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İstanbul Üniversitesi
Sosyal Bilimler Enstitüsü
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İngiliz Dili ve Edebiyatı Bilim Dalı

Yüksek Lisans Tezi

The Theme of Reconciliation in the Fiction of E.M. Forster: A Room with a View, Howards End and A Passage to India

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2501020038

Tez Danışmanı
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İstanbul 2006

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ÖZ

Bu tezin amacı, E.M. Forster'ın A Room with a View (1908), Howards End (1910) ve A Passage to India (1924) adlı üç önemli romanında da işlemiş olduğu "Barış ve Biraraya Geliş" temasını, her eserde tekrar eden motifler aracılığıyla incelemektir. Bu çalışma bir yandan da, bu tarihler arasında İngiltere'nin sosyal, ekonomik ve politik yapısında meydana gelen değişikliklerin, Forster'ın yazınına ne şekilde yansıdığını ve onu nasıl değiştirdiğini de gözönüne sermektedir; fakat Forster çağının getirdiklerinden her ne kadar etkilenmiş olsa da, yazınının odak noktası hep aynı kalmıştır, insan ilişkileri. Aslında Forster'ın yaptığı, yeni çağın getirdiklerinin insan ilişkileri ve bireyler üzerindeki etkisini analiz etmektir.

Giriş bölümünde, E.M. Forster'ın romanlarına altyapı oluşturan dönemle ilgili tarihsel gerçekler ve yazarın hayatının kısa bir değerlendirmesi, Forster'ın barış ve biraraya geliş teması üzerine yoğunlaşmasıyla bağlantılı olarak ele alınmaktadır.

Birinci Bölüm'de, A Room with a View romanının kahramanı Lucy'nin kendi içinde ulaştığı barış ve bütünlük incelenmektedir.

İkinci Bölüm'de, Howards End romanındaki İngiliz ve yabancı çatışması, sosyal sınıflar, materyalist ve entellektüel, "düz yazı ve tutku" arasındaki büyük farklılıklar ve bu farklılıkların romanın sonunda oluşturduğu birliktelik üzerinde durulmaktadır.

Üçüncü Bölüm'de, Forster'ın en tanınan ve beğenilen, savaş sonrası romanı A Passage to India'daki barış ve biraraya geliş, eser bir İngiliz sömürgesi olan Hindistan'da geçmesi ve ırksal, dinsel, kültürel ve cinsel hiyerarşi üzerine kurulmuş olmasına dayanılarak, sömürgecilik sonrası teori ışığında ele alınmaktadır.

Sonuç Bölümü ise, her romandaki barış ve biraraya geliş temasına son bir bakış sunmaktadır.

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to examine closely the common theme of "Reconciliation" in the three major novels by E.M. Forster, A Room with a View (1908), Howards End (1910) and A Passage to India (1924), through the recurring devices he adopted in these works of fiction. While doing that, the study also portrays how Forster's writing alters and evolves in time due to the change in the economic, social and political condition of England and the world in general; yet no matter how much and in what way he is influenced by the affairs of his age, the main focus of Forster remains always the same, that is personal relationships. Actually, he analyzes the reflections of the turn of the century on the interactions of people and also within the individuals themselves.

In the Introduction, the background information for Forster's novels, involving some historical facts about the period and a brief evaluation of the writer's life, is given in relation to his focus on the theme of reconciliation.

In Chapter I, the reconciliation the heroine of the novel, Lucy, achieves within herself is examined in Forster's social comedy A Room with a View.

In Chapter II, the English as opposed to the foreigner, the gaps between the social classes, the material and the intellectual, prose and passion and their union in Howards End are delved into.

In Chapter III, reconciliation between the divergent groups of E.M. Forster's most celebrated, post-war novel, A Passage to India, is discussed in the light of the post-colonial theory, as the novel is set in the colonial India and involves racial, religious, cultural and gender issues as obstacles in the way of personal communication.

Finally, the Conclusion provides one last look at the theme of reconciliation in each novel.

FOREWORD

This study involves a close analysis of E.M. Forster's three best-known works of fiction *A Room with a View*, *Howards End* and *A Passage to India*, focusing on the theme of "Reconciliation", which emerged from Forster's need for a possible solution to the modern world's schism and chaos. Having recognized the inefficiency of institutionalized powers against the suffering caused by industrialism and the upcoming Great War, Forster puts his faith in the individual, and personal relations, and therefore, makes them the subject matter of his novels. He writes about the detachment both within and among individuals and tries to create unity and reconciliation between his diverse characters.

I would like to thank my family and friends who have given me their support, confidence, love and patience in the course of preparing this thesis. I would also like to thank my classmates for their valuable opinions and the discussions which made the classes in the cold rooms of İstanbul University enjoyable. I am grateful to all my professors at İstanbul University for all the precious things I have learned from them in years. Finally, but most of all, I would like to give my thanks to Prof. Dr. Zeynep Ergun, who has taught me with her endless "Why?"s, that there is more to everything than I thought there was, for reading this thesis over and over again and guiding me towards new ideas each time, and eventually, for making me love literature even more than I did before I met her.

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

Reconciliation appears as a theme in many works of E.M. Forster, including his well-known novels *A Room with a View, Howards End* and *A Passage to India.* In all these novels, Forster explores the concept of reconciliation between ideas, represented by different groups of people belonging to diverse social, economic and racial classes, concentrating upon relationships on personal grounds. Although it would be irrelevant to consider the writer's life in order to understand his works and unacceptable to read them as autobiographies, a short analysis of Forster's background and the period in which he wrote the three novels in question will contribute to the comprehension of his motivation in focusing so much on the theme of reconciliation.

The Industrial Revolution in the 19th century brought with it many consequences ranging from the emergence of a new class -the industrial working class- to the expansion of England into an empire. With the death of Queen Victoria in 1901, the change in the social order gained rapidity and the short-lived reign of her son, Edward VII, became a time of transition between the strict Victorian Era and the modern times. The economic structure moving from the agricultural to the industrial -and therefore the population's movement from rural areas to big cities and the beginning of suburbia-, the growth of capitalism and the cracks appearing in the class barriers are some of the significant issues of the Edwardian Period that Forster dealt with in his novels. Henry Wilcox of *Howards End* is the product of capitalism, a merchant with connections with the colonies; on the other hand he is still tied strongly to a house in the countryside, not in soul but because of his wife who has her roots in that place. The interactions between social classes can be observed both in the relationship between Helen and Leonard in the novel mentioned, and also in the marriage of Lucy and George in *A Room with a View.* In *A Passage to India*, the theme of class-consciousness takes on a greater dimension since racial, as well as colonial issues are involved.

For Forster, the growth of big cities and the vanishing of rural areas were personally serious problems since he spent a great deal of his childhood in a massive

mansion in the English countryside and had a strong bond with it. This house, Battersea Rise, belonged to Forster's wealthy great-grand father, Henry Thornton, who was a foremost member of the Clapham Sect, an evangelist bourgeois organization whose purpose was to improve society through the fulfilment of reforms such as the abolition of slavery, the betterment of prison conditions and missionary activities.

> Henry Thornton and his circle would seem, on the surface, to give Forster little to like: they were materialistic, pious, clannish, censorious, public-minded, antagonistic to art. But like or not like is beside the point: they were strong, they had weight.[1]

Clapham represented almost everything that Forster stood firmly against, yet the sense of belonging to something powerful, orderly and constant made him proud of his inheritance and the rapid social change of the fin de siécle caused him to look back at it with a feeling of nostalgia.

In his university years at Cambridge, Forster got involved in a circle called the Apostles which was an early formation of the Bloomsbury group holding a completely contradictory creed to that of the Claphamites. "The Apostles' emphasis was on the inner condition of the individual – on the dictates of conscience and right reason over convention or law,"[2] a central theme in *A Room with a View*, apart from it being one of Forster's main points of interest. Another point where the Clapham Sect and the Apostles differed was that the latter "tended to be men of ideas rather than social and political activists"[3] like the former. For the Bloomsbury group whose discussions Forster joined now and then, "the enjoyment of beauty and personal relations were the highest goods."[4] Although Forster shared some of the ideas of the Bloomsbury group, the kind of novel that he produced was quite different from those of his contemporaries.

> The fragmentation of the modern world has provided both form and subject for modern literature, but that is not the kind of literature Forster can write. Art, for him,

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[1] Wilfred Stone, **The Cave and the Mountain**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1966, p. 22.
[2] **Ibid.**, p. 51.
[3] **Ibid.**
[4] John Colmer, **E.M. Forster: The Personal Voice,** London, Boston, Melbourne and Henley, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983, p. 10.

> is the creation of wholes, the harmonizing of contrarieties, not the celebration of lonely and unmended vision.[5]

Forster wrote all his novels, except for *A Passage to India*, before the First World War, during the Edwardian Period which, as mentioned before, bridged two opposing eras. In that time of upheaval, he united his "worldly (but religious)"[6] Claphamite legacy with the "unworldly (but irreligious)"[7] Bloomsbury ideal to write novels that involved the liberation of the individual along with a nostalgia for the past, leading him to concentrate on the theme of reconciliation.

"In 1840 John Stuart Mill declared that 'Every Englishman of the present day is by implication either a Benthamite or a Coleridgean'"[8] claims Wilfred Stone in the introduction of his book, "not only describing an age's self-division but also suggesting that division itself, self-alienation, is the essential character of that age."[9]

> The contrast between the two is profound and complex, but essentially it is a contrast between a mechanical and an organic view of life, between analysis and creative synthesis. Bentham, a son of the Enlightenment, sought to discover social laws as immutable and splendidly abstract as Newton's laws of physics. Coleridge, a romantic idealist, sought to formulate a view of man and society compatible with man's highest aspirations. It is the difference between rationalism and romanticism, Utilitarianism and anti-Utilitarianism, and these are perhaps the best tags for the opposing sides.[10]

In the light of Stone's explanation of Benthamites and Coleridgeans, it is definitely possible to call Forster a Coleridgean. Like his contemporaries, he was also terrified with the mechanical state the English society was moving towards and grieved to recognize the new objects of worship to be money and material. Forster's discontent with the introduction of these new standards evoked a yearning for the rustic, traditional past. Therefore, the English countryside became the setting for *A Room with a View*, and also for *Howards End* in which the traditional is juxtaposed with

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[5] Stone, **op. cit.**, p. 18.
[6] **Ibid.**, p. 23.
[7] **Ibid.**
[8] **Ibid.**, p. 3.
[9] **Ibid.**
[10] **Ibid.**, p. 4.

the mechanic. India was also a place "where life moved in more traditional rhythms and the past impinged on the present with less violence."[11]

Like every Englishman of the 19th century, Forster also had a split personality both due to the self division of the age and also on account of his bourgeois heritage and his intellectual identity.

> If he is vaguely leftist in his sympathies, he is opposed in principle to the concentration of power that leftist programs require. He can agree for instance, that housing must be found for London workers, but he cannot approve of commandeering a "satellite town" for them in the uprooted countryside of his own home country: "I cannot equate the problem. It is a collision of loyalties. I cannot free myself from the conviction that something irreplaceable has been destroyed, and that a little piece of England has died as surely as if a bomb had hit it." Forster's respect for the countryside, the last fortress of individualism in a world of urban sameness, overrides his concern for the material benefit of the majority.[12]

Throughout his life Forster had been torn between tensions and tried to achieve reconciliation within himself. The yearning for reconciliation was not only related to his personal life of course, but it was also, quite naturally, motivated by having lived through the Great War. Forster's search for a unity became a common theme in his fiction and the protagonists of his novels were also characters in pursuit of harmony and reconciliation. This study aims to resolve this shared subject in Forster's three well-known novels through reappearing patterns and character types. For close text analysis and a deeper view into the novels, we move on to the upcoming chapters.

[11] **Ibid.**, p. 18.
[12] Frederick C. Crews, **E.M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism**, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1962, p. 21.

CHAPTER I

THE RECONCILIATION WITHIN THE SELF: DESIRE OVERCOMES CONVENTION IN *A ROOM WITH A VIEW*

E. M. Forster's novel *A Room with a View,* which was published in 1908, opens in the dining room of the Pension Bertolini in Florence with a conversation between two English tourists, Charlotte and Lucy. The first impression is of disappointment and frustration: the two cousins' rooms do not overlook the Arno as the Signora had promised, and as Lucy points out with discontent and sadness, she is

> 'a Cockney, besides! . . . It might be London.'[13]

With its "portraits of the late Queen and the late Poet Laureate" (p. 23) representing authority both in state and art, and "the notice of the English church" (p. 23) hanging on the wall of a room full of English people, the Bertolini is like a small English colony still very much attached to the strict Victorian values and convention.

To the disappointment of the newcomers contributes the **inappropriate** and intrusive offer of the "ill-bred" (p. 24) old man and his son, the Emersons, of exchanging their rooms with the ladies' since theirs have views of the Arno. The suggestion is quite open and seems friendly to the contemporary reader, simplified in the words of Mr. Emerson the father: "Women like looking at a view; men don't"[14] (p. 25). However, according to the English community at the pension, pursuing the Victorian ethics as the paintings on the wall denote, it is brutal and offensive. Actually, as John Colmer notes,

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[13] E.M. Forster, **A Room with a View**, Middlesex, Penguin Books, 1984, p. 23. All following quotations will refer to this edition; therefore the page numbers will be given in the text.

[14] That is so, simply because men already have access to the outside whereas women's only chance to see the outside – which means only a beautiful view for them- is looking out through the window of a house.

> all the fuss about the rules of propriety . . . may seem excessive – as indeed it did to a contemporary reviewer, R.A. Scott-James in 1908 – but it is artistically justified as the dramatization of two different attitudes towards life. [15]

Therefore, Forster uses exaggeration to set up more distinctly the polarities of the novel between which Lucy is going to get stuck.

Witnessing the impoliteness Lucy and Charlotte are subjected to, the other English tourists at the pension sympathize with them. Thus, a contrast is drawn between the two groups: the ones that will do and the ones that will not, in other words the Emersons.

> [T]he word 'do' turns up often in the novel to suggest the existence of common values and common prejudices among English people of this middle class. . . . Lucy and Miss Bartlett are assaulted by the other residents with all sorts of unwanted advice: everywhere 'kind ladies smiled and shouted'. They are just as intrusive as the Emersons were earlier; but Lucy and Miss Bartlett do not reject them, because middle-class instincts tell them that these kind ladies are their own type and will do, no matter how bad their behaviour or how dishonest their outlook.[16]

On her first night at the Bertolini Lucy finds herself in this conservative English set, full of people telling her how to manage things in Italy. "'. . . [H]ere you are as safe as in England; Signora Bertolini is so English'" (p. 31) she is told; however being English is not the only rule of acceptance to this confined society as the Emersons are "left in the cold" (p. 27) because of their unsuitable ways. These people "are here affecting to see Italy, but . . . [they] have difficulty in coming to terms with even English people just a little outside their own class – let alone Italians."[17] Amidst these two groups Lucy is "perplexed" (p. 25).

> She had an odd feeling that whenever these ill-bred tourists spoke the contest widened and deepened till it dealt, not with rooms and views, but with – well, with something quite different, whose existence she had not realized before. (p. 25)

Being a fatherless young girl with a suburban background who has probably never been abroad or separated from her family, Lucy is caught between many tensions at

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[15] John Colmer, **E.M. Forster: The Personal Voice**, Norfolk, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1975, p. 44.
[16] Mike Edwards, **E.M. Forster: The Novels**, New York, Palgrave, 2002, pp. 14-15.
[17] **Ibid.**, p. 15.

this point: adolescence and womanhood, head and heart, propriety and impropriety, England and Italy, differences in classes and values. The fact that she is confused by Mr. Emerson's talk and that she associates it with a wider and deeper context, denotes that this man is going to have an important influence on Lucy's inner reconciliation. The confusion also implies that Lucy is not completely at one with these insincere middle-class tourists. She still has not quite found her place in the world and her journey to Italy where she will encounter new people and ideas will be a journey into her own soul, a quest for her real identity. In fact, that is why she wants a room with a view: she wants to have a wider perspective of the world; she is open to the change Italy is going to bring her; and the change is going to come through Mr. Emerson as he is the one to offer her his room with the view. As a matter of fact, it is no coincidence that Forster comes up with the name Emerson for this liberal-minded old man. Forster names this character after the famous American writer and poet Ralph Waldo Emerson, who was one of the members of the transcendentalist movement. Their beliefs that

> God is immanent in each person and in nature and that individual intuition is the highest source of knowledge led to an optimistic emphasis on individualism, self-reliance, and rejection of traditional authority.[18]

Therefore, Mr. Emerson is going to help Lucy reject the authority that holds her back, let her real self out and become an individual. Lucy has the potential to rebel -as her name denotes a relation to **light** and **Lucifer-** and improve: she plays the piano passionately; she has the courage to "g[i]ve the outsiders a nervous little bow" (p. 27) at a time when they are dismissed as ill-bred by the people of her own class. She is nervous since she cannot feel completely at ease with the Emersons as they do not fit in, yet her bow is an attempt to reach over the barriers and communicate with these people for whom she feels a sympathy mixed with uneasiness and wonder. To her bow, the young Emerson responds not by another bow, but by raising his eyebrows and smiling" (p. 27), which suggests naturalness, sincerity and spontaneity instead of gentility and propriety.

