he cares for him. Maurice's answer is 'You care for me a little bit, I do think, but I cannot 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.' (p. 214)

Clive wonders about who might have taught Maurice to talk like this. It has been himself. Maurice leaves.

> To the end of his life Clive was not sure of the exact moment of departure, and with the approach of old age he grew uncertain whether the moment had yet occurred. The Blue Room would glimmer, ferns undulate. Out of some eternal Cambridge his friend began beckoning to him, clothed in the sun, and shaking out the scents and sounds of the May Term.

In Forster, we are tempted to think of the characters we find in one novel as the 'continuation' of people

we have met in previous novels. Maurice, in his quest, reminds us of Leonard Bast and, most of all, of Rickie Elliot. The very scheme of the novel makes us think of The Longest Journey. Clive reminds us in so many aspects of Ansell; the gamekeeper, of Stephen. Mr. Deucy and Dr. Barry, the blind guides, represent the values that are praised by people like the Pembrokes. The very sequence, a lonesome boy who goes to public-school, the bad experiences there, the self-fulfilment he finds at Cambridge, has to do with The Longest Journey. Yet, the ending of Maurice rings false. By now we are aware of NO FOR EVERS. The schemesof the Italian Novels don't fit here anymore. The world being as it is, Basts and Rickies and Maurices are not to find either continuance or permanence. One is tempted to declare that Forster's novels are marching, progressively, from Humanism towards Skepticism. The very unviability of this happy ending snows that Forster's universe is going darker. We cannot believe that Maurice's relation to Scudder will last forever. Even Margaret and Helen, after being separated for some months, felt awkward when they met again. A relation as firm as Clive's and Maurice's has proved possible to be broken, therefore Maurice cannot ask us to believe in permanence from now on. It is as if, after seeing the goblins, he tried to pretend they have never been there.

NOTES ON CHAPTER SIX

1. Quoted in P.N. Furbank's introduction to Maurice (Penguin Books, Suffolk,1972.)

2. Furbank: E.M. Forster - a life (Oxford University Press, London, 1979,) p. 148.

3. Tchaikovsky's Symphonie Incestueuse et Pathétique is dedicated to the composer's young nephew, with whom he was in love.

4. Maurice's friend from public-school is called Chapham, a name that reminds us of 'Clapham' and of the Claphamites, which are the model for Forster's people of the undeveloped heart. Durham, on the other hand, makes us think of 'Wonham', the 'real' person we find in The Longest Journey.

5. Page references to Maurice are taken from the Penguin edition, Suffolk, 1972.

6. The Saturday Review of Literature ,(17 December, 1927) The passage is quoted from Furbank's E.M. Forster - a life, p. 145.

7. Lowes Dickinson has complained to Forster about the implanted happy-ending in Maurice. In a letter to his friend Forster acknowledges it is a central weakness in the novel, but says,

> I might have been wiser to let that also (the Alec Scudder part) resolve into dust or mist, but the temptation is overwhelming to grant one's creations a happiness actual life does not supply.

That's hardly an excuse for such a serious author as Forster, and one cannot help believing that, were Maurice really meant to be published, Forster would not have been so kind to his character.

7. CHAPTER SEVEN - A PASSAGE TO INDIA

If we think of this great flaw at the end of Maurice, we will realize it is the result of Forster's uncertainty about the way he sees life. Throughout the novel we have an assertion of Chaos. Nothing fits: Maurice has neither a friend, nor a god, nor a goal. He knows that personal relations are fragile and that there is no Permanence for him, no 'for ever', either in time or in intensity. Therefore, we can say that this happy-ending, which rings so untrue, represents the yearning for order we have in the primitive man in Forster. It stands for this longing human beings have for the 'Eternal Moment,' for this desire of being sure about things and seeing a purpose in life.

Here we are brought back to Beethoven's symphony and to the goblins. If the primitive man in us is right, and if there is Order, there is also some mysterious and great force which is powerful enough to send the goblins away. This force will do in real life what Beethoven does in his music, or Forster in his fiction: this force will blow the goblins away and, at the end, we will find out that life has been a mystery. And we will probably be rewarded with the idea of Permanence, like Maurice.

A Passage to India is the only novel where the author deals openly with this subject. This is a novel about Beethoven and goblins, about Order and Chaos. Forster, here, is not willing to 'force' us to accept either of the possibilities, for the novel itself is a question about the existence of God and about the lasting of a personal relation. Therefore, what we have here, in Forster's last and most complete novel, is, in many ways, a synthesis of the doubts and questions we find in the other novels.

A Passage to India opens with a picture, where the reader is introduced to the most significative elements we find in the novel. First of all, we have the Ganges, which happens not to be sacred as he passes Chandrapore. Nothing is sacred in the city, which consists of a series of huts and bazaars which trail along the bank of the river for some miles, mixed with mud and garbage. Inland, on a higher level, live the Eurasians, who dwell in better houses. Finally, on a second and higher level, we find the English group — they are known as Anglo-Indians — in charge of the place. They live at the Civil Station, which is perfectly British: neither beautiful nor ugly, it is functional, with streets that intercept at right angles, and a red brick club.

This difference on the geographic level, we know, represents the different social status: Anglo-Indians, controlling the landscape, stand for Imperialism. Like the Wilcoxes, they possess 'undeveloped hearts'. They act in the name of the government and of duty and, again like the Wilcoxes, avoid emotions. When they look at Chandrapore from their hill, they are not aware of the poverty of the place. They only see some roofs amid a beautiful wood.

Only two things Chandrapore and the Civil Station have in common: the overarching sky, which is unapproachable and impartial, and the railroad, which runs parallel to the river. Both the sky and the railroad[1] seem to march towards the Marabar Caves, to the south, whose closed fists are the one thing which seems capable of penetrating the arch.

We know that this novel, like The Longest Journey, possesses a symphonic pattern. It is divided into three parts, Mosque, Caves and Temple. In the first part we are supposed to be introduced to two leading themes. These themes are Religion

and Friendship, and they are introduced to the reader in the first important scene in the novel, when Aziz, our main character, goes to a mosque.

Aziz is a small and handsome Moslem. He is a doctor and writes poetry. We know that he is an excellent doctor, but we are not so sure about the quality of his poetry. Anyway, this is a minor point, because Aziz is an Indian, and Indians do not care about the quality of a thing, but about the amount of emotion people put into it. 'They took the public view of poetry, not the private which obtains in England. It never bored them to hear words, words; they breathed them with the cool night air, never stopping to analyse.' (p. 16) Like the Italians, Indians care about feelings rather than about deeds, and this makes of them suitable companions to the English, because again we have the possibility of achieving completion through a successful personal relation. Aziz, like most of his country-fellows, is neither logical nor moderate. He lives on great emotions. His bicycle, which lacks brake and bell, represents him well.

In the first important scene we find Aziz sitting in a little mosque, after a hard day, when he has had to work a lot and to stoop to the conqueror, pretending he has no pride. The whole mosque is washed into moonlight, and its three arches stand, as white as marble, against the ninety-nine names of God which seem to be painted in black. This duality, light and darkness, presence and absence of color, touches Aziz, who longs to turn his feelings into poetry and beauty. He hopes one day he will have a mosque of his own, where he can come and think and where, after his death, his grave will stand. On it he will copy the inscription he has seen on the tomb af a king,

> Alas, without me for thousands of years
> The Rose will blossom and the Spring will bloom,
> But those who have secretly understood my heart—
> They will approach and visit the grave where I lie.

In these lines, again, we have duality. Friendship stands as bright as moonlight against the darkness of death. Aziz's eyes are filled with tears and, as he thinks of 'the secret understanding of the heart,' one of the white pillars seems to move. Aziz resists the fear of ghosts, which is natural to his race, and remains where he is. A second pillar moves, and then a third.[2] It is then that Mrs. Moore appears, involved in a veil of moonlight.

Her very entrance gives us room enough to guess that she is a mother figure. Aziz associates her with a ghost, which brings in the idea of the supernatural. She is connected with the moonlight, and this makes us think of the Mother-Goddess. We can, therefore, presume that Mrs. Moore is going to be Aziz's spiritual mother, and that they will succeed in establishing a personal relation. We can go still farther, and suppose that, in case there are supernatural forces in this novel, Mrs. Moore will be linked to them.

Indeed, they start their relation with a quarrel, as was the case with Gino and Philip, Mrs. Wilcox and Margaret, and Ansell and Stephen. Seeing that she is an English woman, and supposing she has not taken her shoes off as she entered the mosque, Aziz tells her to leave the place. Mrs. Moore tells him she has left her shoes outside the mosque. She respects their customs, and believes this to be the house of God. 'The flame that not even beauty can nourish'(p. 24) springs up and they become friends at once. Aziz pours out his heart to her, and tells her he is glad he has found someone who understands him so well. Surprised, Mrs. Moore replies, 'I don't think I understand people very well. I only know whether I like or dislike them.' (p. 24) 'Then you are an Oriental,'says Aziz. And he is right, because she possesses 'the secret understanding of the heart.' Like Mrs. Wilcox, in Howards

End, she is neither intelligent nor bright, neither an intellectual nor a woman of action. Her great quality is a sort of empathy which makes people feel they have met a friend.

Again according to our pattern, Mrs. Moore is the mother of the City Magistrate, Ronny Heaslop, one of the leaders among the Anglo-Indians. As is the case with Mrs. Wilcox, she cannot reach her son. Mrs. Moore has also two other children from a second marriage, but we don't know much about them. She has come to India with Miss Adela Quested, the woman with whom Ronny intends to get married. Adela has come in order to see the place and the sort of life she is going to lead in case she accepts Ronny's proposal. We have met Miss Quested already in a luncheon-party at Wickham Place: she is a member of the Schlegels' group in Howards End. This is enough for us to know that she is an intellectual. What is left for us to discover, though, is what sort of intellectual Miss Quested is. Is she as impartial as Margaret, who refuses to build stereotypes, or as rash as Helen, who lives on them? The answer to this question is settled very soon, when she says 'I want to see the REAL India.' This makes us think of Rickie Elliot and his pursuit of the 'Great World.' 'Try seeing Indians,' is the reply she gets from Mr. Fielding, the schoolmaster and the one developed-hearted person we find at the Civil Station. She is looking for stereotypes, and willing to analyse life cooly, using her mind, but not her heart. Miss Quested is an unfortunate young woman because, though she is as radical and as hasty as Helen, she lacks Helen's charm, beauty and passion. Since she wants to see the 'real India' Mr. Turton, the Collector, suggests that they have a 'Bridge Party', where some of the most respectable Indians will be allowed to enter the club for a party. Mr. Fielding realizes that Miss Quested's recklessness in dealing with subjects she is not used to handle may lead people into trouble.

The Indians are not pleased with the invitation. They agree to go to the party because their political leader, the Nawab Bahadur, is to go too. But they know that the invitation does not proceed from the English's hearts, and that, therefore, the meeting will be a failure. 'All invitations must proceed from heaven perhaps; perhaps it is futile for men to initiate their own unity, they do but widen the gulfs between them by the attempt.' (p. 38) This has been Margaret's point when she refused to enter a closer relation with the Basts: her heart was not involved, and she was aware that 'one must not play at friendship.' This has also been Clive's fault, as he invited Maurice to visit him out of gratitude and desire to help. The visit turned out a failure because his heart was not involved.

This subject raises a philosophic discussion — or rather, a theological one — between two Christian missionaries and a group of Hindus. The point of the missionaries is that it doesn't matter whether people are mistreated on earth, because, in Heaven, everyone is to have his site: 'Not one shall be kept standing who approaches with a loving heart.' (p. 38) The Hindus then ask them whether there is a place for monkeys in Christian heaven. One of the missionaries answers 'No.' The other, more liberal and open-minded, recognizing that the Lord's mercy is infinite, answers that maybe there is. But the Hindus do not stop here. They want to know whether there is a place for all creatures in heaven, for the jackal, for the wasp, for mud and for the bacteria. This is too much for the liberal missionary, who answers, 'No, no, this is going too far. We must exclude someone from our gathering, or we shall be left with nothing.' (39) This settles the difference between Christianity, an 'exclusive' religion, and Hinduism, which is an 'inclusive' one. There is a passage, in Where Angels Fear to Tread , where Irma asks Mrs. Herriton whether she can pray for her little brother. Her grand-

mother finds it advisable to answer that she can. Then the girl asks whether she can pray for Gino, too, and Mrs. Herriton finds a way of talking about other subjects. This reminds her of one day, when Philip was a child, and asked whether he could include the Devil in his prayers. According to Christianity he cannot, but according to Hinduism he can. Mud, wasps, bacteria and sinners are all mixed together in this muddled religion.

That night Mrs. Moore finds a wasp in her room. 'Pretty dear,' she whispers, and takes care not to disturb the little animal. Again she behaves not as an English woman, but as an Oriental.

The 'Bridge Party' is a failure, because Indians and English do not mix at all. The Anglo-Indian ladies try to assume a position which is at the same time aloof and polite, but their knowledge of the native's language doesn't go beyond the imperative mood. Adela and Mrs. Moore, rather vexed, try to balance their fellows' coldness with tenderness and friendship, and establish a conversation with an Indian lady called Mrs. Bhattacharya, which is again a failure. Whatever they say or do is answered by a polite smile, as they 'strove in vain against the polite walls of (her) civility.' (p. 43) They end up by settling that they are going to pay Mrs. Bhattacharya a visit on Tuesday, and that the Indian lady is to send a car to fetch Adela and Mrs. Moore.

Meanwhile, Adela is looking at the landscape. The Marabar caves, like goblins, seem to be approaching, and she has the impression that, if sunset lasts a little longer, they will touch the Civil Station. As for the sky, 'it seemed unlikely that the series stopped here. Beyond the sky must not there be something that overarches all the skies, more impartial even than they?' (p. 40)

Night falls and the Marabar receed. It looks as if

Beethoven is here to send the goblins away. In this first part of the symphony, called 'Mosque', we have Order, it seems.

That night Mrs. Moore tries to talk to Ronny. She is worried because her son is so different. Though she is not articulate enough to realize he has turned into a symbol of the values of the world of public-school, she senses he is not caring for the life of feelings as much as he ought to. Neither she nor Adela have liked the way Anglo-Indians behaved towards the Indians that afternoon. In their meetings, at the club, they look like robots rather than actual human beings. There is one scene which reminds us of the conditioned reflexes we find in characters in Orwell's 1984. Someone starts playing the National Anthem, and all react to the stimulus in the same way,

> Conversation and billiards stopped, faces stiffened. It was the Anthem of the Army of Occupation. (...) It produced a little sentiment, a useful acession of will-power. The meagre tune, the curt series of demands on Jehovah, fused into a prayer unknown in England, and though they perceived neither Royalty nor Deity they did perceive something, they were strengthened to resist another day.