In the first part of the book, Lucy

[18] (Online) http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/t1/trnscdntl1.asp, 17 September 2005.

> begins as a member of the conventional world manifesting discontent. When we first see her she is severely restless under the constraints imposed upon her by her older and very "proper" cousin Charlotte, who regards herself . . . as duty-bound to uphold and enforce English bourgeois values even in Italy. For Lucy . . . Italy represents liberation. Under Charlotte's governance Lucy is "in a state of spiritual starvation" (*RV*. 26) which prompts her to make repeated attempts to escape the protective "English" atmosphere of the pension and to seek reality in the streets and countryside of Italy.[19]

With no patriarch in her household to tell her what is wrong and what is right, Lucy is torn between the instincts stimulated in her by Italy and the proper behaviour she has been taught to portray as an English girl. The fact that Lucy's father is dead, and therefore that she lacks a proper authority figure who can supervise her through her life in a convenient way, places her in the hands of numerous other guardians throughout the novel. In this aspect,

> *A Room with a View* . . . opposes older and younger generations. The parental generation is a force throughout the novel, appearing in the first half as the English tourists who "protect" Lucy, in the second as the benevolent regime of her mother, from which Lucy nevertheless must separate herself to reach adulthood.[20]

The first of these guides we get acquainted with is her chaperon in Italy, Miss Bartlett, who is obsessed with the idea of doing the **proper** thing for Lucy. However, her anxiousness is exaggerated and ostentatious which makes her quite a repulsive character. After she accepts to exchange the rooms with the Emersons with the arbitration of Mr. Beebe, she settles in the bigger room, her excuse being that it was the young man's room and that it would not be suitable for Lucy to take it. When she goes into the room, the first thing she does is to lock the door, fasten the window shutters and "to see . . . whether there were any oubliettes or secret entrances" (p. 34), all of which indicate her extremely suspicious, xenophobic and narrow-minded personality. Charlotte's locking herself in this room with the shutters fastened is also

[19] Stephen K. Land, **Challenge and Conventionality in the Fiction of E.M. Forster**, New Yok, AMS Press, 1990, pp. 116-117.
[20] Barbara Rosecrance, **Forster's Narrative Vision**, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1982, p. 89.

an implication of her interest in her own -her selfishness- as well as her obtuseness to change and different views. Furthermore, as Barbara Rosecrance points out,

> Miss Bartlett is a portrait of sexual hysteria, from her fascinations with keys, locks and secret passages to her voyeuristic obsession with Lucy's sexual life, the details of which she recounts to her friend, the lady novelist. . . . The cousin's effusive affection for Lucy appears essentially a deflection of her repressed sexuality.[21]

On the other hand, Lucy, when she goes up to her room, "open[s] the window and breathe[s] the clean night air" (p. 34), thinking kindly of Mr. Emerson who has granted her the chance to see the Arno. Consequently Lucy, who has not yet come to terms with her own sexuality and aspirations, still has different alternatives to choose from. On the one side, she has the view of the river suggesting life and change -the change that is going to come through Mr. Emerson- and on the other side she has the suffocating Charlotte, who "envelop[s] her in a protecting embrace . . . [which] gave Lucy the sensation of a fog" (p. 34). Lucy can either recognize her feelings and desires and "take to live as she plays [the piano]" (p. 52), passionately and true to her emotions, or prefer to be a part of the social mechanism and wither away into her alter ego, Charlotte. In fact, she comes close to the latter when she starts to lie to everyone and especially to herself in the second half of the novel. It is her mother, Mrs. Honeychurch, who notices the likeness as she says,

> 'Oh, goodness! . . . How you do remind me of Charlotte Bartlett!' (p. 214)

During the first dinner in the Bertolini, Lucy runs into Mr. Beebe, a clergyman whose sermon she listened to previously and who has been appointed vicar to Lucy's neighbourhood Summer Street. Mr. Beebe keeps appearing throughout the novel and has an ambiguous position in it. The first impact he makes upon the reader is quite positive. We understand that he is an unusual clergyman when Lucy says,

[21] **Ibid.**, p. 100.

> ‘He seems to see good in everyone. No one would take him for a clergyman. . . . And you know how clergymen generally laugh; Mr. Beebe laughs just like an ordinary man.’ (p. 30)

He is friendly and kind in contrast to the other clergyman in the novel, the arrogant Mr. Eager, who is spiteful enough to accuse Mr. Emerson of murdering his wife and to spread this rumour to turn everyone against him. Mr. Beebe prompts several events which bring Lucy and George together. First, he acts as a mediator between Charlotte and the Emersons, which finally results in the exchange of the rooms. With his relatively unprejudiced and tolerant personality, he introduces the Emersons into the pension community and tries to set up a balance between the two groups. He excuses himself saying he has letters to write when Lucy declares she wants to go for a walk, and leaves her unguarded; thus Lucy ends up in George’s arms after she witnesses the murder in the Piazza. It is Mr. Beebe’s idea to organize a drive to Fiesole where George gives Lucy a passionate kiss. Unaware of their real identity, when Cecil helps them move to Summer Street, Mr. Beebe introduces George to Freddy and they go for a swim in the lake during which Lucy sees him almost naked. It is the acquaintance Mr. Beebe sets up between the two young men which allows Freddy to invite George to play tennis, and on this day George kisses Lucy for the second time. Therefore, Mr. Beebe, as the representative of God, precipitates a series of occasions in which Lucy and George gradually build up a relationship, although he does not mean to. After all, we know that he does not want their union as he tries to prevent Lucy and Mr. Emerson’s encounter in his house. Although he is present throughout, like the omnipresent Christian God, actually he has no control over how things turn out. The marriage takes place, even though he does not want it to. Mr. Beebe is disappointed when the engagement of Lucy and George is announced and he does feel satisfaction at the news of her break-up with Cecil. However, his joy does not stem only from his dislike for Cecil, but rather from his dogmatic view of sexuality.

> His belief in celibacy, so reticent, so carefully concealed beneath his tolerance and culture, now expanded like some delicate flower. ‘They that marry do well, but they that refrain do better.’ So ran his belief, and he never heard that an engagement was broken off but with a slight feeling of pleasure. In the case of Lucy, the feeling was

> intensified through dislike of Cecil; and he was willing to go further – to place her out of danger until she could confirm her resolution of virginity. (p. 207)

With this urge to perform the proper action in the name of religious morality, he participates in Charlotte's plan to help Lucy go to Greece with the Miss Alans. He also tries to prevent the meeting of Lucy and Mr. Emerson in his study which is the climax of the novel, yet he is not able to succeed. "This amiable and seemingly harmless man becomes dangerous in the crucial scene of the novel; and of course, it is his Christian distrust of the body that lies behind his action."[22]

On her first day in Florence, Lucy is guided through the back streets of the city to Santa Croce by a resident of the pension, Miss Lavish, who is referred to as "the clever lady" (p. 27) in the first chapter, but is obviously not. She is a self-centred, snobbish spinster who calls herself "'a real Radical'" (p. 37) and says she has "'always flown in the face of all conventions all . . . [her] life'" (p.83), yet her behaviour is in harmony with that of the conservative English lot both towards the Emersons and the Italian lovers in the expedition. Forster's ironic choice of a name for Miss Lavish emphasizes her exaggerated but fake liberalism. At the entrance of Santa Croce she says of the Emersons,

> 'Look at their figures! . . . They walk through my Italy like a pair of cows. It's very naughty of me, but I would like to set an examination paper at Dover, and turn back every tourist who couldn't pass it.' (p. 39)

which again denotes her snobbishness and superficial view of Italy. She makes Lucy get rid of her guidebook by Baedeker saying "'[h]e does but touch the surface of things'" (p. 36), yet Miss Lavish's understanding of Italy and her boastful "bohemianism" (p. 83) are even more pretentious and shallow. Apart from the negative aspects of her personality, the fact that she causes themselves to get lost on the way to the church and that she stands Lucy up right before they enter it indicates that Miss Lavish is not a proper guardian for Lucy. However, with her sudden disappearance, she paves the way for Lucy's second encounter with the Emersons in the church. By depicting the scene that takes place among violets during the

[22] Frederick C. Crews, **E.M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism**, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1962, p. 85.

expedition in her novel, she also stimulates the course of events that lead to George's kissing Lucy for the second time and finally to their union at the end.

Abandoned by her guide Miss Lavish, Lucy enters Santa Croce on her own. Without her Baedeker and her guardian she is bewildered:

> She walked about disdainfully, unwilling to be enthusiastic over monuments of uncertain authorship or date. There was no one even to tell her which, of all the sepulchral slabs that paved the nave and transepts, was the one that was really beautiful, the one that had been praised by Mr. Ruskin. (pp. 40-41)

Lucy has neither the autonomy to appreciate works of art according to her own taste, nor any confidence in her feelings. She needs the proper judgements of other people like Ruskin, who is the archetype of Victorian aesthetics, telling her how to regard art.

> Hers is a personality which, no matter what talents she may have, seems doomed because she is unwilling to take the slightest risk with her emotions. At the Pension Bertolini she feared to offer more than a token bow to the Emersons; here she fears even to cock her head at an effigy.[23]

Yet again, she has potential. After some time, "the pernicious charm of Italy work[s] on her, and instead of acquiring information, she begins to be happy" (p. 41). She watches the tourists with red noses and tries to figure out the meanings of the Italian notices. She is emancipated from the frozen effect of art and moves towards real life and accordingly joins Mr. Emerson and his son George. It is Lucy's and Mr. Emerson's sudden flitting forward to help a child who stumbles over a sepulchral slab and gets his feet caught in "the features of a recumbent bishop" (p. 41) which unites them together. Mr. Emerson holds the dead bishop responsible for this unfortunate event:

> 'Hateful bishop! . . . Hard in life, hard in death. Go out into the sunshine, little boy, and kiss your hand to the sun, for that is where you ought to be. Intolerable bishop!' (p. 41)

[23] Edwards, **op. cit.**, pp. 43-44.

and indicates the contrast between the inside of the church, cold and dark; and the world outside, warm, lively and light. Mr. Emerson values life, truth and "human warmth"[24] instead of worshipping a monotheistic god and living according to the restraints of religion as well as class-consciousness. He adds,

> 'Here's a mess: a baby hurt, cold and frightened! But what else can you expect from a church?' (p. 41)

and makes his point clear, manifesting his attitude towards institutionalized religion quite sharply, echoing the transcendentalists' view of religion who "react[ed] against the orthodoxy of Calvinism and the rationalism of the Unitarian Church, developing instead their own faith centering on the divinity of humanity and the natural world.[25] Though, of course not as defiant as Mr. Emerson, Lucy does not exhibit an enthusiasm in favour of religion either. For instance, Santa Croce does not appeal to her as a pleasant and cosy place with "the many tombs that characterize the building"[26] which denote death, including the Tomb monument to Michelangelo and the Funerary monument to Galileo Galilei.

> 'Of course, it must be a wonderful building. But how like a barn! And how very cold!' (p. 40)

Mr. Emerson's strong and independent convictions are echoed in his son George's little speech about Giotto he gives Lucy in Santa Croce:

> 'Remember . . . the facts about this church of Santa Croce; how it was built by faith in the full fervour of medievalism, before any taint of the Renaissance had appeared. Observe how Giotto in these frescoes – now, unhappily, ruined by restoration – is untroubled by the snares of anatomy and perspective. Could anything be more majestic, more pathetic, beautiful, true? How little, we feel, avails knowledge and technical cleverness against a man who truly feels!' (p. 43)

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[24] **Ibid.**, p. 46.
[25] (Online) http://www.encyclopedia.com/html/t1/trnscdntl1.asp, 17 September 2005.
[26] Patrizia Fibri – Stefano Masi, trans. Anthony Brierley, **The Gold Guides: Florence**, Florence, Bonechi, 2002, p. 91.

It is quite striking that George should refer to the blessings of the Renaissance in a negative way when he praises Giotto's frescoes to be free from the regulations it imposes on the work of art. George's outlook on art and his aesthetic values denote the rebellious, unconventional integrity he has inherited from his father which is a reflection of his view of social issues as well. According to George, majesty, pathos and beauty coexist in Giotto's art, just like he and his father are "indelicate, and yet at the same time – beautiful" (p. 31) as Miss Lavish observes.

Lucy's second attempt to run away from her guardians results in one of the most crucial and symbolic stages in the novel, when she witnesses a murder at Piazza Signora. Right before her escape, Lucy is seen playing the piano in the sitting room of the Pension Bertolini and after that she chats with Mr. Beebe and Miss Alan about the Emersons. Lucy is quite curious about the unusual father and son.

> 'Mr. Beebe – old Emerson, is he nice or not nice? I do so want to know.' (p. 57)

she asks the clergyman. Her upbringing urges her to label and locate these people in a certain group -which is either nice and appropriate or not nice and inappropriate- so that she can implement the suitable code of behaviour towards them. Despite all the unpleasant things she hears about them, Lucy finally declares that "she thought the Emersons were nice" (p. 58) yet she does not forget to add that she does not see them anymore and that "[e]ven their seats at dinner had been removed" (p. 58). Therefore, Lucy's escape can be interpreted as a rebellion against the pension community who finds the Emersons disagreeable, although she is not quite aware of this herself. The influence of music is also an essential force which drives her to this escape:

> Lucy never knew her desires so clearly as after music. She had not really appreciated the clergyman's wit, nor the twitterings of Miss Alan. Conversation was tedious; she wanted something big. (p. 60)

Thus she leaves the pension at sunset waiting for this big thing to come to her. First, she goes into a shop and spends a lot of money on some photographs of paintings by famous Italian painters including Botticelli's *Birth of Venus* which places emphasis on her act of rebellion as Venus is depicted nude in this picture, and as the

conventional Charlotte points out, the nude is "[a] pity in art" (p. 61). However to Lucy "the gates of liberty seem[s] still unopened" and she still feels "discontent" (p. 61) as she walks into the Piazza -an open-air gallery implying freedom, mobility and connection with the outside- where something will finally actually happen to her:

> She fixed her eyes on the tower of the palace, which rose out of the lower darkness like a pillar of roughened gold. It seemed no longer a tower, no longer supported by earth, but some unattainable treasure throbbing in the tranquil sky. Its brightness mesmerised her, still dancing before her eyes when she bent them to the ground and started towards home. (p. 62)

Fascinated by the grandeur of the tower which is implicitly a phallic symbol, Lucy proceeds towards her sexual awareness in this scene.

> As she enters the Piazza Signoria in which "the Loggia showed as the triple entrance of a cave,"[27] Forster opposes the passivity of age to what he will dramatize symbolically as the sexuality of youth: "An older person at such an hour and in such a place might think sufficient was happening to him, and rest content. Lucy desired more."[28]

Then Lucy finds herself in an absolute muddle. She hears two Italians quarrelling over money and then comes face to face with one of them as he bends over to her stabbed by the other. As she sees the blood streaming down his mouth, she feels "he had some important message for her" (P. 62). She then notices George Emerson looking at her, everything grows dim and she faints. With this extraordinary experience, Lucy achieves an epiphany; she reaches sexual realization through her "symbolic loss of virginity"[29] and begins to resolve the dying man's message about life, death, love and passion. "It was not exactly that a man had died; something had happened to the living: they had come to a situation where character tells, and where Childhood enters upon the branching paths of Youth" (p. 66). The change is overt and acute; and the incident is going to be influential to the rest of Lucy's and George's lives as a turning point as Lionel Trilling notes:

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[27] The cave imagery here symbolizes female genitals.
[28] Rosecrance, **op. cit.**, p. 91.
[29] **Ibid.**, p. 92.

> Both George and Lucy are young people imprisoned, Lucy by her respectability, George by a deep, neurotic *fin de siécle* pessimism. But the scene of death has not been lost upon them. It begins, indeed, the destruction of their prisons. George has held Lucy in his arms and now wants to live. Lucy's dull propriety begins to give way before the possibility of passion.[30]

Consequently, Botticelli's *The Birth of Venus* becomes a symbol for Lucy's rebirth into a new life of passion and sexuality. The photographs covered with blood denote the union of art and life for Lucy[31] and "the intrusion of reality into Lucy's protected world."[32] However, this moment of self-awareness does not have immediate consequences in Lucy's behaviour. Her reaction to her newly acquired realization is denial. As soon as she pulls herself together, she makes excuses to get rid of George through whom she discovers passion, sexuality and love. When she cannot do that, she asks George not to mention what has happened in the Piazza Signora to anyone; she is ashamed of her feelings and knows perfectly well that they have no place in the prudish English middle-class society she belongs to. Lucy needs to go through other experiences to develop, to learn to acknowledge and trust her feelings and let passion be her guide.