Mrs. Moore wants to bring her son back to the inner life, but does not know how. She tries talking about God, and His desire that people have good will towards other people. But soon Mrs. Moore realizes she has taken the wrong road to reach Ronny, because his religion is the Wilcoxes' religion,

> Ronny approved of religion as long as it endorsed the National Anthem, but he objected when it attempted to influence his life. Then he would say in respectful yet decided tones, 'I don't think it does to talk about these things, every fellow has to work out his own religion.' (p. 51)

His view is shared by all other Anglo-Indians.

Though Mrs. Moore is aware she ought not to have mentioned God, she cannot stop thinking about him since she entered India. Somehow her God of Order does not fit in this country of muddle. 'Outside the arch there seemed always an arch, beyond the remotest echo a silence.' (p. 52)

Professor Fielding, in order to show Adela 'real' Indians, instead of the 'real India' she is looking for, invites her and Mrs. Moore to a tea-party. He invites also Professor Godbole, his Hindu friend, who is also the guardian of Wisdom in the novel, and Aziz, whom he does not know.

Aziz has already received an invitation to have tea with Mr. Fielding, but has forgotten to go. Now, as he receives the second one, he is touched : 'Here was true courtesy — the civil deed that shows the good heart.' (p. 61) He goes early, and arrives before the other guests. Soon he and the Englishman become friends. 'He felt Fielding's fundamental good-will. His own went out to it, graped beneath the shifting tides of emotion which can alone bear the voyager to an anchorage but may also carry him across the rocks.' (p. 66) Theirs is to be a difficult friendship. They belong to different cultures. As an Englishman, Fielding's first commitment is to Truth and to fairness. Aziz doesn't care about either quality: he wants passion and intimacy. Fielding's goal is to keep proportion; Aziz tends to extreme emotions. He never likes or dislikes things; he either loves or abhors. And it is not only in the important points that they differ. Slight habits, provenient from their different races, irritate them sometimes. Even the barrier of language tends to hinder their friendship: 'A pause in the wrong place, an intonation misunderstood, and a whole conversation went awry.' (p. 267)

Theirs is a strange party. Professor Godbole, guide and

guardian to the novel, proves to be quite bizarre. He never says a word, and only cares about the food. He never stops eating. Adela is straight and rational, Mrs. Moore as friendly as ever. Aziz, feeling at ease, leads the conversation. He talks about India and about his heroes, the Mogul Emperors. Today he praises Emperor Alamgir, famous for his generosity. In a show of Indian incoherence and illogicity, he states his wish to be so generous as Alamgir, 'God would give me more when he saw I gave. Always be giving, like the Nawab Bahadur. My father was the same, that's why he died poor.' (p. 69) And on he goes, giving wrong but poetical information about his country. Fielding, who has 'dulled his craving for verbal truth and cared chiefly for truth of mood,' does not correct him.

Their next topic is Mrs. Bhattacharya, who has never sent the car so that the ladies could visit her . Adela, again trying to find a reason for things, says she hates mysteries. Mrs. Moore replies that she likes mysteries, but rather dislikes muddles. To which Fielding contributes saying that mysteries <u>are</u> muddles. All these statements are rather confused and need a further interpretation. Adela starts by saying that she 'hates mysteries.' She is being as careless as usual with her words. The verb she chooses, 'to hate', is rather exaggerated for such a petty incident. And when she uses the word 'mystery' she is treading on a symbolic word, a leit-motif in the novel. Mystery refers to the supernatural, to things that are beyond people's understanding; Mystery implies the existence of a God in heaven and of Order in the world. That's why Mrs. Moore replies that she likes Mystery. But she dislikes Muddle, because Muddle denies the idea of Order. Fielding, who is an atheist, and doesn't see any difference between a Mystery and a Muddle, thinks they are the same. Aziz, who is an Indian, and therefore lives in muddle, says, 'There'll be no muddle when you come to see me.' As soon

as he finishes the utterance, thinking of his dirty hut amid the bazaars, and of the flies which are his companions there, he suddenly realizes why Mrs. Bhattacharya has never sent the car. Again he is in a muddle, and has to find a way out. That's why he says 'I invite you all to meet me at the Marabar Caves.'

Some time later Fielding takes Mrs. Moore to see the school, and Godbole and Adela remain in the sitting room. Adela wants to know what is the touristic attraction to be found at the Marabar Caves and Professor Godbole[3] is the only person who is able to talk about them. But, before he does, Ronny arrives, rather irritated because Fielding has mixed Adela and Mrs. Moore with the Indians. He doesn't take the trouble to be courteous to Aziz and Professor Godbole. Adela, who has told the Indians she was not staying in India for long and, only after the remark, realized this implied that she has given up marrying Ronny, is rather cold to the Anglo-Indian. Before they leave Professor Godbole wants to sing them a song. Like anything else in India, this song has neither rhythm nor coherence, neither a begining nor an end. It stops as suddenly as it has started. As soon as he finishes the song, Professor Godbole explains it. It is the story of a milkmaiden[4] who asks God — Shri Krishna — to come to her, but the god refuses to come. Next she asks him to multiply himself into a thousand gods, but to let one of these gods come to her. The milkmaiden asks him to come, but he neglects her. Both Mrs. Moore and Adela are more impressed by the song than they realize at the moment. Mrs. Moore asks Professor Godbole whether Krishna comes, in another song. 'On, no, he refuses to come. (...) I say to him , Come, come, come, come, come, come. He neglects to come.' (p. 78)

Ronny and Adela then go to the club, where she breaks their engagement off. Ronny is hurt, but, as is the case with

Cecil Vyse, in A Room with a View, he acts like a gentleman. As soon as she realizes they are not going to marry, Adela suddenly remembers his good qualities, which she has forgotten, and regrets the hastiness of her decision. It is then that the Nawab Bahadur arrives in his new car and invites them for a drive. The Nawab Bahadur is so rich and influential that Anglo-Indians treat him as an equal. Ronny and Adela accept the invitation. The Nawab Bahadur falls asleep and, when they get to a cross-road, Ronny instructs the chauffeur to take the Marabar road. An accident ensues, when the car hits an animal, probably a hyena. Muddle follows. The Nawab Bahadur is panic-striken: some years ago he has driven over a drunk man and killed him. According to his belief, the dead man has taken the form of a hyena and has waited for him all through these years, close to the place of his death. That's why the Nawab Bahadur avoided the Marabar road from then on. He doesn't tell this to the English guests, who wonder why he is so scared about the accident. The incident unites Ronny and Adela, 'They forgot their abortive personal relationship, and felt adventurous as they muddled about in the dust.'(p. 87) That night they become engaged to be married.

When they tell Mrs. Moore about the accident, the old woman shudders and says 'A ghost!' Again she has achieved communion with Indians, and shown the 'secret understanding of their hearts.' She is glad to know about the marriage. Adela, though, is not so happy. She feels something is missing, but doesn't realize what. They are playing cards, and there comes the omen, when Mrs. Moore lays a 'black knave on a red queen.' (p. 94)

Finally, the time for their excursion to the Marabar Caves comes. Neither of the ladies is willing to go: since they have heard Professor Godbole's song, at the tea-party, they cannot

experience any sort of emotion vividly. Aziz has never planned this excursion either: it is the product of his muddle at the tea-party. Better to take the ladies to the caves than to his house. And since they are to have this expedition, he makes up his mind to be a great host. He is to imitate his heroes, the Mogul Emperors. He will be as generous as Alamgir, and as friendly as Babur, who never betrays a friend. Aziz spends almost all his money so that everything turns out well.[5] He manages to have some guides and an elephant. There is English food for the ladies and Fielding and Hindu food for Professor Godbole. He has brought a poor and funny relative, Mohammed Latif, to amuse the guests. Professor Godbole will explain the mysteries (or muddles?) of the caves to them, and Fielding, his friend, will make him feel at ease.

Things start going wrong when they are to enter the train, and Fielding and Professor Godbole have not arrived yet. They come at the last minute, but the train is already in motion. Fielding tries to jump in, but does not succeed, and Aziz is left with the two English women. Not used to moderate emotions he is thrown from total happiness into complete despair. Mrs. Moore soothes him by saying, 'We shall be all Moslems together now.' Again he loves her, 'There was nothing he would not do for her. He would die to make her happy.' (p. 131) Also Adela, in her clumsy way, tries to make him feel better. Fighting against her growing apathy, the young woman tries to pretend she is enjoying herself. As the train is approaching the caves they see the sun-rise. Against the huge rocks the sky is magnificent and orange. Adela, like Rickie, waits for a revelation. 'But, at the supreme moment, when night should have died and day lived, nothing occur-red. It was as if virtue had failed in the celestial fount.' (p.136) For a while she tries to pretend this has been the false dawn, and that, suddenly, the miracle would occur. But nothing happens. The sunrise has actually been splendid. The problem is within herself.

Since she cannot experience things, at least she can pretend, so that Aziz feels good, while the train proceeds in its slow march towards the caves. 'The train, half asleep, going nowhere in particular and with no passenger of importance in any of its carriages, the branch-line train, lost on a low enbankment between dull fields. Its message — for it had one — avoided her well-equipped mind.' (p. 135)

The message conveyed by the train is that there is no goal to be reached, nor any sort of revelation to be suddenly acquired in life. This reminds us that we are in the second part of the symphony, called 'Caves', which is to work as a foil for the first part, called 'Mosque', where we have found Order. Now we are faced with lack of purpose and with Chaos.

As they leave the train and mount the elephant, they go to a clearing where they are to have their picnic, and decide to enter the first cave. The women feel slightly oppressed, because the sky seems to be so unhealthily near the top of the caves. As they enter the first cave, Aziz is at a loss. He is supposed to be the guide, but the one person who is able to explain the place is Professor Godbole, who is notthere. There is nothing inside the cave , and he does not know what to say. He does not realize that NOTHINGNESS is the very message conveyed by the place.

There is total darkness inside the rock, and when a match is lit, one realizes that the walls of the rock reflect the light, like a mirror. 'The two flames approach and strive to unite, but cannot, because one of them breathes air, the other stone.' (p. 124) This imagery of the mirror reminds us of Maurice, and of the person arrested on the other side of the looking glass. In many ways these caves work like Beethoven's symphony, which conveys different messages to different people. They seem to

work as a mirror where everyone sees the reflection of his/her fears and contradictions.

The first to be affected by the cave is Mrs. Moore. She feels suffocated inside the cave. There are several people crowded together, and she almost faints when something is pressed against her face. As they leave she realizes it has been a baby. She is angry, and wants to find a villain in the group, but there is none. They are simple people, and she realizes that. She has also been impressed by a horrid echo, and settles she is not going to visit any other cave. She tells Aziz she is tired and is to wait for them at the clearing. Aziz is pleased with her frankness: only a true friend would be so sincere as to say she doesn't want to follow the host. 'Yes, I am your friend,' are Mrs. Moore's last words to Aziz. When they leave she decides to write a letter to her other children, Ronny and Stella. But it is then that she is fully striken by the message the caves have conveyed her.

> The crush and the smell she could forget, but the echo began in some indescribable way to undermine her hold on life. Coming at a moment when she chanced to be fatigued, it had managed to murmur, 'Pathos, piety, courage — they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value — (...) Devils are of the North, and poems can be written about them, but no one could romanticize the Marabar because it robbed eternity and infinity of their vastness, the only quality that accommodates them to mankind. (p. 147)

The message the caves convey to Mrs. Moore has to do with the ultimate truth we have in the short-story "The Story of the Siren,"[6] where a young Italian sees the Siren and suddenly turns very unhappy, 'Unhappy, unhappy because he knew everything. Every living thing made him unhappy because he knew it would die. And all he cared to do was sleep.'

This is what happens to Mrs. Moore. She has suddenly perceived the goblins. She gives up everything, first her children, because she never finishes her letter. Then she gives up Religion, when 'suddenly, at the edge of her mind Religion appeared, poor little talkative Christianity, and she knew that all its divine words from "Let there be Light" to "It is finished" only amounted to "boum."' (...) She lost all interest, even in Aziz, and the affectionate and sincere words that she had spoken to him seemed no longer hers but the airs.' (p. 148) The fact that Aziz is the last one she has given up shows how great their short friendship has been.

Adela is also affected by the caves. As she enters one of them she suddenly realizes what it is that she has been missing all along: it is love. She has considered all the details concerning her marriage, but has hidden from herself that she does not love Ronny. Trying to convince herself that love is not necessary to a successful marriage, she looks at Aziz and realizes that, for Oriental women, he must be a very attractive young man. She asks him how many wives he has. Since only uneducated Indian Moslems have more than one wife, and being himself a widower, Aziz feels insulted and enters a cave so as to recover his balance. When he is calmer, and comes out to meet her, Miss Quested has vanished. He is afraid she has got lost in one of the caves. Nervous, he beats the guide in punishment, and the man runs away. Then he realizes that Fielding has arrived in Miss Derek's car and that Miss Quested is going to meet the group. He finds her field-glasses on the floor. When he goes down to meet his friend he is surprised to see that Miss Quested has left with Miss Derek for the Civil Station without any explanation. He is hurt, but tries not to mind. Perhaps her attitude has to do with some British usage he is not aware of. He finishes the picnic with Fielding, who looks

quite cross because of Miss Quested's nasty behavior, and with Mrs. Moore, who is so strange and aloof. Fielding goes to see one cave, but is not impressed: for him Mystery and Muddle are synonymous.

When they arrive back at the station Aziz is arrested. He is accused of trying to attack Miss Quested at the cave. The girl was all scratched as she arrived at Miss Derek's car.

The big Ibsenian machine has been set in motion, and there is no way of stopping it now. Adela is in shock and is sent to the Turtons, so that they may take care of her. Anglo-Indians grow hysterical. They meet at the club, discuss all the possible ways of action, and settle that they are going to send women to a safer place. 'They had started speaking of "women and children" — that phrase that exempts the male from sanity when it has been repeated a few times.' (p. 180)

Fielding, who, like Babur, never betrays a friend, does all he can in order to release Aziz. But it is the word of an Indian against the word of an Englishwoman. And, besides, he has been found with her glasses on his pocket. The one person who can authorize Fielding to speak either with Aziz or with Miss Quested is the City Magistrate, and the City Magistrate is Ronny Heaslop. Hammidulah, Aziz's Indian friend, decides they should send for Amritrao, a famous anti-British barrister. Fielding tries to bring the Anglo-Indians back to sanity, but it is too late, and they cannot forgive him because he has not lost his head too. There comes a time when Fielding has to choose sides, and he ends up by resigning from the club and siding with the Indians.