After this remarkable scene, heavy with symbols, in the Piazza Signora, Lucy and George come close together in the expedition to Fiesole arranged by Mr. Beebe and attended by the English residents of the Pension Bertolini. "The trip to the Fiesole picnic, whose consequences seem at first to be so unpleasant for everyone, is likened to the reckless charioting of Phaethon"[33] who picks up his girlfriend on the way to Torre del Gallo and the couple is envied by Lucy who sees them kissing:

> Lucy had a spasm of envy. Granted that they wished to misbehave, it was pleasant for them to be able to do so. (p. 82)

Phaethon and Persephone appeal to Lucy when the conventional English set stops the horses and asks the girl to leave. The young couple associate themselves with the

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[30] Lionel Trilling, **E.M. Forster**, New York, New Directions, 1965, p. 100.
[31] In Chapter Three, Mr. Beebe remarks "'If Miss Honeychurch ever takes to live as she plays, it will be very exciting – both for us and for her'" (p. 52), reminding the reader the contrast between her ardent playing and her quiet, restricted social life. The blood on the photographs signifies the introduction of passion into Lucy's real life.
[32] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 109.
[33] Crews, **op. cit.**, p. 133.

young Lucy who, they presume, has the potential to sympathize with them, yet she is still perplexed after her experience in the Piazza and has not yet come to that stage where she can make her own decisions. Despite Mr. Emerson's protests, Persephone is made to get off the cab. Here,

> Forster dramatises an opposition between the cerebral English and the instinctual Italian. The English gain the victory in the dispute over the driver's behaviour and deprive Phaethon of his Persephone, but there is no doubt that Forster wishes us to see that there is a deeper dispute in which they are losers. The driver alone 'had played skilfully, using the whole instinct, while the others had used scraps of their intelligence' (p. 90). The English, he says, 'gain knowledge slowly, and perhaps too late' (p. 91) – reminding us of Lucy, whose story is one of gaining knowledge slowly, very slowly, but not too late.[34]

In addition to this, Persephone functions also as a kind of alter ego for Lucy in this scene. In Greek mythology, Persephone is the goddess of fertility and the underworld where she spends the majority of the year. She returns to her mother Demeter once in a year and brings spring to the Earth. Lucy travels to Italy in the spring, too, where she encounters an alternative lifestyle. However, Lucy

> war[s] against the spring within her, tries not to recognize the fact.[35] Instead she returns to Summer Street and tries to hold on to her old life, to a kind of eternal summer[36]

indicating the safety she feels among her family and the circumstances she is accustomed to.

When the group reaches its destination and stop to enjoy the view, the small society disintegrates and this creates the opportunity for Lucy and George to unite. Therefore, despite the regulations and restrictions to keep the established order intact, the individual will at least try to find his or her way out through its gaps and cracks. "The petty machinery of social form malfunctions so completely that Lucy is free to meet George unchaperoned."[37] When Lucy asks Phaethon where the good men are in

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[34] Edwards, **op.cit.**, p. 48.
[35] The fact is that she is in love with George.
[36] John Sayre Martin, **E.M. Forster: The Endless Journey**, London, New York and Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 90.
[37] Crews, **op. cit.**, p. 98.

her broken Italian, it is ironic that he guides her to where George Emerson is though she had meant the clergymen, Mr. Eager and Mr. Beebe. According to him, if there is a good man in this group of people, it is definitely George; thus he misleads Lucy towards him -just like he misdirects Helios's chariot- and the misunderstanding results in George's kissing Lucy among streams of flowers. However, the magic of the moment is disturbed by Miss Bartlett standing "brown against the view" (p. 89) and the fertile blue violets.

The Italian first half of *A Room with a View* ends with Lucy and Charlotte's escape from Florence to join some family acquaintances in Rome, the Vyses. In her journey to Italy, Lucy discovers new emotions and a new **view** of life in general which were previously unknown to her. Mr. Beebe observes Lucy's progress and expresses it most eloquently:

> 'There was simply the sense that she had found wings, and meant to use them. I can show you a beautiful picture in my Italian diary: Miss Honeychurch as a kite, Miss Bartlett holding the string. Picture number two: the string breaks.' (p. 112)

Italy is the setting of Lucy's instinctual, sensual and sexual awakening[38], yet she is going to go back to her conventional routine in England, trying to disregard her desires. However, the experiences she lived through in Italy are going to continue haunting her in England as well. She will return to England changed; yet she is going to try hard not to consent to this alteration.

At the beginning of the second half of the novel which takes place in England, Lucy's engagement with Cecil Vyse is announced. "The curtains part" (p. 105) and Cecil enters the scene. He is a performer acting out his role in the established societal order. The first impression he conveys is not encouraging at all: "Cecil's first movement was one of irritation" (p. 105). Then Forster gives an account of his physical appearance which is not very promising either:

> He was medieval. Like a Gothic statue. Tall and refined, with shoulders that seemed braced square by an effort of the will, and a head that was tilted a little higher than the usual level of vision, he resembled those fastidious saints who guard the portals of a French cathedral. Well educated, well endowed, and not deficient physically, he

[38] The season being spring also indicates the rebirth of Lucy.

> remained in the grip of a certain devil whom the modern world knows as self-consciousness, and whom the medieval, with dimmer vision, worshipped as ascetism. A Gothic statue implies celibacy, just as a Greek statue implies fruition. (p. 106)

Forster's comparison of Cecil to a statue is quite significant as it denotes "coldness, immobility and lifelessness"[39] and indeed a Gothic one which is even worse as Forster associates it with celibacy. Therefore, Cecil's relationship with Lucy, who has already recognized her sexuality, although has not yet come to terms with it, cannot be expected to deliver any positive results; it is sterile and is doomed to fail. Actually, the contrast between them is marked sharply as they do not even share the same space when they are introduced to the reader as a couple: Cecil is inside the Honeychurch drawing-room while Lucy is outside on the terrace, and thus has access to a view. In fact, Lucy later on admits to him that she associates him with "[a] drawing-room . . . [w]ith no view", not "with the open air" (p. 125): "'When I think of you it's always as in a room'" (p. 125), which emphasizes the fact that Cecil is locked-up in himself; he is selfish and he is a peevish snob. The position of his head reveals that he looks down on people. He condescendingly announces his engagement to Lucy in Italian to the Honeychurch family and Mr. Beebe who do not speak or understand Italian at all. He is not brave enough to deal with his feelings in front of people. He belongs to the English lot in Forster's novels who "are depicted as tourists, not quite at home with themselves even in their own country."[40] Only when he declares in English that Lucy has accepted his proposal, does the statue-like Cecil "flush and smile with pleasure, and look more human" (p. 106). When George says of Cecil that "'[h]e should know no one intimately'" (p. 185), he echoes Lucy's younger brother Freddy's thoughts about him: "Cecil was the kind of fellow who would never wear another fellow's cap" (p. 104). "'He is for society and cultivated talk'" (p. 185), but when it comes to personal relations, he is a fiasco, as Freddy puns on the word fiancé. He lacks human warmth, sympathy and sincerity. Furthermore, he lacks passion. Before he kisses Lucy for the first time, he feels obliged to make a

[39] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 75
[40] **Ibid.**, p. 80.

long and unnecessary introduction and also he asks for her permission. Forster portrays the scene with mockery:

> At that supreme moment he was conscious of nothing but absurdities. Her reply was inadequate. She gave such a businesslike lift to her veil. As he approached her he found time to wish he could recoil. As he touched her, his gold pince-nez became dislodged and was flattened between them. (p. 127)

Compared to George's spontaneous kiss full of excitement which haunts Lucy for quite a long time, Cecil's kiss is a major blunder, a failure lacking in passion; and it does remind Lucy of George's kiss indeed. Cecil's pince-nez that prevent them from kissing denote the difference of their points of view towards life and how it affects their relationship as a couple. Lucy is the one to break the silence after this farcical embrace, making an important confession: "'Emerson the name was, not Harris'" (p. 128).

As the title of the chapter where Cecil first appears in the novel indicates, Cecil is truly medieval. He assumes the role of feudal landlord towards the Emersons when he meets them in the National Gallery -an enclosed space signifying limitation and pressure as opposed to the Piazza Signora- and brings them to Summer Street for "educational purposes" (p. 173). He calls them "'my protégés'" (p. 173), "[f]or the only relationship which Cecil conceived was feudal: that of protector and protected" (p. 173) as noblesse oblige required. When it comes to women, Cecil thinks he is a medieval knight in shining armour ready to rescue the damsel in distress, that is Lucy. On the occasion of their running into Freddy, George and Mr. Beebe bathing in the pond, Forster teases this out-of-date warrior: "'Come this way immediately,' commanded Cecil, who always felt that he must lead women, though he knew not whither, and protect them, though he knew not against what" (p. 151).

Cecil wants Lucy to fit into a certain ladylike female figure he has in mind. He treats her as a cold and dead work of art:

> She was like a woman of Leonardo da Vinci's, whom we love not so much for herself as for the things that she will not tell us.[41] The things are assuredly not of this

[41] Clearly, this is an allusion to female silence.

> life; no woman of Leonardo's could have anything so vulgar as a 'story'. (pp. 107-108)

This is reminiscent of Robert Browning's famous poem "My Last Duchess" in which a man has silenced and imprisoned his late wife into a frozen painting -a portrait which symbolizes limitation- forever. Like Browning's Duke, Cecil denies Lucy's humanity. As his words "Lucy was of another clay" (p. 109) indicate, he regards Lucy as a lump of clay which he thinks he can shape as he desires and model into a lifeless statue like himself. Cecil's last name, Vyse, which can be associated with the word **vice** -a tool used for holding something tight-, suggests his constricting manipulation of Lucy. He is disturbed and gets upset when Lucy speaks out her opinions: "He longed to hint to her that not here lay her vocation; that a woman's power and charm reside in mystery, not in muscular rant" (p. 118).

> [A]s often happened, Cecil had paid no great attention to her remarks. Charm, not argument, was to be her forte. (p. 173)

The ways Lucy and Cecil view Italy are very different from one another. For Lucy, Italy is the place where

> [h]er senses expanded; she felt that there was no one she might not get to like, that social barriers were irremovable, doubtless, but not particularly high. You jump over them as you jump into a peasant's olive-yard in the Apennines, and he is glad to see you. She returned with new eyes. . . . Italy was offering her the most priceless of all possessions – her own soul. (p. 130)

On the other hand,

> Italy had quickened Cecil, not to tolerance, but to irritation. He saw that the local society was narrow. (p. 130)

The reason why Cecil does not play tennis despite everyone's insistence, is on the surface based on the fact that he does not want to make a fool of himself; as a matter of fact, he is too dead to get involved in physical activity. As opposed to

Cecil, George is "so unchivalrous that he enjoys beating Lucy at tennis."[42] Just like Lucy, after the murder in the Piazza, George experiences his first epiphany. He overcomes his despair and now wants to live. The bathing scene is the second stage of his self-realization. From the small pond he is born again; he is totally alive:

> Then all the forces of youth burst out. He smiled, flung himself at them, ducked them, kicked them, muddied them, and drove them out of the pool. (p. 150)

While George, Freddy and Mr. Beebe are all swimming and playing so energetically and enthusiastically, Lucy, Mrs. Honeychurch and Cecil walk into the scene. George greets Lucy with a colloquial "[h]ullo!" (p. 152), naked, which signifies his being stripped of all conventions and regulations of society. Just as he was when he kissed Lucy among the violets, he is again natural and spontaneous. As Stephen K. Land points out, "the theory behind . . . this episode is pronounced beforehand by his father"[43]:

> '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. . . . In this – not in other things - we men are ahead. We despise the body less than women do. But not until we are comrades shall we enter the Garden. . . . I believed in a return to Nature once. But how can we return to Nature when we have never been with her? Today, I believe that we must discover Nature. After many conquests we shall attain simplicity. It is our heritage.' (p. 145)

As George participates in the bathing scene, he proves once again the influence of his father's ideology on his actions. The father and son are not members of the middle-class social mechanism stabilized upon values, rules and restrictions imposed on its members to avoid idiosyncrasy in order to achieve continuity. Mr. Emerson as a liberal journalist and George as a railway clerk have occupations that are not quite acceptable to the middle-class standards. Mr. Emerson is the writer of news, views and truth while George recalls Paethon driving his girlfriend away. George takes Lucy on a journey and through him, Lucy acknowledges her sexuality since the railway is also a phallic symbol. The father and son are egalitarian individuals and

[42] Crews, **op. cit.**, p. 87.
[43] Land, **op. cit.**, p. 120.

act "in pursuit of liberal humanism and in defiance of middle-class conventions."[44] They challenge the organic structure of society with their strong belief in "sexual equality, recognition of man's physical nature . . . and freedom from conventional restraints."[45]

Although Lucy attains self-recognition in Italy, she is terrified with her discovery as it does not comply with her bourgeois upbringing. Thus, her realization is followed by an immediate denial. She finds it easier and more appropriate to flee from this new situation than to cope with it. Therefore she leaves Florence only to find herself in more dangerous circumstances – in a stuffy and dull engagement which cannot respond to her passionate needs. She has not got the courage to break off from the secure stability her life provides her with. In times of trouble she "recall[s] the free, pleasant life of her home, where she [is] allowed to do everything, and where nothing ever happened to her" (p. 77). Lucy disregards her feelings and tells lies to everyone trying to make even her own self believe in them. Subconsciously she desires change, yet she is aware that it is not going to be easy. "'I want to be truthful,'" (p. 93) she says, "'It is so hard to be absolutely truthful'" (p. 93). Lucy, standing "on the edge of a green magic carpet which hovered in the air above the tremulous world" (p. 105), has got two alternatives to choose from. She is torn between "her private thoughts and public behaviour"[46] as it is implied in the conflicting fragments of her surname, Honeychurch, where honey stands for nature, sweetness, kindness, femininity and fecundity while church indicates institutions, restrictions, coldness and harshness. She is standing in the corner -Windy Corner- and she is going to take one of the turns although it will take her a long time to do so. Forster treats this delay as a typical quality of the English in a subsequent essay:

> The Englishman appears to be cold and unemotional because he is really slow. When an event happens, he may understand it quickly enough with his mind, but he takes quite a while to feel it.[47]

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[44] **Ibid.**, p. 118.
[45] **Ibid.**, p. 121.
[46] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 16.
[47] E.M. Forster, "Notes on the English Character", **Abinger Harvest**, New York and London, Harvest/HBJ, 1964, p. 7.

With the help of Mr. Emerson, Lucy starts to feel and makes her decision. She prefers to trust her feelings, admits her love for George and marries him. In other words, Lucy reconciles her demeanour with her desires, her playing with the way she lives and art with life.

As the title of the last chapter indicates, the Middle Ages come to an end for Lucy. She breaks her engagement with the outdated knight Cecil, marries George who promises a relationship based on "personal honesty and intimacy"[48] and they end up where they had begun, in the Bertolini in Florence. "In the course of the novel she experiences a renaissance of her own, emerging from the darkness of her adherence to convention into the light of understanding of herself and her place in society."[49] However, although the union of Lucy and George signify reconciliation, it is imperfect: "His own content was absolute, but hers held bitterness: the Honeychurches had not forgiven them; they were disgusted at her past hypocrisy; she alienated Windy Corner, perhaps for ever." (pp. 227-228) "That the price, her expulsion from Windy Corner, is paradise lost, suggests the degree to which, despite the happy ending, Forster implies a modern condition."[50] As she gains control over her own life, Lucy becomes an individual. The fact that the novel is concluded in Italy instead of England indicates disintegration. In exchange of her newly acquired autonomy, Lucy becomes detached from society and even from her own family which is its smallest representation, for both of which her marriage is unacceptable. Nevertheless, no matter how rebellious Lucy has been, it is significant that Forster depicts her mending her husband's socks at the end of the novel. After all, marriage is acquiescence to institutions and society. In addition to this, Cecil says to Lucy, "'a new person seems speaking through you'" (p. 192) when she tells him she wants to break the engagement, and that is George's voice he hears. Therefore, although Lucy had made some progress, actually she has only released herself from the influence of Cecil to fall into George's. She has adopted a male outlook carried out by her husband and his father, and assumed the role of a conventional housewife mending her husband's socks.

[48] Land, **op. cit.**, p. 128.
[49] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 79.
[50] Rosecrance, **op. cit.**, p. 90.

Although Lucy and Goerge's union develops a vestige of hope despite its negative aspects, the inevitable advance of the city towards the countryside also threatens the harmony. The "fatal improvement" (p. 122) of the train service in which George's profession lies, is going to bring the strain of city life into Summer Street and interrupt its peace and tranquillity.