> Fielding, too, had his anxieties — he did not like the field-glasses or the discrepancy over the guide — but he relegated them to the edge of his mind, and forbade

> them to infect its core. Aziz was innocent, and all action must be based on that. (170)

When he gets to the school Fielding writes a letter to Miss Quested telling her of his belief that Aziz is innocent. He doesn't think Adela has invented this story out of malice. Either she has been attacked by the guide, he thinks, or she has had some sort of hallucination.

It is only when he has done everything he can do for his friend that he stops to consider the possibility of Aziz being actually guilty. He asks Professor Godbole whether their friend could have done such a thing. 'I think you are asking me whether the individual can commit good actions or evil actions,' he says. But, as a Brahman, Godbole is not interested in who commited the evil action. He is worried because Evil is loose: 'When evil occurs, it expresses the whole of the universe. Similarly when good occurs.' (p. 175) Fielding, exasperated, complains that he is suggesting that good and evil are the same. To which Godbole replies, in his bizarre way,

> Good and evil are different, as their names imply. But, in my own humble opinion, they are both of them aspects of my Lord. He is present in one, absent in the other, and the difference between presence and absence is great, as great as my feeble mind can grasp. Yet absence implies presence, absence is not non-existence, and we are therefore entitled to repeat, "Come, come, come, come". (p. 175)

These notions conveyed by Godbole are the essence of Hinduism, and they introduce us to another possibility. According to Hinduism Muddle is not a synonym for Chaos, but maybe the introduction to an unknown sort of Order. Muddle implies absence, but absence is not necessarily non-existence. Perhaps there is something beyond Mrs. Moore's ultimate truth. In the caves

she has realized that the world lacks Mystery, and that life lacks Order. She has acknowledged Muddle and taken it for Chaos. But here comes Godbole and tells us that, in spite of Muddle, we are still entitle to beg 'Come!'

Adela, in her sickness, has been haunted by what she calls 'an echo'. She longs to see Mrs. Moore, the one person, she believes, who is able to send this echo away. 'Evil was loose...only Mrs. Moore could drive it back to its source and seal the broken reservoir.' (p. 190) But, when she meets Mrs. Moore, she finds out her friend has given up caring about other people. When Adela asks her about the echo the old woman replies, 'If you don't know, you don't know; I can't tell you.' (p. 195)

Nevertheless, through what so many critics have decided to call telepathy, Adela has the clear notion Mrs. Moore has told her that Aziz is innocent. Ronny tells her it is just an impression, but Adela goes back to Mrs. Moore and asks her whether she has said that Aziz is innocent. Mrs. Moore says she has never spoken his name, but concludes, indifferently, 'Of course he is innocent.'

Ronny, who is as honest as any member of public-school, says that if his mother thinks so, it is her duty to testify at the trial. But Mrs. Moore doesn't consider she has any duty towards mankind at all. Through Ronny's suggestion, and because she wants it, she returns to England. Both know that, because of the heat , this is going to be a dangerous trip. But Mrs. Moore has come to the 'twilight of the double vision', that state where 'the horror of the Universe and its smallness are both visible at the same time,'

> If this world is not to our taste, well, at all events there is Heaven, Hell, Annihilation — one or other of these large things, that huge scenic background of stars, fires, blue or black air. All heroic endeavour,

> and all that is known as art, assumes that there's such a background, just as all practical endeavour, when the world is to our taste, assumes that the world is all. But in the twilight of the double vision, a spiritual muddledom is set up for which no high-sounding words can be found. (pp. 202-3)

As her train passes a place called Asirgarh she sees a mosque to the right of the city. In The Longest Journey we have already realized that trains — which can be said to symbolize the road we have to pass through during the journey of our lives— use to turn abruptly, sometimes, and perform a sort of circular movement. Mrs. Moore's train turns, and as she passes Asirgarh for a second time, the mosque, which has been to the right, now appears to be to the left of the city. She leaves the train and enters a carriage, and from the carriage she is taken to the boat. As she leaves the country, she looks at the hills and coconut palms which wave her good-bye. She realizes India is greater than she has thought."'So you thought an echo was India; you took the Marabar caves as final?' they laughed. 'What have we in common with them, or they with Asirgarh? Good-bye!' " (p. 205)

We don't know what happens to Mrs. Moore, or whether, like her train, she has gone beyond the idea of Chaos. We only know that she dies at sea before her name is mentioned at Aziz's trial.

Ronny, because he is personally involved in the event, doesn't want to preside as magistrate . The case is left to Mr. Das, his subordinate. Aziz's barristers are Mr. Amritrao and Aziz's friend, Mahmoud Ali. Mahmoud Ali loses his head when he sees that the English are behaving as if they were in a party. Addressing the Magistrate, he says 'I am not defending one case, nor are you trying one. We are both of us slaves.' Then, accusing Ronny of having sent away Mrs. Moore, the one person who could speak in Aziz's

favor, he leaves the room. People in the audience start whispering Mrs. Moore's name, which is soon turned into 'Esmiss Esmoor', whom they believe to be a goddess who will protect Aziz. They start praying to the goddess.

Meanwhile Adela looks at the culprit. All through her crisis she has associated him with a principle of evil. Now, looking at him, she realizes he is a simple man, and acknowledges he is innocent. Like Caroline, in Where Angels Fear to Tread, she recognizes she has been wrong. And, also like Caroline, she is strong enough to say so.

Aziz is released and there is a tumultuous demonstration, where the English are cursed and the goddess is praised. Esmiss Esmoor has 'stricken Adela in the middle of her lies.'

And here we come to the question of what has happened at the trial. If there is Mystery in life, and someone like Beethoven to send the goblins away, Mrs. Moore has saved her young friend and spiritual son. If there is Chaos, then Mrs. Moore has died and it is Adela who has saved him. But, in either case, Mrs. Moore has contributed to Aziz's deliverance. Adela has been influenced by Mrs. Moore's statement: 'Of course he is innocent.' The personal relation the English lady and the young Indian have established has proved so strong as to pull her, for a moment, from her indifference, which seemed inscrutable.

Adela is left by herself in the middle of the turmoil. She cannot go back to the Turtons, and is not going to be accepted by the Indians. Fielding knows that and, rather annoyed, takes her to the school. Then he goes to meet Aziz at the Nawab Bahadur's house, where they are to remain for some days. Aziz is resentful, and wants Adela to pay him twenty thousand rupees as a compensation. Fielding, who realizes how brave Miss Quested has been, pities her because now she is going to take the worst out of two worlds. The

Anglo-Indians will not receive her anymore; Ronny will not marry her; and Aziz is going to take all her money from her. He thinks this rather unfair, and determines to help the girl. He tries to make Aziz think rationally, and see that Miss Quested has saved his life. But, like a child, Aziz doesn't care about logical arguments. He decides he will ask Mrs. Moore what to do. Then he remembers she has left India. During the trial he has had the strange impression that she was present in the room. Fielding then tells him that Mrs. Moore is dead, but Aziz thinks this is a joke, and doesn't care. Fielding then settles not to spoil Aziz's happiness. By the morning he will learn from someone else that she is actually dead.

> And it seemed to him for a time that the dead awaited him, and when the illusion faded it left behind it an emptiness that was almost guilt: 'This is really the end,' he thought, 'and I gave her the final blow.' He had tried to kill Mrs. Moore this evening, (at) the Nawab Bahadur's house; but she still eluded him, and the atmosphere remained tranquil. Presently the moon rose — the exhausted crescent that preceeds the sun. (p. 249)

While Adela is at the school, they use to have frequent conversations, and learn to admire one another. Together, they try to decide what might have happened in the cave, and get to the conclusion that it might have been either the guide or a hallucination. Next, they wonder about what might have made her change her mind, during the trial. Fielding says he supposes the straight questions she has been asked during the trial have exorcised her ghosts. The term 'exorcised' makes her think of Mrs. Moore, and her comment about the ghost, during the accident with the Nawab Bahadur's car. She tries to agree with Fielding, and says,"'Events presented to me in their logical sequence,' but it hadn't been that at all.'"(p. 234) Again we have the duality; either, through Mystery, Mrs. Moore has become Esmiss Esmoor, or,

through Chaos, she has died. Both of them agree that Mrs. Moore has probably died. Still, Adela cannot help the feeling that the old woman, may be through telepathy, could have told her what happened in the cave.

> Were there worlds beyond which they could never touch, or did all that is possible enter their consciousness? They could not tell. They only realized that their outlook was more or less similar, and found in this a satisfaction. Perhaps life is a mystery, not a muddle; they could not tell. Perhaps the hundred Indias which fuss and squabble so tiresomely are one, and the universe they mirror is one. They had not the apparatus for judging.

In the meanwhile, they have a more practical problem to solve. Aziz has agreed not to charge her the twenty thousand rupees if she writes him a letter, apologizing for all the problems she has brought to him. She tries hard to write it, but finally gives up. She ends up by facing the fact that she doesn't have a real affection for Aziz, and that he will sense this, no matter what she may say. Aziz gives up the money, anyway, and Miss Quested returns to England.

But evil is still loose. Aziz's and Fielding's friendship, which has resisted so many blows, is finally bound to give way to the racial barrier. 'They had conquered, but were not to be crowned.' (p. 265) Aziz has never understood why Fielding has taken Miss Quested to the school, instead of joining him in his triumphal procession, after the trial. He also cannot see why his friend has asked him to give up the girl's money. Fielding has tried to be fair and to behave according to what he believed to be his duty as a human being, but duty and honesty do not represent much to Aziz. According to his beliefs, a friend is the person who loves and hates with us, and it is hard for him to accept that Fielding is not Miss Quested's enemy. Besides, some of his Indian friends have told him

that Fielding and Adela are lovers. He likes his friend so much that he could accept even this. He knows Fielding is getting old, and probably he has trouble in getting prettier women than Miss Quested. But what he cannot perceive is the reason why his friend avoids exchanging confidences. He cannot understand that for Fielding, who is an Englishman, it is hard to open his heart to emotion. In the day when they had become real friends Aziz has shown him his wife's photograph. According to the custom, in the East, a man only shows his wife to his brother. That photograph is the most precious thing Aziz possesses, and Fielding knows that. He is touched, and longs to give Aziz something in return. But, like Maurice, Fielding does not believe in permanence. He is afraid of opening his heart and being hurt,

> He felt old. He wished he too could be carried away on waves of emotion. The next time they met, Aziz might be cautious and stand-offish. He realized this, and it made him sad that he should realize it. (p. 115)

It is ironical, paradoxical, but probably not uncommon at all, the fact that Fielding doesn't throw himself completely into the relationship because he is afraid of being hurt and losing the friend; and he ends up by being hurt, and losing the friend, exactly because he has not thrown himself completely into the relationship.

One night they have a slight altercation. Aziz, trying to force him into a confidence, jokes, 'So you and Madamsell Adela used to amuse one another in the evening, naughty boy — ' And Fielding, who doesn't like the tone, is roused and answers, 'You little rotter.' The rough words hurt Aziz more than he realizes. That night Fielding tells his friend he is going to England for a short visit, and Aziz grows suspicious. He is afraid that Fielding and Miss Quested are planning to get married and to live on the money they have taken from him. 'Aziz did not believe his own suspi-

cions — better if he had, for then he would have denounced and cleared the situation up.' (p. 272)

Fielding realizes he is losing his friend, and cannot do anything about it. He used to say of himself, 'I travel light', but he likes Aziz, and one cannot travel light once one's emotions are involved. Somehow he links what is happening to the Marabar and to the echo. Evil is loose, Godbole has implied.

> 'Everything echoes now; there's no stopping the echo. The original sound may be harmless, but the echo is always evil.' This reflection about an echo lay at the verge of Fielding's mind. He could never develop it. It belonged to the universe that he had missed or rejected. (p. 269)

Actually, it belongs to the universe where Fantasy and the supernatural exist, to the universe where people believe in the permanence of a personal relation, to the universe where people are either naïve or brave enough to throw themselves on waves of emotion.

Fielding goes to England. When he reaches Venice he sends a post card. If an Englishman is not skilfull in showing his emotion, he is even more awkward when he writes. Aziz and his Indian friends agree there is something wrong. Aziz refuses to read Fielding's letters and is soon told by Mohammed Latif that he has married an English woman. Supposing that the woman is Miss Quested, he leaves Chandrapore and goes to Mao, in Central India, with Godbole.

Two years afterwards, during the Hindu cerimony which corresponds to Christmas, he hears that Fielding is to come and spend some days on the place. Aziz tries not to mind it.

The Hindu festival is marked by Muddle. God, who is soon to be born, is not born yet. Though, of course, he has been born centuries ago and, if we want to be really truthful, he has never been born because he is eternal. Maybe a religion which is based

on muddle is the best way to express the complexity of life. There comes a moment, in this queer festival, when one is supposed to love anyone or anything which comes into one's mind. While Professor Godbole is praying, he thinks of a wasp, and of Mrs. Moore.

> 'One old Englishwoman and one little, little wasp,' he thought, as he stepped out of the temple into the grey of a pouring wet morning. 'It does not seem much, still it is more than I am myself.' (p. 286)

Everyone dances and sings, and then they realize an inscription where it is written 'GOD SI LOVE' (p. 281) , and all are happy, because they know theirs is a God who has a sense of humor.

> Infinite Love took upon itself the form of SHRI KRISHNA, and saved the world. All sorrow was annihilated, not only for Indians, but for foreigners, birds, caves, railways, and the stars; all became joy, all laughter; there had never been disease nor doubt, misunderstanding, cruelty, fear. (283)

Aziz's attitude to the ceremony is at one time benevolent, bored and slightly cynical. The Rajah has just died, but they are to hide this from the people so as not to spoil their illusion of salvation.