> The suburban villas of Summer Street are gobbling up the country, cosmopolitanism is invading the precincts of simplicity and honesty. As cities grow, the divine becomes more distant.[51]

The idea of cosmopolitanism is invoked only flimsily in *A Room with a View*, but it is going to be one of the main issues in Forster's next novel in line, *Howards End,* which depicts more severe tensions and demands several tragic events to achieve reconciliation at the end. After *A Room with a View*, due to the approaching First World War, Forster assumes a more desperate tone and writes the novel the title of which can be read as "Towards End".

[51] Wilfred Stone, **The Cave and the Mountain**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1966, p. 234.

CHAPTER II

HOWARDS END:
THE RECONCILIATION OF THE INNER LIFE AND OUTER LIFE

The opening sentence of E. M. Forster's *Howards End* is quite problematic: "One may as well begin with Helen's letters to her sister."[52] The novel starts in medias res, subverting the traditional practice of narrative concerning time and chronological order. "[T]he pronoun 'One' places the narrator at an ill-defined distance from both reader and writer."[53] The reader can neither identify herself with the narrator and participate in the story as she would if it were a first person narrative, nor does she confront a storyteller who leads her to a definite path. Rather, the narrative voice puts the reader in an ambiguous, chaotic position. However, after a few pages it asserts its authority by intruding into Helen's letter and omitting some of her words.

As presented by the narrator in the very first sentence of the novel, follow the letters written by Helen to her older sister Margaret. Although letter writing requires a looking back at the past, remembering and reporting what has happened after it has gone through one's **filters** that is to say, Helen's letters give the impression that they were written in a hurry without being well thought over. This quality of her letters is the consequence of having encountered a life style that is brand new to her, not like any she has been familiar with before. Therefore, these letters can be treated as written under a spell mixed with Helen's amazement at the contrast the Wilcoxes create with the house they inhabit, as she admits to Margaret: "It isn't going to be what we expected" (p. 19). However, Helen's sympathetic approach to the Wilcoxes will come to an end quite instantaneously, the implication given in the rashness of her letters. Helen is going to regret what she has written as she announces in the telegram she sends to Margaret: "All over. Wish I had never written" (p. 27).

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[52] E. M. Forster, **Howards End,** London, Penguin Books, 1992, p. 19. All following quotations will refer to this edition; therefore the page numbers will begiven in the text.
[53] Mike Edwards, **E. M. Forster: The Novels**, New York, Palgrave, 2002, p. 20.

The chaotic effect created by the first sentence of the novel continues throughout Helen's letters. With her emotional and energetic nature, she informs her sister about the house, the garden and the Wilcoxes in a disorganized way. One moment she talks about hay fever, then she moves on to games and Margaret's outlook on life. However, in the first two letters the reader is given the clues indicating what the novel will be about:

> What [Forster] does is to set up tensions for exploration later: . . . tension between Helen and Margaret; other thematic tensions, between hotel and house, for example; between sympathy of man with nature, and hostility; between expectation and actuality; between men and women; . . .[54]

and also between the English and the foreigner. Having the epigraph of the novel in mind, "Only connect...", the reader can guess what awaits her at the end: the reconciliation of the opposing forces. However at what expense and to what degree the reconciliation will be possible are still unknown to her; though the letters she encounters at the beginning foreshadow the imperfection and the fragmentary quality of this expected unity, since the reader has the chance to read only Helen's letters, which are incomplete, but not the replies she receives. Therefore the communication and the **connection** will not be accomplished entirely.

The depiction of the Schlegel sisters' father as German is a deliberate choice on the part of the author, and plays quite an important role in the novel as his influence especially on Margaret is related to the reader in Part IV whereas we hear almost nothing of the English mother, and thus can surmise that the influence is rather flimsy. Margaret's "liberalism . . . is inherited from an enlightened parent, her father[55], the bookish and impractical 'idealist, inclined to be dreamy.'"[56] In the first decade of the nineteenth century, Germany was greatly influenced by nationalism which is a consequence of the French Revolution and the conquests of Napoleon in Europe. Moreover, in 1871 Bismarck unified some of the German states with Prussia and established the German Empire. Therefore a powerful empire in Europe with

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[54] **Ibid.**, p. 22.
[55] It must be noted that the father is German.
[56] Stephen K. Land, **Challenge and Conventionality in the Fiction of E. M. Forster**, New York, AMS Press, 1990, p. 146.

strong nationalistic ideas constituted a threat to the xenophobic British Empire as an island as opposed to the continental mass, just like the Schlegel sisters threaten the English societal order with their "unshaven musicians, . . . actress[es], German cousins (one knows what foreigners are), [and] acquaintances picked up at continental hotels (one knows what they are too)" (p. 29).

The nineteenth century for Germany was a time of "cultural renaissance"[57] with Beethoven, Goethe, Kant and Hegel; thus Germany became a major centre of culture like France. Margaret and Helen share their last name with one of the German romantics of that age, Friedrich Schlegel. It must also be remembered that Germany is the place where Romanticism first flourished.

> The romantic movement, in all its cultural forms, emphasized emotion and sentiment rather than reason . . . . By its very traditionalism, it appealed to sentiments of separatism: it reminded men of all that was special, individual, and personal. By its emphasis on creative and original genius, it made human personality seem more important than society and implicitly condemned restrictions on individual freedom of expression; . . .[58]

In this regard, owing to their German heritage, Helen can assert her identity and say "I" and "live straight from the middle of [her] head" (p. 232), and Margaret holds personal relations and the human being above all organizations.

By choosing to depict the central character of the novel and her family as half German, Forster also exhibits the differences between the two nations and displays the defective aspects of the English character by using his usual method of dualism. As he points out in his essay "Notes on the English Character",

> the English character is incomplete. We have to look for some qualities in one part of the world and others in another. . . . [The English character] has a bad surface – self-complacent, unsympathetic, and reserved. There is plenty of emotion further down, but it never gets used. There is plenty of brain power, but it is often used to confirm prejudices than to dispel them.[59]

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[57] David Thomson, **Europe Since Napoleon**, Middlesex, Pelican Books, 1974, p. 142.
[58] **Ibid.**
[59] E. M. Forster, "Notes on the English Character", **Abinger Harvest**, New York and London, Harvest/HBJ, 1964, p. 3.

Thus the half German sisters' ardent ideas about personal relationships based on emotions like trust, sincerity and understanding are portrayed in contrast to

> the Englishman [who] can't feel – it is that he is afraid to feel. He has been taught . . . that feeling is bad form. . . . He must bottle up his emotions, or let them out only on a very special occasion.[60]

The intense opposition between the English and the foreigner is displayed mostly through the Schlegels's aunt Mrs. Munt who represents the average conservative, upper-middle class Englishwoman. Mrs. Munt has tried to gain control over her nieces and nephew since their parents' death, but Margaret as the eldest sister does not let her interfere with their lives, though out of respect for Aunt Juley who learns "much to her horror, that Margaret, now of age, . . . put[s] [her money] into Foreign Things, which always smash" (p. 28), she invests a small amount of money in "the safe old investments" (p. 28) which indicates her readiness for a reconciliation. With her strong feelings of nationality, Mrs. Munt believes that Great Britain "was appointed by God to govern the world" (p. 43). When they go, as a group, to Queen Hall to hear some Beethoven, Mrs. Munt insists on their German guests to stay longer and listen to Elgar who is an English composer. Mrs. Munt hints at the superiority of England above all nations several times in the novel and ignores the Schlegel's German heritage, saying: "Of course I regard you Schlegels as English, . . . English to the backbone" (p. 23).

The most striking conflict and the one that the novel mostly revolves around is between the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes. These two families belong to two different branches of the upper-middle class. The only thing they have in common is money, although the Schlegels have inherited it while the Wilcoxes have earned it through trade. Thus the way these two families treat money is quite different from one another: The Wilcox Family, as Wilfred Stone quotes from John Maynard Keynes, "love . . . money as a possession"[61] whereas the Schlegels "love . . . money as a means to the enjoyments and realities of life."[62] The Schlegels represent

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[60] **Ibid.**, p. 5.
[61] Wilfred Stone, **The Cave and the Mountain**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1966, p. 250.
[62] **Ibid.**

intellect, culture and idealism as expected from their German background and the Romantic connotations of their surname, whereas the Wilcoxes[63] stand for commerce, materialism and conventions. The Schlegels denote sensitivity and nature, whereas the latter indicate pragmatism and technology, a fact which agrees with the ratio of males and females in each family, as well. Tibby Schlegel requires his sister's attendance when sick while Charles Wilcox "gets quite cross when . . . inquire[d] after it" (p. 19).

These two families with their clashing values are not the only groups of people that exist in the novel. It is not quite possible to put Mrs. Wilcox in the same position with the other members of the family: "She seemed to belong not to the young people and their motor, but to the house and to the tree that overshadowed it" (p. 36). In Helen's first letter she is portrayed as a woman who is very much in contact with nature. Ruth Wilcox spends most of her time in the garden, "watch[es] the large red poppies come out" (p. 20) and smells the new-cut hay which recalls the biblical Ruth gleaning in the fields, whereas her husband and children all have hay fever and cannot even go out at harvest time. Their treatment of nature contrasts with that of Mrs. Wilcox since they turn it into a utility. They view the garden as a place to play croquet and the tree as something to attach some kind of a machine to and do "callisthenic exercises" (p. 20). Mrs. Wilcox can be associated with the old, agricultural, feudal England due to her devotion and love for the past finding its way in the ardour she feels for Howards End which remains a farm house in this age of motor cars and telegrams. Thus, it is no coincidence that she cannot survive these times and gets ill and dies in the chaotic greyness of London. Ruth Wilcox, "the presiding spirit of Howards End, is almost a myth-like figure, and seems to float rather than walk through the book"[64], "trail[ing] . . . her long dress over the sopping grass" (p. 20). "She is by nature a peacemaker."[65] She has "the instinctive wisdom which the past can alone bestow" (p. 36). With this instinctive wisdom she can realize what has taken place between Helen and Paul, and guided by her ancestors

[63] The name Wilcox can be regarded as a phonetic combination of the words **will** and **cocks**, indicating the male domination and determination in the family.
[64] **Ibid.**, p. 247.
[65] Land, **op. cit.**, p. 162.

she "[s]eparate[s] those human beings who will hurt each other most" (p. 36) and settles things peacefully.

In *Howards End,* the lower classes are represented by Leonard Bast who works as a clerk in an insurance company. He has a great desire to acquire culture and knowledge, yet his primary concern which is to earn money hinders him as he has neither the time, nor the energy for it. He reads books and attends concerts to gain culture, but he lacks the background to understand them. His mind is too occupied with things that are trivial for the rich. For example, before going to the concert where he meets the Schlegel sisters for the first time, he is anxious about where to get seats and whether to buy a programme or not, in order to save money. Later on he worries about his **stolen** umbrella thinking to himself,

> 'I suppose my umbrella will be alright, . . . I don't really mind about it. I will think about music instead. I suppose my umbrella will be alright.' (p. 53)

This attitude marks the line between him and the Schlegels quite sharply. Margaret and Leonard are unable to look at things from each other's points of view. For Margaret an umbrella is just a worthless object and the same applies to Helen as well, as she is so careless about it to snatch the first one that comes to her hand; "she lives in a world where there are umbrellas in abundance."[66] However, it is important to Leonard in several ways. The first is that if he loses the one he already has, he simply has to spend some money, of which he does not have plenty, to get a new one. The other one is that an umbrella is "the symbol of 'respectability'- of the surface of society which exolts . . . money as the primary reality"[67] as Forster writes in Chapter 6, "'All men are equal, that is to say, who possess umbrellas'" (p. 58). "[Leonard] carries one, therefore, as part of his genteel uniform, and feels that he cannot appear in public without it anymore than a soldier can appear without his hat on parade."[68] The umbrella is a phallic symbol, a sign of masculinity, too and Leonard is going to prove his manliness when he gets Helen pregnant. Moreover, it can also be interpreted as an object of protection. Thus Leonard's uneasiness about

[66] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 84.
[67] Christopher Gillie, **A Preface to Forster**, New York, Longman, 1983, p. 121.
[68] **Ibid.**

his loss is an indication of his insecurities and lack of self-esteem. The fact that he works for an insurance company is an allusion to his uncertainties about himself. His unwillingness to give his address to Margaret to recover his umbrella is also a consequence of his suspicious character and also the fear of being seen in his natural environment and robbed of his fake social posture. "[T]he point is impressive: the poor cannot afford to trust people."[69] His deficiencies can be easily traced in his manners and the conversation that takes place between him and Margaret. While she talks to him about art flitting from music to painting, Wagner to Monet, Leonard broods over pronunciations.

> Leonard's words, . . . reveal him adopting a role he perceives to be required of him in the social setting of the concert. This is not the real Leonard Bast; it is Leonard acting the concert-goer, and acting up to the people he meets. Although he is "in truth a little uneasy" about his umbrella, he is much more uneasy about his social performance.[70]

Throughout the novel, Forster sets up several scenes in an attempt to bring together these three groups of people, (actually four if Mrs. Wilcox is to be treated separately). The first of these attempts is the short-lived affair between Helen and Paul which begins at once, the night they get to meet for the first time. However, their hasty episode does not work. It is just the fulfilment of an opportunity for Paul, who will soon go away to colonial Nigeria, to kiss a beautiful young girl, which reveals a prejudice about foreigners, **the others**, that there can be no beautiful girls in Nigeria. Just like her brief engagement with Paul, Helen experiences even a briefer relationship later on with Leonard Bast. It is notable that these young men come from exactly opposite backgrounds and have completely different life styles, both from each other and from Helen as well. As a passionate girl, Helen seeks a passionate relationship; therefore she acts spontaneously with "her susceptibility to atmosphere and to people totally unlike herself"[71] when she encounters them, and throws herself first into Paul's and then Leonard's arms. Hence, although the two affairs may seem

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[69] Stone, **op. cit.**, p. 251.
[70] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 81.
[71] John Colmer, **E.M. Forster: The Personal Voice,** London, Boston, Melbourne and Henley, Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1983, p. 89.

different, actually they originate from the same impulse, the inclination to connect with what she is not. As John Sayre Martin comments,

> [n]either man did she love. Both to her were symbols, Paul of romantic virility, Leonard of the poor and exploited. 'Did Leonard,' she wonders, 'grow out of Paul?' The answer, obviously, is yes.[72]

Margaret and Mrs. Wilcox's friendship is another quest for a possible union between the two families. Although Margaret wants to conclude the acquaintance at first, Mrs. Wilcox insists on its development due to her instinctual ability to **connect**. The two women pay visits to each other and spend time together, yet cannot fully communicate. Margaret finds Mrs. Wilcox's response to the fact that they are going to have to move from Wickham Place over reactive when she says

> 'It is monstrous, Miss Schlegel; it isn't right. . . . I do pity you from the bottom of my heart. . . . It is worse than dying.' (p. 93)

For Mrs. Wilcox, her house is the meaning of her life; it means history, the values of the past and stability while for Margaret houses are just places to live. On the other hand, Mrs. Wilcox is unable to follow and attend the conversation in the luncheon party Margaret invites her to. When she is asked what her opinion is on a subject in discussion, she only answers "'I think Miss Schlegel puts everything splendidly'" (p. 86). Unlike Margaret, Mrs. Wilcox is not a woman of ideas. She is the silenced mother of a patriarchal family. In spite of their lack of understanding, they feel sympathy for each other and their relationship is a significant step that will lead to the union which is going to be created at the end of the novel. Ruth Wilcox's role as a natural peacemaker will be inherited by Margaret, which is evident in Ruth's bequeathing to Margaret her only passion in life – that is Howards End. In other words, Ruth leaves her **soul** to this young woman in whom she can see the potential to **connect**. In fact Margaret does become the next Mrs. Wilcox in the literal sense and finally inherits Howards End. Thus the two women share the same identity:

[72] John Sayre Martin, **E.M. Forster: The Endless Journey**, London, New York and Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 112.

"Margaret fades into Mrs. Wilcox"[73] and Howards End becomes their common source of influence.

It is a noteworthy fact that it is Margaret, not Helen, who builds up a friendship with Mrs. Wilcox and later on inherits her house and her position as peacemaker. As sisters, Margaret and Helen have a lot in common; they are both smart, intellectual, liberal-minded and they treasure the inner life and personal relations above everything. However, they also function as alter egos within the novel. Helen is attractive, impulsive and passionate, while Margaret is rather plain, balanced and calm. As John Sayre Martin points out, "Whereas Helen declares as exclusive commitment to the inner life, . . . Margaret sees that the outer life also has claims."[74] Then he quotes,

> The truth is that there is a great outer life that you and I have never touched – a life in which telegrams and anger count. Personal relations, that we think supreme, are not supreme there. There love means marriage settlements, death, death duties. So far I'm clear. But here's my difficulty. This outer life, though obviously horrid, often seems the real one – there's grit in it. It does breed character. Do personal relations lead to sloppiness in the end? (p. 41)

Although Margaret shares basically the same ideas with her sister, she is more mature and open to new viewpoints. She understands the necessity of the outer life and tries to connect with it by carrying out her relationship with the Wilcoxes.

Margaret has the required features for the heroine that is going to connect the opposite forces:

> Margaret, not Helen, is the heroine, because it is only Margaret who, when the three connected crises of the novel occur – the disclosure of Henry's adultery, of Helen's pregnancy, and of Leonard's death – demonstrates the love, compassion, and the sense of proportion needed to establish harmony.[75]

All these virtues and maturity Helen lacks, hence she cannot be the heroine although she

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[73] Stone, **op. cit.**, p. 270.
[74] Martin, **op. cit.**, pp. 112-113.
[75] **Ibid.**, p. 120.

> tries to be heroic and fails. Taking up Leonard's cause in the name of Truth and Justice by melodramatically bringing him and Jacky to Evie Wilcox's wedding-party[76]

she precipitates a series of events that results in the three crises of the plot mentioned above. When trying to help Leonard, she indirectly causes his death.

The first meeting of the three classes of people takes place in the Schlegel's house quite incidentally. On the day Margaret and Helen ask Leonard to tea to warn him about the insecurity of the company he works for, Evie and Henry Wilcox call on the Schlegels unexpectedly. Leonard gets angry with the sisters for interfering with his life and suspects them of "wanting to make money out of him" (p. 150). He loses him temper and he and Margaret begin shouting at one another. After Leonard leaves, Mr. Wilcox and Margaret talk about him, yet they have their own diverging thoughts on the matter and cannot come to an understanding. Margaret, though unsuccessful, tries to connect with him on a personal level while Henry Wilcox treats him as he would any other member of the lower classes: "I know the type" (p. 152), he says. Ironically, they are both wrong about Leonard, since the reason for his ill humour is his discovery that the intention behind the invitation is not to discuss art and literature with him, but to talk business. With this scene, Forster draws attention to the lack of communication that arises from the fact that these people are divided into classes in economical and ideological terms.

The third and the most radical attempt to unite the parties in contradiction is Margaret Schlegel and Henry Wilcox's engagement. Margaret's acceptance of the proposal creates an even more shocking effect than the proposal itself, yet Forster gives the clues to make this marriage possible beforehand: Through Leonard, Margaret realizes the consequences of poverty which makes him a gloomy and sceptic person with limited intellect though he longs for culture immensely. For Margaret,

> [f]air shares in food, clothes, or housing are not what matters, but the light within. Money is important only because there can be no "soul" without it, none of the

[76] **Ibid.**

> health or leisure or culture that give England and Howards End their meaning. If this is so, should we not honour the strong ones who earn it- or even marry them?[77]

She explains her new outlook to her aunt in those words:

> 'You and I and the Wilcoxes stand upon money as upon islands. It is so firm beneath our feet that we forget its very existence. It's only when we see someone near us tottering that we realize all that an independent income means. . . . [T]he lowest abyss is not the absence of love, but the absence of coin.' (p. 72)

Several times in the novel, Margaret mentions the respect she feels for businessmen since they procure the conditions for the "superficial comfort" (p. 30) of her life. In that manner, she discovers something in common with the Wilcoxes; yet at the same time she is very much aware of the wide gap between her personality and Henry's. From the beginning of their relationship, she always has the intention to change her husband and make him a better man. Henry is the modern businessman locked up in his materialistic worldliness who disregards the existence of his feelings as it is said in Chapter 22:

> It was hard going in the roads of Mr. Wilcox's soul. From boyhood he had neglected them. 'I am not a fellow who bothers about my own inside.' (pp. 187-188)

"Wilcox's office at the Imperial and West African Rubber Company, some details of which emphasize the soulless uniformity that lies at the heart of capitalist endeavour and others its far-reaching imperial power."[78] Henry Wilcox is a man of "hard facts" (p. 180) and they are "enough for him" (p. 180) which reminds us of Thomas Gradgrind, the ferocious materialist of *Hard Times* uttering "Now, what I want is, Facts."[79] Mr. Wilcox asks "plain questions" (p. 278) and expects "plain answers" (p. 278). By doing so, he endeavours to stay away from the chaotic effect of emotions and lives behind a social mask and thus remains shallow. "'My motto is Concentrate'" (p. 188), says he which implies that he cannot see other people's points of view and sympathize with them. He finds it easier to dismiss what he is not

[77] Stone, **op. cit.**, p. 242.
[78] Colmer, **op. cit.**, p. 98.
[79] Charles Dickens, **Hard Times**, Kent, Wordsworth Classics, 2000, p. 3.

able to understand and cope with. On the other hand, Margaret's guidance is the epigraph of the novel, "Only connect..." which "underlines the importance of being in touch with one's emotions as well as of communicating with others"[80]:

> Only connect! That was the whole of her sermon. Only connect the prose and the passion, and both will be exalted, and human love will be seen at its highest. Live in fragments no longer. Only connect, and the beast and the monk, robbed of the isolation that is life to either, will die. (p. 188)

Her first urge is to reconcile the split elements of her husband's identity: his body and his soul, his mind and his heart. First he has to acquire his integrity, then he can connect with others; thus she needs "only to point out the salvation that [is] latent in his own soul, and in the soul of every men" (p. 188). Henry has to get over his habit of evaluating "situations on too purely a conventional level, persistently seeing the people involved in terms of social, sexual, or racial prejudices"[81], he needs to see the **personal relations** beyond these conventions and stop treating "Leonard purely as a member of the lower middle class, Margaret and Helen as 'ladies' in need of male protection and guidance, and Jacky as a former mistress, a mere sexual episode."[82] However Henry "can accept no personal liability for Leonard, sees in Jacky only a possible threat of blackmail, and persists in offering Margaret and Helen only what he thinks is best for them, not what they really need."[83] Towards the end of the novel, Margaret can no longer tolerate Henry's obdurate hypocrisy and she finally explodes with rage:

> 'You shall see the connection if it kills you, Henry! You have had a mistress - I forgave you. My sister has a lover - you drive her from the house. Do you see the connection? Stupid, hypocritical, cruel – oh, contemptible! – a man who insults his wife when she's alive and cants with her memory when she's dead. A man who ruins a woman for his pleasure, and casts her off to ruin other men. And gives bad financial advice, and then says he is not responsible. These men are you. You can't recognize them, because you cannot connect. I've spoilt you long enough. All your life you have been spoilt. Mrs. Wilcox spoiled you. No one has ever told you what you are – muddled, criminally muddled. Men like you use repentance as a blind, so don't repent. Only say to yourself: "What Helen has done, I've done."' (p. 300)

[80] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 193.
[81] Land, **op. cit.**, p. 143.
[82] **Ibid.**
[83] **Ibid.**

Henry is not moved at all even by such a plain outburst of truth and all he can say is, "'The two cases are different'" (p. 300). "He is mad with rage over Helen's affair with Leonard, yet he cannot see that his own adultery with Jacky is morally the same."[84]

The physical appearance Forster comes up with for Mr. Wilcox works in harmony with his character:

> His face was not as square as his son's, and indeed the chin though firm enough in outline, retreated a little, and the lips, ambiguous were curtained by a moustache. But there was no external hint of weakness. . . . The forehead too was like Charles's. High and straight, brown and polished, merging abruptly into temples and skull, it had the effect of a bastion that protected his head from the world. . . . He had dwelt behind it, intact and happy, for fifty years. (p. 100)[85]

His protective forehead indicates a firm, stable way of thinking that is closed to outside influence. His moustache is an obstacle in the way of communication and a symbol of masculine authority, while his square but not sharp face, and his retreating and ambiguous lips denote a liability to change, the change that Margaret is going to bring him.

In *Howards End,* the Schlegels and the Wilcoxes do not only stand for idealism and materialism, but they are also representatives of the sexes, masculinity and femininity. In terms of ideals and views that demand equality among men and women, and since it is dominated by the elder sister Margaret, the Schlegel family is feminine. On the other hand, with its patriarch Henry who is conventional enough to "say the most horrid things about women's suffrage" (p. 21), the Wilcox family is masculine. Henry's hypocritical reaction to Helen's pregnancy is also evident of his dogmatic vision of the roles and rights attributed to men and women. "Tibby Schlegel, the dilettantish brother of Margaret and Helen, is indeed effeminate, and Charles Wilcox is indeed brutal."[86] The two young men represent the extremes of what each family symbolize. They are the ones who stand at the furthest distance to a

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[84] Stone, **op. cit.**, p. 256.
[85] Henry Wilcox's physical appearance too is suggestive of Thomas Gradgrind in terms of the emphasis on both having square features which indicate rationality and stricness.
[86] Frederick C. Crews, **E.M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism**, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1962, p. 113.

reconciliation. Tibby is sophisticated and educated, yet he lacks affection and compassion. Unlike his sisters,

> [h]e had never been interested in human beings . . . Just as some people cease to attend when books are mentioned, so Tibby's attention wandered when 'personal relations' came under discussion. (p. 250)

As Colmer notes, "[m]usic, books, and pictured have developed Tibby's mind and taste; they have not developed his heart."[87]

In *Howards End*, the clash of masculinities involved should not be overlooked either. When Leonard and Henry first meet in the Schlegels's house,

> Margaret first observes common ground, a point of fundamental equivalence between these two characters. . . . She sees that they share a common masculinity and are on that account capable of mutual jealousy.[88]

"A woman and two men – they had formed the magic triangle of sex, and the male was thrilled to jealousy, in case the female was attracted by another male" (p. 152). Later on in the novel, when the Wilcoxes, the Schlegels and the Basts come together for a second time at Oniton Grange after Evie's wedding, it is revealed that actually Jacky had occupied Margaret's position in this "magic triangle of sex" in a former relationship with Henry who had her as his mistress when he was married to Ruth Wilcox, which is quite parallel to Leonard's betrayal of his wife Jacky by having a one-night affair with Helen, in the consequence of which she gets pregnant. Thus the result is chaos again and the lives of all these people who come from different classes and have different backgrounds becomes intertwined.

The struggle of males over a woman can be spotted once again when the three groups gather at Howards End on day following the discovery of Helen's pregnancy by Margaret and Henry. The outcome is vulgar and tragic: As soon as he overhears that Leonard is the father of Helen's illegitimate child, Charles snatches up the Schlegel sword and hits him to death. The final stroke comes from the books which also used to belong to the Schlegels's father and are symbols of the culture and

[87] Colmer, **op. cit.**, p. 95.
[88] Land, **op. cit.**, pp. 155-156.

knowledge Leonard strived for, as they fall over him from the shelves. Leonard who had at first seemed weak, lost and worn like his symbol of masculinity, the umbrella, actually proved his virility through his sexual intercourse with an upper-middle class woman,

> ("Was she 'got with child by Leonard Bast or his fatal forgotten umbrella. All things considered', Katherine Mansfield mocks, 'I think it must have been the umbrella.')[89]

but this time he is beaten by another male with the phallic symbol of a third one, the Schlegel sword.[90] Helen as the reason behind Leonard's death, like Helen of Troy, becomes an object that men fight for in order to possess.

As the novel bears the name of a house for its title, it can be presumed that the house imagery in *Howards End* is quite significant. Houses are treated in different ways by each character in the novel. For Henry Wilcox houses are commodities that are "to be bought and sold at profit."[91] However, until his wife's death he lives in Howards End which is an old farmhouse with a soul of its own. That is why Helen at the beginning of the novel finds that it does not meet her expectations of a house for the materialistic businessman. She rather associates the Wilcoxes with expensive hotels which denote wealth and temporariness which is an allusion to nomadism that according to Margaret "alter[s] human nature so profoundly, and throws upon personal relations a stress greater than they have ever borne before" (p. 256). It is more appropriate to relate the Wilcoxes, except for Ruth Wilcox, to motor cars instead of houses, which are the brand new products of the modern era. A motor car signifies movement, mobility, industrialisation, mechanisation and mass production. It also is a symbol of wealth, speed and power; but it can be destructive, as Margaret is well aware since she keeps on thinking about "chickens and children" (p. 198) while riding in Henry's car. For Margaret, Wickham Place has been important to her as she has had lived there for all her life

[89] Colmer, **op. cit.**, 89.
[90] "One of the points of the symbolism of sword and umbrella in *Howards End*, however is that the sword, despite its deadliness, represents the dead power of a heroic aristocracy; it is the umbrella that points to the future" (Edwards p. 192) as the heir of Howards End is the son of that umbrella's owner, Leonard.
[91] Land, **op. cit.**, p. 119.

and it is her bond with the past, yet she does not make a big deal of the fact that it is going to be pulled down. She is going to be alright as soon as she finds another suitable house to settle in. It is a significant fact that E. M. Forster chooses the name of a character in Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* for the Schlegel sisters' house. Wickham, a military officer of the early nineteenth century seeking his fortune through marriage with a wealthy young woman, becomes a place in this modernist novel. It prevails as the materialistic reality of the age like a contagious disease that is going to make everyone suffer. For Leonard Bast, his flat is his prison. It is in high contrast with the church in Ruskin's *Stones of Venice* that he has been reading: "Ruskin's church is luminous, airy, [and] spacious; [whereas] Leonard's flat is dingy, airless and small."[92] With its dark and gloomy atmosphere it is the symbol of his economic and intellectual limitations. As for Mrs. Wilcox, Howards End is the centre and meaning of her life. As an old farmhouse, it belongs to the pre-industrial age and has a haunting effect on the Schlegel sisters with its natural setting. The wych-elm which keeps appearing throughout the novel with pig's teeth stuck on its stem adds to the house's enchanting atmosphere as **wych** is the phonetic equivalent of **witch**. The fact that Henry, although he's been living there for quite a long time has not recognized the teeth on the tree, denotes his businessman rationality, egocentricism and his blindness to the people and the things around him.

The last scene of the novel is set in Howards End which becomes the meeting point of all the characters who have had trouble in communicating with each other throughout the novel. Howards End with its feminine connotations as an old farmhouse denoting nutrition and fertility, and as Mrs. Wilcox's "only . . . passion in life" (p. 95) is where Henry, Helen and her illegitimate child can finally live together in harmony "under the benign matriarchy of Margaret Schlegel, generated initially by the human instinct of Mrs. Wilcox."[93] However, Forster's choice of imageries in the conclusion of the novel indicates ambiguity and dichotomy at the same time. The season being autumn denotes the idea of connection as it combines two opposing forces of nature, summer with winter; yet it is also the time when Persephone returns to Hades, the time of decay, and England is going through a decaying process in

[92] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 50.
[93] Gillie, **op. cit.**, p. 118.

terms of social issues and personal relationships due to industrial capitalism. "The chaos of Howards End resolves into a harmony of asserted reconciliation and coming harvest, but the red rust of London is already visible from the farm."[94] The harvest indicates the crop Margaret has come to collect since she has managed to bring Henry, Helen and her child under one roof after a series of failed attempts; yet some people are missing from this scene. "The reconciliation is not all-inclusive – Leonard is prevented by death from participation, Charles is in prison, Henry's other children remain hostile."[95] The prerequisite for getting these people together is great; it requires too big an explosion: the murdering of Leonard by Charles. The fact that Howards End will pass onto Helen's child is a hopeful look at the future. He is the outcome of the collapsing class barriers. Though Henry is able is accept Helen's child and finally leave Howards End to Margaret -not as Mrs. Wilcox chose to do but according to law, now that Margaret has become his wife-, he still tries to justify his treatment of his late wife's will; he does not admit that he was wrong. He seeks his conduct to be approved by Margaret when he asks her, "I didn't do wrong, did I?" (p. 332); yet asking the question indicates self-doubt. Margaret is aware of her husband's limitations and no longer forces the boundaries of his nature. She accepts him as he is. Her reply to his question is

> 'You didn't, darling. Nothing has been done wrong.' (p. 332)

although "something [shakes] her life in its inmost recesses, and she shiver[s]" (p. 332), which denotes that she does not really mean what she says.