Next day he goes for a walk with his children, Karim, Ahmed and Jamila. They are going to the Shrine of the Head. There is a legend about a saint, a hero who released some prisoners, but who lost his head during the fight. His body went back home, and died there. Therefore, now he has two shrines, the shrine of the body — which is placed in Aziz's very garden — and the shrine of the head. This disjunction of body and head takes us back to the problem of connection of heart and mind where people, through personal relations, reach completeness. The shrine of

the body is in Aziz's garden because, in his relationship with Fielding, he is the part which stands for emotions and instincts. When he gets to the shrine of the head he meets Fielding, who is with a young man, his brother-in-law. Probably, were it not for the Muddle, Aziz would not have addressed them. But Fielding and the young man are attacked by some wild bees. Besides, it is raining, and they are all dirty with mud. The mess makes Aziz feel good, and he addresses the Englishmen . Fielding tries to be friendly, but Aziz is cold, biting and ironic. Fielding, now older and sterner, does not attempt a further intimacy. Talking to the young man, Aziz calls him Mr. Quested. And it is then that Fielding understands why his friend is so resentful. The young man is not Miss Quested's brother. Fielding's wife is Stella, Mrs. Moore's daughter. Fielding has referred to her in several of the letters Aziz never read. But this is not enough to make the illogical young Moslem feel better. He has been angry with Fielding and hating all Englishmen for two years, and is not willing to stop now. 'He had build his life on a mistake, but he had built it.' (p. 298)

Fielding and his family are staying at the Guest House, and Aziz decides to go there and give the young man some embrocation for the bee stings. He finds Ralph alone, and thinks this a good opportunity to take his revenge on the enemy. Outside, the Hindus go on with their carnival. The moment of universal love comes to its climax when one of the prisoners is to be released. Ralph doesn't want Aziz to pass the medicine on him. He feels the Indian's hostility. Aziz is surprised, and asks him, 'Can you always tell whether a stranger is your friend?' Ralph answers this is the one thing he always knows. Suddenly, at the exact moment when the Hindu prisoner is released, he realizes this is Mrs. Moore's son. 'Then you are an Oriental,' he says. Aziz feels the cycle is beginning again.

According to the Continuance theme, Ralph is more than Mrs. Moore's son — he is part of her. And, when Aziz asks him whether his mother has talked about him, symbolically it is Mrs. Moore who speaks through her son,

> 'Yes.' And with a swerve of voice and body that Aziz did not follow he added, 'In her letters, in her letters. She loved you.'

As a last tribute to Mrs. Moore, Aziz decides to take Ralph, on a boat, to watch the festival. Mrs. Moore's son makes him decide to enter the boat. And when his boat collides with Fielding's, it is Mrs. Moore's daughter who, flinging herself first against her husband, and then against Aziz, makes them fall into the water. Amid rain, mud, water, in this third part of the symphony, called 'Temple', which represents Muddle, they become friends again. Either Chance, or Muddle, or Esmiss Esmoor, has driven Evil back to its source and sealed the broken reservoir.

Before Fielding leaves Mao, he and Aziz go for their last ride together. Though they are friends again, they know there is no meeting place for them in India. Fielding doesn't travel as light as he travelled once. Now he has a wife and a child who depend on him. He cannot afford to go against the Anglo-Indians or to losehis job anymore. 'He already felt surprise at his own past heroism. Would he today defy all his own people for the sake of a stray Indian?' (p. 314) We cannot know where Fielding's train is going to lead him. Is he going to become an Anglo-Indian? Let's hope not. When he was free, and 'travelled light,' he used to feel there was something missing in his life. Maybe, like Philip and Cecil and Ansell, he regretted being more of a spectator than of an actor in life. Like Margaret and Rickie, he has become an experiment. He has got something, a family, and given something in return, his

heroism. As he talks about his wife and about Ralph, Fielding implies they are after something he cannot quite understand. Maybe they are after the question which has brought so much bewilderment to their mother, the question about the existence of Order, the question about the difference between Mystery and Muddle.

Again, a woman has separated a man from his best friend, it seems. They go on, discussing politics. Aziz, inflamated with patriotic enthusiasm, longs for the day when Indians will stop fighting against themselves and unite to fight against the oppressor,

> 'We may hate one another, but we hate you most. If I don't make you go, Ahmed will, Karim will, if it's fifty five-hundred years we shall get rid of you, yes, we shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then'— he rode against him furiously — 'and then,' concluded, half kissing him, 'you and I shall be friends.' (p. 317)

This is the story of a different sort of friendship, a friendship which succeeds, although the friends are going to separate. They have reached their own sort of permanence, and, again, we don't know whether this is a sad or a happy closing to a personal relation. We are as unsure about things as we were in the beginning, yet we have the feeling we have acquired something, in A Passage to India, which was not present in the other novels. Perhaps it is the acknowledgement of Doubt. In the first part of the symphony we are shown a world of order where two personal relations have been established, one between Aziz and Mrs. Moore, the other between Aziz and Fielding. In the second part we are introduced to Chaos, and both relations are broken. Finally, to close the circle, we find another sort of Order, through Muddle, and, though in a confusedway, both relations are reopen. On

the one hand Fielding and Aziz, though separated, are still together. On the other, through her son, Aziz has managed to touch Mrs. Moore again. This is Muddle all over, and perhaps Muddle is an unknown sort of Mystery.

NOTES ON CHAPTER SEVEN

1. The railroad seems to be a recurrent leit-motif in Forster. Comments are made upon it in several novels. In The Longest Journey Rickie has an accident in a tram. Several years later he is killed by a train. This suggests fate, and a sort of circular movement. We have already seen this circular movement when the train passes Ansell's home twice, and will see it again in A Passage to India, when Mrs, Moore passes by the city of Asirgarh.

2. The number three is also frequent in Forster's fiction. The mosque is formed of three arches. In Maurice we have the Trinity, where God's face can be perceived in the intersection of three rainbow arches. In The Longest Journey Rickie, for three times, denies his brother, who is the 'Shepherd.' In all cases this 'trilogy' can be associated with religion and, in the scene at the mosque, it may reinforce the idea of Order, which is implied in this first part of the novel.

3. Mr. Oliver Stallybrass, in his notes on A Passage to India (Penguin, Bucks, 1980), tells us that 'Godbole' means 'Sweet-mouthed.'

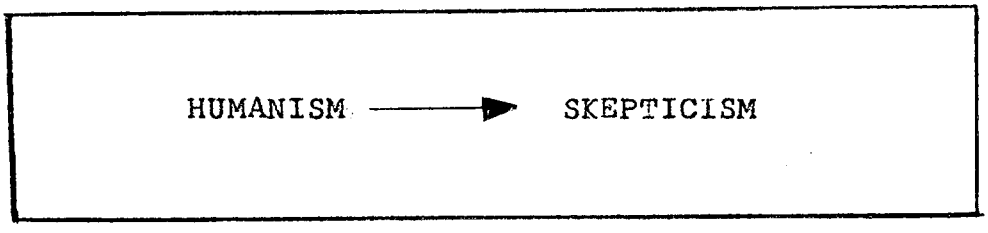
4. The milkmaiden reminds us of Tom, the milk boy in Howards End, and of the scene where Gino and Philip share the milk, in Where Angels Fear to Tread. Milk is the element which seals friendship, and the Hindu expression for God is THE FRIEND.

5. In his booklet about Islamism (O que é Islamismo : Ed. Brasiliense, São Paulo, 1981) Jamil A. Haddad talks about hospitality as a religious duty cherished by all those who live near the desert. Because of the hard climate, people have usually to help one another, and that's why hospitality is such an important feature in their code of morals.