Howards End as the symbol of understanding and unity has been passed from mothers to daughters for generations; thus the implication is that female sympathy is required for reconciliation between clashing ideas and people. However after Margaret, Howards End is going to be inherited by a male, Helen's son, who is biologically a product of two different social classes, but his father being dead he will be raised by his mother only. Therefore the future of Howards End is socially hopeful as the next owner symbolizes the union of the two classes, yet it is also full

[94] Rosecrance, **op. cit.**, p. 130.
[95] Land, **op. cit.**, p. 163.

of threat as the house will pass on to a male this time and looking at the male characters in the novel, the situation is not promising: Henry Wilcox is the pragmatic businessman who cannot come to a reconciliation within himself, even if he does improve a little towards the end of the novel, his limitations are obvious; Charles is "stupid and rigid, able to judge situations only by the stereotypes which his prejudices impose on them"[96], Leonard is portrayed as an unsympathetic and unhealthy character, while Tibby remains completely passive throughout the novel because of his self-absorption and disinterest in personal relations. A dichotomy is also latent in the last pages of *Howards End*. Although Margaret talks about a future civilization that "will rest on the earth" (p. 329), she also is perfectly aware that what her sister Helen prophesizes is true: "'Life's going to be melted down, all over the world'" (p. 329).

[96] Gillie, **op. cit.**, p. 122.

CHAPTER III

A PASSAGE TO INDIA: NATURE DENIES RECONCILIATION

E.M. Forster's last novel *A Passage to India,* published in 1924, begins with the word "Except"[97] which is followed by a very detailed description of the Indian city Chandrapore teeming with words and phrases which denote absence, negation and estrangement such as "nothing", "scarcely", "shut out", "ineffective", "hidden" (p. 3) and many more. The whole first chapter is devoted to the portrayal of the setting; unlike *A Room with a View* and *Howards End*, there are no dialogues or letters indicating any human existence in this first section. Thus, the city of Chandrapore and India are treated as living entities and especially the latter is going to be the central focus and mystery of the novel. Actually the whole action will be started off by the wish to get hold of India.

As implied by the very first word of the novel, in the first chapter Forster sets up the contradictions that are to be examined thoroughly later in the novel. The word "except" manifests the existence of opposing forces, isolation and lack of communication. At first, an account of the Indian part of Chandrapore is given, but rather than what it is, the paragraph relates what it is not: "There are no bathing steps on the river front" (p. 3), "the Ganges happens not to be holy here" (p. 3), "indeed there is no river front" (p. 3), "there is no painting and scarcely any carving" (p. 3). In the second paragraph the attention shifts to the Civil Station where the English civil servants live; the distinction between the two parts of the city is quite obvious:

> On this second rise is laid out the little Civil Station, and viewed from hence Chandrapore appears to be a totally different place. It is a city of gardens. It is no city, but a forest sparsely scattered with huts. (p. 3)

Therefore, this English part of the city is rather a centre of exoticism violated by the huts built by the English conquerors the houses of whom "stand on the high ground by the railway station" (p. 3) which signifies industry, trade, civilization and

[97] E.M. Forster, **A Passage to India**, London, Penguin Books, 1979, p. 3. All following quotations will refer to this edition; therefore the page numbers will be given in the text.

colonization, besides its being a violating, intrusive, satanic phallic symbol. This "is the railway which will carry Aziz's guests on their disastrous expedition."[98]

> . . . [The Civil Station] provokes no emotion. It charms not, neither does it repel." (p. 4)

Like the Englishman who "bottle[s] up his emotions"[99], his dwelling is devoid of stirring any feelings. The "roads that intersect at right angles" (p. 4) indicate the orderly and strict English rationality while the "red-brick Club" (p. 4) is another allusion to Englishness and the club will indeed prove to be a sample of English society. The opposition between the "monotonous" (p. 3) Indian section of the city and the regular English Civil Station reveals itself in the ways they respond to death. "[P]eople are drowned and left rotting" (p. 3) by Indians whereas the English have their cemetery to hide them away because they don't want to be reminded of the ultimate end; yet Indians do not cover up reality.

In the first two paragraphs of Chapter I, where the two different worlds in Chandrapore are depicted, the predominant colour is brown with references to the Ganges "scarcely distinguishable from the rubbish it deposits so freely" (p. 3), "filth" (p. 3), "wood" (p. 3) and "mud" (p. 3). However in the third paragraph in which the sky above Chandrapore is described, several colours are mentioned, but chiefly blue. "[T]he overarching sky" (p. 4) is the only thing the diverse divisions of the city share. "[I]t is . . . a dome of blending tints" (p. 4) foreshadowing the dome of the mosque where Aziz and Mrs. Moore initiate their friendship.

The mention of the Marabar Caves both at the beginning of the chapter and at the end, the quality of "extraordinar[iness]" (p. 5) attached to them, suggests an uncanny contingency linked with these mysterious parts of the Indian landscape. "The meaning of the caves is also prefigured in the negativity of the description of Chandrapore: like the town, they are 'Nothing', though they come to seem much more intensely so."[100]

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[98] Mike Edwards, **E.M. Forster: The Novels**, New York, Palgrave, 2002, p. 27.
[99] E.M. Forster, "Notes on the English Character", **Abinger Harvest**, New York and London, Harvest/HBJ, 1964, p. 5.

[100] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 27.

In the first chapter of *A Passage to India*, Forster identifies the two conflicting groups of the novel: the Indians and the English[101], the East and the West, the colonizer and the colonized. The possibility of a connection between the two will be searched for throughout the novel, which consists of three parts called "Mosque", "Caves" and "Temple", each symbolizing one of the three main groups living in India. As Wilfred Stone points out,

> [t]hey . . . stand for Moslem, Anglo-Indian, and Hindu, and for the qualities of character and temperament associated with these ethnic groups. Since Moslem-Mosque and Hindu-Temple clearly go together, it would seem logical to link Anglo-Indian and Caves – as Glen O. Allen has tried to do, describing "the religion of caves" as a "devotion to reason, form, and the sense of purpose as the *sine qua non* of right behaviour and attitude." But actually the caves represent everything that the British, with their devotion to the daylight virtues of God, King, and Country, generally find incomprehensible and repugnant. . . . [T]he three sections emphasize certain qualities of mind and soul – to the Moslem belongs the emotional nature, to the Anglo-Indian the intellect, and to the Hindu the capacity for love.[102]

The first part of *A Passage to India* called "Mosque" is where the relationships between the representatives of the clashing sides generate, but first a general impression of the interactions between the native and the Anglo-Indian is presented. One of the main characters of the novel, Aziz, a Moslem physician, is summoned untimely and with haste from the dinner he is having with his friends by his English superior Major Callender. Dr. Aziz rushes to Callender's house only to find that he has gone and left no message for him. Moreover, his tonga is taken by two English ladies who ignore him and "turn instinctively away" (p. 11). Therefore the initial impression of the Indian – Anglo-Indian relationship is far from encouraging: it indicates grudging obedience on the part of the colonized and neglect and disrespect on the colonizer's. Aziz, having lost his tonga to the English ladies, leaves Callender's house. When he gets tired of walking, in order to rest he enters a mosque where one of the most crucial scenes in the novel -and after which the first part is named- takes place. There he makes the acquaintance of Mrs. Moore who has arrived in India recently to visit her son, the City Magistrate. The facts that she takes

[101] It must be noticed that there is also a subdivision among the Indians themselves, between the Muslims and the Hindus represented by Aziz and Godbole.
[102] Wilfred Stone, **The Cave and the Mountain**, Stanford, Stanford University Press, 1966, p. 311.

off her shoes before she enters the mosque, claims the existence of god in it, addresses Aziz in equal terms with respect and that she is frank enough to criticise a compatriot endear Mrs. Moore to Aziz remarkably. The fact that Aziz is the other colonizer, just like Mrs. Moore, is one other reason behind this possible communication scene: "What did it matter if a few flabby Hindus had preceded him there, and a few chilly English succeeded?" (p. 17). It is this coincidental friendship that is going to trigger off the upcoming events of the novel: Mrs. Moore will mention Dr. Aziz to Adela whom the City Magistrate invited to India with his mother with the intention of marrying her. Then, Adela who is eager to "see the *real* India" (p. 18) will impart Mrs. Moore's account of Aziz to Fielding, and Fielding will invite him over to his little tea-party where Aziz will propose an expedition to the caves to entertain the English guests, and this expedition is the climax of the novel after which the Indian – Anglo-Indian affairs become most tense.

With the intention of bringing the groups in conflict together, Forster established *A Passage to India* upon a series of social occasions. The invitation for the first of private occurrences comes from the Collector, Mr. Turton, out of hospitality for Adela who insists on knowing Indians closely. He plans a Bridge Party in honour of Adela and Mrs. Moore, and "issue[s] invitation cards to numerous Indian gentlemen in the neighbourhood, stating that he would be at home in the garden of the Club between the hours of five and seven on the following Tuesday" (p. 28). Yet, his invitation is quite ironic since India is actually the home of the Indians, not of the uninvited English conquerors who think they have the right to forbid or permit the natives to a place that is already theirs. However, on the other hand, the Club is absolute English territory, an organization which holds up the values of the English in exile and gives the xenophobic and jingoistic English "the comforting security of the group."[103] The ironically named Bridge Party is a complete failure. Indian guests stand "massed at the further side of the tennis lawns, doing nothing" (p. 30), Mrs. Turton "refuse[s] to shake hands with any of the men" (p. 33) and reminds Mrs. Moore,

[103] David Dowling, "Forster's Novels", **A Routledge Literary Sourcebook on E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India***, Ed. by Peter Childs, London and New York, Routledge, 2002, p. 94.

> ‘You’re superior to them, anyway. Don’t forget that. You’re superior to everyone in India except one or two of the ranis, and they’re on an equality.’ (p. 33)

When she approaches the group, she says “a few words of welcome in Urdu, . . . [but] she kn[ows] non of the politer forms, and of the verbs only in the imperative mood” (p. 34), which signifies on what level the relationship between the Indians and the English functions.

The invitation Adela and Mrs. Moore receive from Mrs. Bhattacharya at the bridge party also turns out to be a disappointment. On the day of the visit, the Bhattacaryas do not send their carriage to the English ladies as prearranged. The get-together becomes a muddle and remains unconcluded due to a misunderstanding between the two parties.

In contrast to the informal and insincere atmosphere of the Bridge Party organized by Mr. Turton, Fielding throws a small tea-party in his house, where all the main characters of the novel are present and try to communicate in more candid and amicable tones. In this gathering are the two newly arrived English ladies Adela and Mrs. Moore, Aziz, a Moslem, Professor Godbole, a Hindu, and Mr. Fielding the Principal of the Government College. Like Margaret of *Howards End*, Fielding believes in the superiority of personal relations and does not want to belong to any of the polarized groups in India:

> Neither a missionary nor a student, he was the happiest in the give-and-take of a private conversation. The world, he believed, is a globe of men who are trying to reach one another and can best do so by the help of goodwill plus culture and intelligence . . . He had no racial feeling – not because he was superior to his brother civilians, but because he had matured in a different atmosphere, where the herd-instinct does not flourish. (p. 52)

Likewise, Aziz is “initially and naturally amicable.”[104] “‘I like unconventional behaviour so extremely’” (p. 53), he says to Fielding when he finds him still dressing in his bedroom and is told to make himself at home, his spirits lifted by the friendly tone of his host. He gives him his own collar stud in return when Fielding accidentally steps on his own and breaks it. Thus “the give-and-take of private

[104] Stephen K. Land, **Challenge and Conventionality in the Fiction of E.M. Forster**, New York, AMS Press, 1990, p. 191.

conversation" (p. 52) is secured between them in an instant. "Aziz has the will to make connections in defiance of established conventions and is, to this extent, a challenger of conventional values."[105] Despite these conventions sustaining discrimination upheld by the British, Fielding and Aziz reach over these barriers and make each other's acquaintance, yet their friendship that begins at the tea-party and acquires intimacy when Aziz shows Fielding the photograph of his late wife, will be put to test several times in the novel and the possibility of their attachment in these political and racial circumstances will be questioned.

The tea-party advances in an informal and favourable manner in spite of some misunderstandings and the unsolved mystery of the Bhattacaryas's carriage that had not arrived to pick up the ladies. This is as close as things get to a possible unity among these people from different races and cultural backgrounds. However the casual and amiable mood is disrupted by the abrupt arrival of Ronny who finds Adela smoking with Aziz and Professor Godbole as, meanwhile, Fielding is showing Mrs. Moore around the college. Ronny is quite enraged by what he sees. Without greeting anyone in the room, he asks where Fielding and his mother are. Mike Edwards remarks the similarity between Ronny's interruption of the tea-party and the introduction of Cecil Vyse into the scene in *A Room with a View*:

> Ronny's arrival changes the atmosphere in a manner that recalls the entrance of Cecil Vyse in *A Room with a View*. Ronny's unconcealed 'annoyance' as he calls to Adela from the garden to know the whereabouts of Fielding and his mother parallels Cecil's irritably throwing aside the curtains behind which the Honeychurches are talking. From this point Ronny dominates the gathering, reducing it within a few moments to 'sudden ugliness'.[106]

He "t[akes] no notice [of Professor Godbole's answer], but continue[s] to address his remarks to Adela" (p. 65). Ronny ignores the two Indians completely:

> He did not mean to be rude to the two men, but the only link he could be conscious of with an Indian was the official, and neither happened to be his subordinate. As private individuals he forgot them. (p. 65)[107]

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[105] **Ibid.**
[106] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 86.
[107] Here, one is reminded of Cecil's way of looking at relationships, that is feudal. See p. 20.

Ronny's behaviour evokes Callender's ignoring of Aziz at the beginning of the book when he orders him to be fetched to his house at once. Ronny is like a subsequent version of Mr. Wilcox in *Howards End*, the materialistic conventional businessman who disregards personal relations and classifies people as types. Henry Wilcox thinks Leonard Bast is a **type**, so does Ronny think is Aziz. Actually, Forster uses almost the same wording as he did in the former novel to describe Ronny's attitude towards Aziz:[108] ". . . [H]e knew the type; he knew all the types, and this was the spoilt westernized" (p. 65). Henry Wilcox of *Howards End* stands for money and business; he is the powerful authority figure of the industrial England, while Ronny as the City Magistrate, is the upholder of English law in India. Just like Henry, Ronny cannot connect; he is the prejudiced member of the conventional English society. He is the colonizer trying to impose the Cartesian, male point of view upon the colonized India.

Disappointed by Ronny's behaviour at Fielding's, Adela realizes that "India had developed sides of . . . [Ronny's] character that she never admired" (p. 68). Consequently she breaks up her engagement. Ronny accepts her decision calmly and does not even want to discuss it. They are completely cool over this change of plans: Adela "feel[s] that a profound and passionate speech should be delivered by one or both of them, [but they are] . . . awfully British over it" (p. 72). However, in a few hours they reunite while driving in the Nawab Bahadur's car:

> Her hand touched his, owing to a jolt, and one of the thrills so frequent in the animal kingdom passed between them, and announced that all their difficulties were only a lovers' quarrel. Each was too proud to increase the pressure, but neither withdrew it, and a spurious unity descended on them, as local and temporary as the gleam that inhabits a firefly. (p. 75)

Wilfred Stone examines this brief scene of unity:

> . . . Ronny and Adela –two "reasonable" Anglo-Indians– come closest to love in the first part of the novel, during the winter solstice when the sun (reason) is at its nadir and the moon (instinct) is full and high. The illumination of the moon and stars tempts these two, who normally live by the daylight of reason, to hazard some timid descents into the unconscious, into the dark of their buried passions. . . . It is a

[108] See p. 35.

> "spurious unity" because they have been victimized by the consciousness, by an inhibiting Western education that has made feeling, passion, and love either sentimental or illicit. And since their moral pride causes them to deny darkness, they cannot make a whole, for darkness is half of the diurnal round.[109]

Thus the broken engagement of the English couple is temporarily restored, and the bond is strengthened by an unexpected event just when they are driving, an accident, which is one of the muddles in the novel since they cannot figure out what causes it. Ronny thinks they have skidded while Adela says they have run into an animal; later on when they tell Mrs. Moore about it, she suggests they might have crashed into a ghost. Adela and Ronny reunite as the intruders in the mysterious surroundings of India, in the face of an unknown threat. Adela's and Ronny's interpretations of the accident tend to justify their English rationalism as they try to come up with logical reasons with concrete elements: "Certainly some external force had impinged . . ." (p. 76). Adela, who declares earlier in the book that she hates mysteries, figures out a solution to the puzzle and having seen the paint of the car gone -a solid evidence-, Ronny agrees with her. The fact that Adela and Ronny believe the animal that they have run into to be a hyena, is a significant choice on the part of the author as far as Mohammad Shaheen is concerned. In his book, Shaheen comments on the hyena as "the most deceptive animal to man"[110] since it has a hypnotizing impact on the human being according to Oriental folklore. In order to emancipate himself from the spell of the hyena, it is believed that one has to "cause some bleeding [and] [t]his is supposed to help him recover his senses as a result of the release of the blood."[111] Shaheen associates this evil intentioned animal with Ronny who, in a similar way, "kidnaps Adela's mind and she recovers it only later on with enough bleeding and cuts made by the rock of the Marabar Caves."[112] Ronny tries to brainwash Adela with his imperialist, chauvinistic, male discourse and justify the English presence in India. Adela is deceived by Ronny for once in this event, which is a foreshadowing of the upcoming disaster of the Marabar Caves as it takes place "on the Marabar road

[109] Stone, **op. cit.**, p. 312.
[110] Mohammad Shaheen, **E.M. Forster and the Politics of Imperialism**, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2004, p. 140.
[111] **Ibid.**, p. 141.
[112] **Ibid.**, p. 142.

chosen by Ronny"[113]; however, later on, she is going to encounter the truth in a Marabar Cave, and when she realizes the façade she had been pulled into by the Anglo-Indian community, she is going to speak up, and therefore will be isolated by the people of her own race. Mrs. Moore's interpretation of the cause of the accident, on the other hand, is far from realistic. Her suggestion being a ghost as the reason behind the unfortunate event reveals her state of mind, as she moves away from her Englishness towards a new, metaphysical sphere of thought in which she will be aware of the futility of her religious beliefs as well.

The Marabar Caves and their suggestions dominate the whole of *A Passage to India*, yet especially the second section focuses more closely on these mysterious and **extraordinary** elements of the Indian scenery after which it is called, "Caves". In the first chapter of the second part of the novel, the caves are described in detail and the description echoes the portrayal of Chandrapore at the beginning with its stress on negativity. The deprivation is strongly emphasized by "Nothing, nothing attaches to them" (p. 110). "[T]he caves combine the extremes of extraordinary and monotonous."[114] On the one hand they are said to be extraordinary, on the other hand "the pattern [of the caves] never varies," Forster writes, "no carving, not even a bees' nest or a bat, distinguishes one from another" (p.110). In the following paragraph, the darkness of the caves is highlighted. "However, the theme remains consistent: darkness and emptiness are kin; darkness is, as it were, nothing made visible."[115]

In this section of the novel, the pattern of invitations recurs, and as he promised to do, Aziz organizes a day trip to the caves to show Adela and Mrs. Moore around. However, the outcome of "[t]he offering or withholding of invitations, which is the Englishman's characteristic of keeping his life in proper social order,"[116] becomes a muddle in the hands of a Moslem Indian. Aziz, scrupulous over the details of the excursion, considers the needs of his guests, yet to bring all these people together is so hard that even the food is to be a problem. Adela, Mrs. Moore and Fielding as Christians would most probably prefer to eat ham and drink liquor, thinks

[113] **Ibid.**
[114] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 57.
[115] **Ibid.**, p. 58.
[116] Frederick C. Crews, **E.M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism**, New Jersey, Princeton University Press, 1962, p. 148.

Aziz, whereas his religion forbids them, and, on the other hand Professor Godbole would be upset if anyone ate beef and would require his food to be prepared by a Brahman. By his insistence on uniting those people from different races and religions, Aziz goes beyond the limits; thus the aftermath of this arrangement is going to be quite tragic for him: "Trouble after trouble encountered him, because he had challenged the spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments" (p. 113).

The misfortunes that have begun with the arrangement of food continues with Fielding and Godbole's missing the train that was supposed to take them to the caves, which is quite unexpected since "Fielding was an Englishman, and they never do miss trains" (p. 115). To this Aziz responds, "'Bad, bad, you have destroyed me, . . . our expedition is a ruin'" (p. 116), as if he foresees the approaching disaster.

The caves, as the focus point of *A Passage to India*, make outstanding impacts upon the people who enter them. They symbolize, in the Freudian sense, the subconscious where one keeps one's **inappropriate** and **unacceptable** desires under pressure so as to preserve one's **proper** social self. With its polished walls that denote a mirror-like quality, a Marabar Cave is where one confronts the dark side of one's existence. The darkness of the caves is in contrast with the outside where, in that hot season of India, the sun is at its highest. "The experience is, rather, what Jung describes as the Shadow, that deepest and darkest bottom of the unconscious which strikes unspeakable horror into those unequipped to encounter it."[117] Although Mrs. Moore and Adela tend to have milder personalities, they are unequipped indeed since they are English all the same, and

> the English character is incomplete. It has a bad surface – self-complacent, unsympathetic, and reserved.[118]

> The incidents in the Caves are of course the symbolic heart of the novel, where India exerts its force of illusion and disillusion upon the British visitors. These incidents are meaningful on all levels, making the hopeless misunderstanding between East and West vivid and complete, but their most important kind of meaning is clearly religious. The Christian Mrs. Moore and the Moslem Aziz, having befriended one another in a mosque, have previously been kept apart by social barriers, but now they

[117] Stone, **op. cit.**, p 335.
[118] Forster, "Notes on the English Character", p. 14.

> are to meet, with Adela, on the ground of what Adela has called "the real India." The Marabar Caves will offer them an India more virginal than they bargain for, and will, through utter indifference to selfhood, challenge their very sense of reality.[119]

It is Mrs. Moore who goes through her unusual experience in the cave first: "A Marabar cave had been horrid as far as Mrs. Moore was concerned, for she had nearly fainted in it, . . . couldn't breathe and some vile naked thing struck her face and settled on her mouth like a pad" (p. 130). Mrs. Moore, as an old woman, approaching an advanced age, is afraid of death. The faintness she feels in the cave and the difficulty of her breathing signify this fear. When she emerges from the cave, she realizes that "the naked pad was a poor little baby, astride in her mother's hip" (p. 131). Therefore, she feels challenged by the younger generation as the part of the cycle of life whose time has come to leave this world. She feels unimportant and lost. She is searching for a meaning and is hoping to find it in religion; but Christianity turns out to be inadequate to her needs. Right after she comes out of the cave and ponders upon her experience, "[a]t 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'" (p. 133). In the cave, all the sounds and the words uttered come back as a monotonous meaningless echo; there is no distinction between the divine and the ordinary, so the state of affairs is chaos. The Kawa Dol, a boulder near the Marabar Caves, described in the first chapter of "Caves" section as "empty as an Easter egg" (p. 111) and "hollow" (p. 111) is an allusion to the futility and the insufficiency of Christianity in the face of darkness, annihilation and chaos. It "implies the fate of Mrs. Moore's Christian faith, which will undergo not the resurrection associated with Easter but rather the fate of an Easter egg – an object already emptied of its contents, hollowed out, filled with nothing, and, finally, shattered."[120] In the **nothingness** of the cave Mrs. Moore loses her sense of reality, order and harmony. She goes through a significant change in India and the cave experience is the climax of her reform, her epiphany, which allows her to realize the destructiveness of the English societal order for the

[119] Crews, **op. cit.**, p. 155.
[120] Barbara Rosecrance, **Forster's Narrative Vision**, Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press, 1982, p. 202.

individual, reducing it to nothing, and consequently leaving no room for reconciliation between them:

> Perceiving the horror of the void where distinctions and values disappear, the void beyond discourse and differentiation, she perceives as well that discourse itself, no matter how multiple or mobile its forms, has the potential to obliterate rather than unify individuals, even the discourse of love and marriage that she no longer distinguish from rape: 'Why all this marriage, marriage? . . . The human race would have become a single person centuries ago if marriage was any use. And all this rubbish about love, love in a church, love in a cave, as if there is the least difference.'[121]

Throughout the novel, Mrs. Moore gradually moves away from the conventional English party she belongs to, finally to a state of introversion and disinterest. First she leaves the **safety** of the Club on her own and meets an Indian in a mosque. Then she tries to mix with others in the Bridge Party. She enhances her friendship with Aziz in the gathering at Fielding's and is moved deeply by the song of Professor Godbole in which he calls to god to come to him. "She slowly moves toward a view of life that is Hindu, if anything – in which the differences between races and sects become unimportant."[122] She comes to believe that every living creature deserves a place in the world, no matter how small and trivial it seems to be. For instance, when she finds a wasp in her room one night, "in calling it 'Pretty dear', acknowledges its right to existence; she 'invites' it into the circle of her benevolent interest."[123] The wasp reappears in the thoughts of Godbole in the beginning of the third section of the novel and he associates it with Mrs. Moore; he considers them to be parts of a whole:

> They loved all men, the whole universe, and scraps of their past, tiny splinters of detail, emerged for a moment to melt into the universal warmth. Thus Godbole, though she was not important to him, remembered an old lady he had met in Chandrapore days. . . . His senses grew thinner, he remembered a wasp seen he forgot where, perhaps on a stone. He loved the wasp equally, he impelled it likewise, he was imitating God. (pp. 253-254)

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[121] Brenda R. Silver, "Periphrasis and Rape in *A Passage to India*", **E.M. Forster: Contemporary Critical Essays**, Ed. by Jeremy Tambling, Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire and New York, Palgrave Macmillan, 2002, p. 188.
[122] Stone, **op. cit.**, p. 330.
[123] Crews, **op. cit.**, p. 150.

Here, Forster specifically chooses to use the wasp image since wasps live in social colonies divided into three castes, just like the Indian society. Moreover, the fact that one of those castes consists of "the workers, or sexually undeveloped females"[124], instantly recalls the other sexually undeveloped female in the novel, that is Adela.

What lies behind Adela's episode in the cave is foreshadowed quite early in the novel when one evening in the Club, as she admires the hills, "[i]n front like a shutter, falls a vision of her married life" (p. 38). Adela has a problematic relationship with Ronny. She tries to be sensible over her future marriage, not loving and passionate. Before she marries him, she wants to see Ronny in his environment in India and is disillusioned with what she finds out. When she is climbing up the rocks to the cave with Aziz, it suddenly occurs to her that "they [Ronny and herself] did not love each other" (p. 134). Then her thoughts wander off to Aziz's physical attractiveness and she compares him to Ronny: "She regret[s] that neither she nor Ronny ha[s] physical charm" (p. 135). Deeply absorbed in the issue of marriage, Adela questions Aziz about his marital status and asks "Have you one wife or more than one?" (p. 136). The question implies an awareness of Aziz's sexual power as well as a commonplace prejudice about the Moslem community. Adela's state of mind before she enters the cave is not quite intact. The implication of her troubled sexuality is indicated earlier that day, when she mistakes a "withered and twisted stump of a toddy-palm" (p. 124) for a snake which is both satanic and a phallic symbol, therefore indicates a fear of sexual interaction and male attack as well as a connection between sex and sin. Only when she puts on Ronny's field glasses, does she realize that it's not a snake, and accordingly not sexual or erotic either. When she adapts Ronny's way of looking at things -male and rational-, she sets aside her restrained desires and fears, and becomes reasonable. Having entered the cave, she encounters the suppressed feelings of her dark side; the cave with its polished walls mirrors **the other** in Adela. She lives her own hell there- that is sexual assault.

> Elaine Showalter, . . . reads the hallucination in terms of Adela's apprehensions about committing herself to a loveless marriage that is nothing short of "legalized rape." Brenda Silver also links the imaginary rape to the gender roles suggested by marriage. Since Adela enters the cave disturbed about her forthcoming marriage to

[124] (Online) www.encyclopedia.com/html/w/wasp.asp, 23 January 2006.

> Ronny Heaslop, she is forced to acknowledge her social status as a sex object and thus confront "the material and psychological reality of what it means to be rapable."[125]

Yet it is not just Adela who realizes her subsidiary status as a woman in the English society.[126] Aziz's position as the invisible colonized is reinforced by his arrest after the cave incident. He, who had objectified his wife treating her as a "token of exchange for male bonding"[127] in order to enhance his friendship with Fielding, and also being the other colonizer in India, now

> disappears as speaking subject. . . . McBryde reduces Aziz to his body, his skin colour, by implication his sexuality, which is by definition depraved.[128]

It is the fact that Adela finally sees this connection between herself and Aziz as the victims of the white male oppression that eventually brings her to her senses: "With the understanding attained through knowledge of her body, her sexuality, and the powers that control it, Adela perceives him now for what he is: devoid of evil but subject as Indian to a discourse of objectification and appropriation structured in a similar way to that she experiences as woman."[129]

Adela Quested, who has come to see **the real India**, actually quests for the part of herself she had previously been unaware of -as implied by her last name- and in conclusion she finds herself in sadness and dismay. She realizes that she is incapable of loving someone truly; she is frigid both sexually and in terms of humanity which recalls Helen in *Howards End* and Cecil Vyse in *A Room with a View*. After what she has gone through in the cave, Adela accuses Aziz of sexual harassment, causes him to be sent to prison and throws herself back to the secure community of the Club. The English circle reacts to the incident as an insult to

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[125] Jenny Sharpe, "The Indeterminacies of Rape", **A Routledge Literary Sourcebook on E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India***, Ed. by Peter Childs, London and New York, Routledge, 2002, pp. 77-78.
[125] **Ibid.**, p. 79.
[126] The echoes Adela hears in the cave are the repeated discourse of the patriarchal structure. Like the mythical Echo, she cannot articulate her own ideas and feelings, but rather she is forced to reproduce what she has been preached by men.
[127] Silver, **op. cit.**, p. 187.
[128] **Ibid.**, p. 182.
[129] **Ibid.**, p. 187.

English masculinity. Adela's "double positioning . . . as inferior sex but superior race"[130] places her in a situation where she becomes the subject of pity, kindness and sympathy directed to her by the English society in Chandrapore. On the other hand, Ronny's threatened and humiliated virility by an Indian's attempt to rape his fiancée raises him to the rank of a "martyr" (p.164), and he becomes almost a Jesus Christ figure among the English in Chandrapore:

> At the name of Heaslop a fine and beautiful expression was renewed on every face. Miss Quested was only a victim, but young Heaslop was a martyr; he was the recipient of all the evil intended against them by the country they had tried to serve. (p. 164)

After Adela's accusation of Aziz, the English stick to each other more closely than they did before. The Club where they gather and discuss this issue symbolizes identity, membership, belonging and togetherness. It is a means of conformity and a place of safety in the predominant disorder and chaos of India. It is the general Club mentality, a conventional prejudice on the part of the English uttered in the courtroom, that "the darker races are physically attracted by the fairer, but not vice versa" (p. 194).

> In this same vein, Aziz's wife is assumed by McBryde, when he sees her photograph, to be a prostitute – which would follow the idea of Aziz a sexual threat . . . . Their identities are reduced by the Anglo-Indian Club to a projection of British fears about violated property and sexual threats.[131]

As a matter of fact, it is not just Aziz, his dead wife, or the Indians in general who are objectified here. The way the **assault** is treated by the English diminishes both Adela and the other English women to the possessions of men. As Brenda R. Silver remarks:

> . . . [T]he alleged 'insult' of the Englishwoman becomes the occasion for cloistering all Englishwomen, simultaneously reducing them to objects of protection and using

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[131] Peter Childs, **A Routledge Literary Sourcebook on E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India***, London and New York, Routledge, 2002, p.144.

> them as an excuse to reassert white male power over both their women and their potential attackers.[132]

The denial of individuality for the Englishwomen[133] leads Mohammad Shaheen to believe that a reconciliation between the English and the Indians is not attainable:

> By analogy it is impossible for those British officials to see individuality in Indians because they fail to see it in people of their own race. The gap, then, is beyond any bridge. The crisis of the Caves is consequently an opportunity for the British officials to show themselves as an impediment in the way of any understanding between the two races.[134]

After the muddle in the Marabar Caves, the tensions that separate the English and the Indians become even more obvious than they were before. Adela does not force the barriers that stand between the two races anymore; she finds shelter in the security of the Anglo-Indian sphere. Mrs. Moore goes into a state of withdrawal. She does not care about Adela's condition, her union with Ronny, or Aziz's trial even though she intuitively knows that he is innocent. She disclaims all responsibility for the things happening around her and turns completely into her own self. She leaves India as soon as she can and dies on board ship on her way back home; yet she becomes a mystical figure and her spiritual existence dominates the succeeding developments in the novel. The mention of her name in court brings Adela to her senses, she gets rids of the echo in her head and states that she is not actually quite sure about what has happened in the cave. With her name distorted into "Esmiss Esmoor" (p. 200) by the natives, Mrs. Moore becomes a myth in Chandrapore. In that sense, Mrs. Moore recalls Mrs. Wilcox of *Howards End* whose well-meant demeanour towards everyone in the novel influences Margaret to establish a union under the roof of Howards End bequeathed to her by this spiritual guide.

Even though he wanted to remain impartial in India, Fielding is forced to take sides after Aziz's accusation. He believes in his friend's innocence and stands up against his countrymen in order to defend him. Like the heroes of the previous

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[132] Silver, **op. cit.**, p. 180.
[133] The fact that the British women in Chandrapore disdain the Indians even more forcefully than the men suggests that they reflect upon them their own frustration.
[134] Shaheen, **op. cit.**, p. 164.

novels, he is also caught between two worlds at conflict. Originally he belongs to the conventional party, like Lucy did, and just like her he sympathizes with the opponent group; yet he does not break his bonds with his origins either. He helps Adela after the trial at a time when she is ostracized by her fellow citizens. Consequently, he ends up in a different position than Lucy did, in the conclusion of the novel. While Lucy has made an obvious choice between the two clashing alternatives, and by marrying George offended her family, Fielding

> not only has kept his footing in the British sphere (by remaining an official and by marrying Heaslop's half-sister), but he has also widened his horizons by restoring his friendship with Aziz and by moving out of Chandrapore into a broader arena of action.[135]

However, his achievement in uniting with his friend is controversial and will be discussed in detail in the following paragraphs.