6. Forster: "The Story of the Siren" (in: Collected Short Stories). Giuseppe, the young man who sees the Siren, marries a girl who has had the same vision. Together, they are going to have a child, who is to be the 'Anti-Christ'. The child represents the passage, through Chaos, to another sort of Reality. But the baby is killed by the priests (who represent the tradition of the undeveloped heart.) One can feel, again, the influence of Nietzsche's philosophy in this short-story.

8. CONCLUSION: TRYING TO CONNECT

A dissertation is supposed to be a circular kind of work. Therefore, it is time we go back to our first proposal, the analysis of the clash between the opposite trends of Skepticism and Humanism in the novels written by E.M. Forster. By now we are supposed to have got to some clear conclusion, and to state it in this coda to the work. And, indeed, we are greatly tempted to trace a diagram,



and conclude by saying that, after taking into consideration Forster's ideas towards the theme of Personal Relations in the course of twenty-one years and six novels, we have the feeling that the predominant emphasis in his work has changed from Humanism to Skepticism. This would be based, say, on a comparison between the Italian Novels, where we find Order, Permanence and the Supernatural, and A Passage to India, where people cannot be certain about anything.

Doing such a thing, though, would be rather unfair to Forster. We cannot, for didactic purposes, force what is complex to fit into a scheme. This would be behaving like the Wilcoxes, who tend to make life a simple subject.

The diagram we have traced above sins because it is too primary. It would have served us if our intention were to

determine what percentage there is of Humanism and Skepticism in each of the novels.' Let's leave that to the mathematician and to the businessman. Besides, we are not working in terms of skepticism versus humanism: we are dealing with skepticism and humanism, two characteristics of a single person. This person is Forster, and Forster is an author. Their sum, clash, mixture or whatever we determine to call it, is reflected in his work. They are the cause of the several flaws and paradoxes we find in the novels. We have got thus far. Let us now consider each of these features for a while.

Firstly, we have talked about flaws. A good example is what we have in Maurice. On the one hand we have the negation of all that is permanent and the realization that we cannot be sure about things. Even the strongest ties between human beings have proved to be fragile. On the other hand there is this strong desire for order, that culminates in the flaw raised by the happy-ending, where all that has been so painfully asserted in the novel is suddenly forgotten.

But the sum of these antagonic elements raises also the paradoxes which broaden the scope of the novels and make them so interesting. The humanist believes in Man, in Order, and in Permanence. The skeptic talks of Chaos, of NO "FOR EVER's" and of doubt. One of the consequences of these dichotomies is that the text acquires two levels of interpretation: there is a symbolic reading, which is optimistic and suggests hope, and a literal reading, which leads to tragedy. The best example is the case of Rickie: symbolically he triumphs and his image is cast among the stars forever. On the level of the story he experiences the most bitter of all failures, and dies broken and deceived. This happens to Leonard Bast, who is murdered by a social structure which he doesn't fit and, at the

same time, as a symbol, continues through his son and returns to Nature. Beside the implications raised by these different levels of reading, paradox is also the best word to describe these contradictory views Forster has of things. Let's start with the fact that he is both a feminist and a misogynist. As a humanist he defends minorities, women included. The intellectual in Forster is a feminist. The part of him which is a 'child of Nature' is misogynistic. So with religion: Rationally he is an agnostic , but what Malinovski calls the primitive part of man, which yearns for a reason for living, and for a creator, demands that he believes in an ultimate order, which would be God. This makes us think of another sort of paradox in Forster: he is not able to unite these two aspects of his personality, the heart and the mind. At heart yearning for order, and rationally afraid of chaos, he is himself unable to connect the beast and the monk. This is another aspect which contributes greatly to the complexity of his novels. Forster-the-mind possesses the knowledge of good-and-evil: he knows that Wilcoxes have positive qualities. Like Margaret, he tries to connect. He knows that Clive is a good person, and that Mr. Pembroke has the best of intentions. Forster-the-heart is as idealistic and as romantic as Rickie, as partial and radical as Helen, as a-moral as Gino and Scudder. As a result we have inconsistencies, that's certain, but also several dimensions are added to the novels. There are people who say that Forster is too sarcastic towards people like the Wilcoxes. There are others (like Lawrence, who criticises Howards End saying that 'Business is no good,') who think he is too kind to them. Both of them are right, each reading the novel from a different angle. This adds to richness and also to beauty in the text, and makes of Forster a greater, though less perfect, author. This is the result of the sum of skepticism and humanism.

Let us go back to the diagram which states that Humanism, the predominant note in the Italian Novels, is gradually replaced by Skepticism, which seems to dominate his last works. This is right as far as we think in terms of 'percentage.' Everyone agrees that there is a greater emphasis on the idea of doubt in Maurice, or in A Passage to India, than in A Room with a View. But can we go as far as stating that Forster's ideas about personal relations have changed in the interval between his first and last novels? If we think of Forster's life, perhaps the answer is 'Yes.' But here we are dealing with his work. There is already much of skepticism in the Italian Novels. The only difference is that the author choses not to deal with it. George's questions have to do with the idea of Order. 'Things don't fit.' Rev. Beebe, a puzzling character, is never properly decodified. All paths that lead into skepticism, into doubt, are already present, but the author refuses to deal with them. Rather than stating that the novels have grown more pessimistic, we might say that their scope has widened. Doubts which have always existed are finally undertaken and discussed. And in spite of all these doubts, we still have a place left for hope.

This makes us think of the circular movement, so frequent in Forster. Rickie, in the beginning of The Longest Journey, quite naïvely states he doesn't hate anyone, and thinks he is a humanist as a consequence. Then comes the crisis, when he hates his brother. At the end of the novel the circle is closed, and again he states that he doesn't hate anyone, but now he has grown. The same can be said of Forster's novels: the Italian Novels are said to be more optimistic because they do not talk about doubt. But doubt is there, like a ghost, haunting action. In later novels, it is discussed openly. If we have a greater skepticism we have, also, a nobler sort of humanism, which passes beyond doubt and points to hope. After the 'Everlasting Yea' and the 'Everlasting No'

we seem to be left with a humble 'Perhaps.' This makes us think of Mrs. Moore, in A Passage to India : as the story opens she believes in order; at the caves she acknowledges Chaos. Lastly, as her train performs its circular movement near the city of Asirgarh, the hills ask her: 'So you thought an echo was India; you took the Marabar caves as final?' We start with Order, and then move to Chaos. The last word, though, seems to be Muddle, and again we have another paradox: usually Muddle seems to be, in the earlier novels, synonimous with Chaos. But, in A Passage to India, it comes as the possibility of an unknown kind of Order, or even as something which can be found beyond Chaos.

It's time we get to our conclusion. And we are not so candid as to say that Forster is either a Humanist or a Skeptic. He is the result of both tendencies. We cannot say that he believes in the 'Everlasting Yea' or in the 'Everlasting No.' We know that he believes in a humble perhaps. And that his novels are an assessment of this 'perhaps.' The skeptic in him contributes with the doubt; the humanist with the hope.

> "Mr. Forster, you will be ninety in the New Year ('Yes, good heavens!' he interjected), do you still regard yourself as an unbeliever?"
>
> "Yes," replied Mr. Forster, "I think I should call myself one."
>
> "Unbeliever?" I repeated.
>
> "Yes, perhaps", answered Mr. Forster and halting for a moment corrected himself: "Non-believer perhaps — a better description."
>
> (G.K. Das: E.M. Forster's India. Billing & Sons Ltd., Worcester, 1977, p. 118.)

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