The last section of the novel "Temple" introduces the reader into the setting of a Hindu festival which celebrates the rebirth of God:

> This corridor in the palace at Mau opened through other corridors into a courtyard. It was of beautiful hard white stucco, but its pillars and vaulting could scarcely be seen behind coloured rags, iridescent balls, chandeliers of opaque pink glass, and murky photographs framed crookedly. (p. 253)

This disorderly and chaotic atmosphere of the festival is contrasted with the description of Venice on the last page of the "Caves" section. After the trial, on his way back to England Fielding stops in Venice and is struck by the neat and regular beauty of the architecture and works of art. He compares the perfectly-proportioned Italy to the confusion of India:

> The buildings of Venice . . . stood in the right place, whereas in poor India everything was placed wrong. He had forgotten the beauty of form among idols temples and lumpy hills; indeed, without form how can there be beauty? Form stammered here and there in a mosque, became rigid through nervousness even, but oh, these Italian churches! . . . The Mediterranean is the human norm. When men leave that exquisite lake, whether through the Bosphorus or the Pillars of Hercules,

[135] Land, **op. cit.,** p. 194.

> they approach the monstrous and extraordinary; and the southern exit leads to the strangest experience of all. (pp. 249-250)

Thus the distinction between the East and the West is clearly stated. The West means order and harmony whereas the East is a muddle as the descriptions of Chandrapore, the caves and the temple show.

> 'Mediterranean is human norm.' Anything beyond, to the East, is a deviation from the norm which inevitably portends trouble.[136]

In spite of its chaotic tone, the last part of *A Passage to India* is where the previous misunderstandings and confusions of the novel are resolved to some extent. First of all, Aziz's misconstruing about Fielding's wife -which has developed in his cynical mind since Fielding left for England- is cleared up. He learns that Fielding has married Mrs. Moore's daughter Stella, not Miss Quested as he had presumed. However, the emergence of the truth about the marriage does not straighten things out between Aziz and Fielding. The goodwill of Mrs. Moore who has long been dead is going to travel through his son Ralph and his daughter Stella so as to bring the two friends back together. The scene of the accidental collision of the boats is the climax of this section that symbolizes the union and it recalls Aziz's invitation of the English ladies to an expedition of the caves, as, similarly, this time he invites Ralph for an outing on the boat. Their boat crashes into that of Fielding and Stella in the dark, and the scene is heavily symbolic:

> The shock was minute, but Stella, nearest to it, shrank into her husband's arms, then reached forward, then flung herself against Aziz, and her motions capsized them. They plunged into the warm, shallow water, and rose struggling into a tornado of noise. . . . That was the climax, as far as India admits of one. The rain settled in steadily to its job of wetting everybody and everything through . . . (pp. 281-282)

Thus, the East and the West merge into one another and along with the Hindus, the Moslem and the English all mix up in the holy waters of the Ganges. In addition to that, the cool weather of the first section and the hot season of the second clash and

[136] Shaheen, **op. cit.**, p. 76.

there comes rain with the monsoon in the last part symbolizing purification and relief. As the two boats capsize, the barriers between these people are removed and

> [a]t the moment of the rebirth of the Hindu deity, love is reborn among men . . . . [R]iver and rain combine in a ceremony of spiritual cleansing.[137]

Considered from a Christian point of view, this accident on the river also conjures up the Deluge, Noah and his ark, so all these people are saved from their misconceptions to be united. However, that is only a momentary reconciliation without any hopes for the future. The first sentence of the following chapter expresses dejection and futility: "Friends again, yet aware that they would meet no more, Aziz and Fielding went for their last ride in the Maju jungles" (p. 282). During their ride they talk about politics and for the first time in the novel they communicate their political views openly to each other. Even though they both want a reconciliation, they know they cannot be friends because "socially they had no meeting-place" (p. 284). Personal sympathies and the wish to connect are not sufficient; personal relations are manipulated by national and social consciousness. Imperialism determines what turn the friendship of Aziz and Fielding is going to take. ". . . Forster envisages imperialism as an initial act of ruining individual relations, eventually developing into a misrepresentation of the contact between the cultures of different races."[138] The failure of Aziz and Fielding's union is furthermore related with human limitations. The inferiority and triviality of the human-being have been emphasized several times in *A Passage to India*, especially in the opening chapter which is devoted to the description of the city, with no mention of the characters and involving no dialogue. The inhabitants of Chandrapore were likened to mud. Also in the general tone of the novel, the human-being's worthlessness is obvious: the introduction of the characters is delayed and they are not fully developed individuals when compared to those of the previous novels. On this issue Frederick C. Crews notes:

[137] Edwards, **op. cit.**, p. 116.
[138] Shaheen, **op. cit.**, p. 16.

> Such a novel can have no hero or villain, since the blame for the failure of communication rests on the whole conflict of civilizations, indeed upon human nature generally. . . . [I]nstead of following one character's internal debate between values represented by a few other characters, we stand before a social panorama in which a multitude of "flat" characters are briefly glimpsed.[139]

The insignificance of the human-being is highlighted through one's juxtaposition with nature. Aziz and Fielding's desire to become friends is annihilated by the horses, the earth and the sky as they do not want unity and harmony between the two men. Just like the flame and the shadow it casts on the polished wall of the cave do not unite, so the two cannot fully be reconciled, because the normal state of affairs in nature is chaos. Order, harmony and unity are human creations and limitations to be imposed upon the individual so as to stabilize the social system.

> [Godbole's] words about the interdependence of good and evil, and about the involvement of the whole universe in each, may be seen as central to Forster's moral thinking in so far as the dualisms, across which his heroes are striving to connect, are the result of wrong-headed attempts to limit and assign good and evil within artificial boundaries, within the terms of social conventions.[140]

The attempts of the wretched human-being are feeble and inadequate against nature and especially against "the overarching sky" (p. 4) above Chandrapore. "The sky settles everything" (p. 4). The emphasis placed on the power and dominance of the sky, together with the plot of the novel with its trifling, incidental events that stimulate the upcoming chaos, seem to neglect the existence of an omnipotent god. Furthermore, the domes existing in the various temples of each religion, which "derive their ultimate inspiration from the curve of the sky"[141], are vain attempts to reconstruct a dome under which people can unite. Ironically, the religious beliefs of people, as well as differences of race and gender, tend to widen the existing gap between human beings, rather than bringing them together. In addition to this, the circular shapes of the Marabar Caves call up "the overarching sky" (p. 4), too. Like the domes of the holy places, the caves also signify separation simultaneously:

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[139] Crews, **op. cit.**, p. 145.
[140] Land, **op. cit.**, p. 212.

[141] John Sayre Martin, **E.M. Forster: The Endless Journey**, London, New York and Melbourne, Cambridge University Press, 1976, p. 152.

> Each man, enclosed in his own cave, tries to reach out and commune with his fellow man; but the caves separate man from man, keeping each in his own compartment, discouraging intimacy between Moslem and Hindu, English and Indian, white man and dark, high caste and low. The echo that terrifies Mrs. Moore and rages up and down Adela's nerves extends to the world beyond, for it, too, with its mixture of races, creeds, and classes exemplifies spiritual muddledom.[142]

As pointed out earlier, the caves are also the places where people experience a sudden moment of realization of the chasm within themselves.

The authority of the sky is emphasized once again as Ronny points out to his mother, "'There's nothing in India except for the weather, . . . it's the alpha and omega of the whole affair'" (p. 40). Indeed, in *A Passage to India,* the relationships between the characters and the plot are determined by the seasons and each section represents a certain Indian season. In the "Mosque" section which is set in the cool season, two crucial confrontations between the characters are made, those between Aziz and Mrs. Moore, and Aziz and Fielding. In the "Caves" section, hot weather dominates India and finds its reflection in the temperament and the passion of Adela's troubled sexuality, Mrs. Moore's finding herself surrounded by meaninglessness as she moves towards death and the tense atmosphere of the courtroom. With the monsoon rains of the "Temple" section, misapprehensions and tensions between the conflicting parties are resolved and a brief scene of reconciliation is depicted; yet it is followed by an inconclusive ending, not with a union but a separation.

> The separation of race from race, sex from sex, culture from culture, even of man from himself, is what underlies every relationship. The separation of the English from the Indians is merely the most dramatic of the chasms in this novel.[143]

Only one character in the novel rises above all these synthetic codes that estrange people from one another, that is the punkah-wallah in the courtroom. He sits almost naked at the back of the room, pulling the rope of the fan. He is stripped of all conventions that restrain the individual, as his nakedness implies. He does not belong to any civilization, culture or any institution. He is not aware of what is happening

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[142] **Ibid.**, p. 158.
[143] Lionel Trilling, **E.M. Forster**, New York, New Directions, 1965, p. 151.

around him. Primitively and naturally beautiful, he stands "aloof" (p. 193), detached from all formalities. He is "higher that communities and religions."[144] "The beauty of the lowliest member of the courtroom illustrates the artificiality of human forms of exclusion, from the Indian caste system to the English class system."[145]

All the relationships, even the ones established upon personal grounds, are doomed to fail in this pessimistic post-war novel by Forster. It is distinguished from his preceding novels by its hopeless vision, even on the subject of personal relations. In *Howards End* and *A Room with a View*, with human sympathy and understanding, characters are able to survive in a union although the future holds only a feeble hope for them. Nevertheless, in *A Passage to India* the human-being is defeated because of his limitations and lacks. Forster's last novel "neglects to overcome the latent fear of chaos; it continues to illustrate the humanistic struggle against meaninglessness, but fails to affirm that a victory is possible."[146] The nullifying tone of the opening chapter pursues in the end and the ultimate nature denies the union: "But the horses didn't want it – they swerved apart; the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single-file;" (p. 288). Finally, the last words are uttered by the overruling sky asserting its rejection of the reconciliation: "'No, not yet,' and the sky said, 'No, not there'" (p. 288).

[144] Childs, **op. cit.**, p. 72.
[145] **Ibid.**, p. 152.
[146] Crews, **op. cit.**, p. 143.

CONCLUSION

Forster constructs his novels upon a clear-cut pattern of binary oppositions in a social context. He presents the distinctly diverse good and evil embodied in his characters and the ideas they represent, and explores the interrelations between these tensions to see if they lead to reconciliation. In the three novels I have explored, Forster juxtaposes different groups of people and viewpoints, keeping his focus on personal relationships. He values the individual, personal relationships, human warmth and sympathy rather than conventional hierarchy in social interactions.

In *A Room with a View,* there is the conventional set of people consisting of the pension community, the Honeychurch Family and Cecil Vyse, and in contrast with them there is the rather liberal, unconventional Emersons. The heroine of the novel, Lucy, who actually belongs to the former group and is still a young girl who has not quite found her place in the world, is stuck between these two alternatives. Her journey to Italy brings out the potential in her. The experiences she lives through in Italy has a great impact upon her later life in England. Although at first she disclaims the self-realization she attained in Italy, eventually she becomes an individual and takes control over her own life, breaks her engagement with Cecil, declares her love for George Emerson and decides to get married with him, even though that means she has to turn her back on her family and friends. Thus, Lucy overcomes the prejudices implanted in her mind by her upbringing and first obtains a reconciliation within her soul; then, she connects with the unfit Emersons, and thus becomes the medium of reconciliation between the class she belongs to and the free-minded Emersons. However, to what extent that reconciliation is accomplished is controversial, since Lucy does not become a completely autonomous individual, but rather changes her source of influence, from her medieval fiancé Cecil to the unorthodox Emersons, and she also loses her ties with one side of the conflict.

Due to its more complicated structure, there are more oppositions to be studied in *Howards End.* The discord between the English and the foreigner, the countryside and the city, materialism and human sympathy, convention and personal relationships, and men and women make up the issues that Forster deals with in this

novel. In this case, there are more than one group of people: to begin with, we have the half-German, intellectual Schlegels on the one hand, and the conventional, materialistic Wilcoxes on the other. Yet, each member of these families has their own idiosyncrasies. Helen is rather obstinate and passionate while Margaret is more sensible and balanced. As for the Wilcoxes, the mother, Ruth, is completely different from her husband and children. She is like a part of nature and Howards End whereas they belong to the industrial city life of England. Leonard Bast and his wife stand for the third group in the novel, the lower classes. Out of the several attempts to connect with a person from a different class, only Margaret's succeeds, but only to some extent. Paul Wilcox and Helen can only connect for a moment with a kiss which has different meanings for the two, the love affair that took place between Henry Wilcox and Jacky had long been concealed before it is finally uncovered accidentally, and eventually Helen and Leonard connect for one night only. At the end of the novel, many of these people are able to come together in Howards End which is a survivor of the old times and, being a farmhouse, denotes nutrition, fertility and a harmonious relationship of man with nature. Having inherited "the instinctive wisdom" (p. 36) from Ruth Wilcox who haunts her throughout the novel, Margaret blends it with her sensibility and humanism, and finally brings Henry, "the outer world of telegrams", and Helen, passion, together. Moreover, the illegitimate offspring of Helen and Leonard, who symbolizes the removal of barriers between classes, is also included in this harmonious unity. However, this reconciliation is imperfect as some of the characters are absent. The reconciliation of the tensions requires the death of Leonard and the imprisonment of Charles both of which contribute to the maturing of Henry and Helen. As the first two letters of their names indicate, they are able to meet on a common ground at the end through Margaret's efforts, but still they are absolutely unlike. Although they have found this haven, Howards End, to live this peaceful life in connection with nature, it is for sure that it is not going to last long; the future does not hold anything promising for them. The fog and the dust of the city moving in through the countryside which is now easier to get to, thanks to motorcars and railways, foreshadow the vanishing of the natural life in rural areas.

A Passage to India deals with racial, religious and cultural issues between the English and the Indian, the East and the West, and the colonizer and the colonized in

the city of Chandrapore in India. However, the structure of the novel is not that clear-cut this time, since the Indians are separated also within themselves, due to the hierarchy in their own peculiar social system, as well as in their choices of religion. Again, Forster makes use of the journey motif and sets the plot upon a series of invitations. As a consequence of her journey to India and to the caves, Mrs. Moore loses herself in the chaotic setting of this mysterious country. Her search for something to hold on to, as she advances into old age, results in the loss of her belief in the Christian God and eventually, she dies on her way back home. Besides, through her journey, Adela discovers the previously unrevealed features of Ronny's character and decides to break her engagement with him; moreover, she discovers her desires, too and her troubled sexuality uncovers itself in the darkness and emptiness of a Marabar Cave. The invitations and social gatherings in the novel bring people from different groups together. However, in each occasion the outcome is disappointment; even the small intimate tea-party at Fielding's, where there is a representative of each group liable to a reconciliation, is disrupted by Ronny. What is even worse is the day trip to the caves, at the end of which the relationships between the peoples become tenser, and even Aziz and Fielding's friendship falls apart after the events caused by the accusation of Aziz and his trial. They become aware of the limitations of their companionship and both take shelter in the security of their own spheres: Fielding goes back to England and gets married, thus integrates himself into the conventions of English society; while Aziz moves to a different city which is not under British reign and is now more enthusiastic about his nationalistic ideas and writes poems on politics. Restricted in such a way by their racial, cultural and political diversities, the friendship that was once established between Aziz and Fielding is no longer possible. Politics and national consciousness triumph over personal relations. Although Forster preferred to conclude *A Room with a View* and *Howards End* with reconciliation no matter how imperfect it was, this time he leaves no chance for hope in this post-war novel. He emphasizes the triviality of the human-being by claiming a much more powerful force above him, that is nature, which does not allow the reconciliation to take place.

As it has been discussed in this thesis, along with E.M. Forster's writing, the theme of reconciliation in the three novels also evolves in time. The disillusionment

with the modern age and the rise of the individual above society appears as a main subject matter in all these novels. In the clutter of the changing times, Forster places his trust in the possibility of personal relations and in the reconciliation of polarities. However, reconciliation, if achieved, is never perfect. Having acknowledged and submitted to her desires, Lucy overcomes the prejudices of her class and marries George Emerson; yet she is separated from her mother who does not approve of this union. Although Margaret unites her husband and her sister in Howards End, she knows that the busy city life is moving towards them and she is also aware of the limitations of Henry. *A Passage to India* promises no hope for the future as it was written after the First World War, and it carries a tone of depression and dejection, leaving no chance for a reconciliation. The post-war reality finds its way into Forster's last novel and challenges even relations on personal grounds that he had so much faith in, making reconciliation unattainable.

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