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The Critics' Views on E.M. Forster's Fiction

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Abstract
Forster has been exposed to an unfair attack of criticism. Critics Views on Forster are consistent. One group is pro-Forsrtersim, and the other is anti-Forsterism. Nevertheless, both groups agree that Forster has produced artistic work. Forster's art reached its climax in A Passage to India. His critics found Forster divided in his vision and inclined to be over – anxious in presenting it. Other critics accused Forster that his symbols are not meaningful. These critics went far in considering Forster a vague and boring writer. In fact, there are two schools of Forester's critics: English and American. The British trend, headed by F.R. Leavis, regards Forster as a social writer. The American, headed by Lionel Trilling, looks upon Forster as a romantic writer. However, neither school has investigated the philosophy of Forster's concern with human relationships. In fact, Forster has been really wronged by some critics. I admit that during his life Forster did not develop a social message. He did not get himself involved in the political, economical and social matters of his time. He belonged to the group that believed in art for art's sake. If one discusses Forster from that angle, one might think of him as a quite remarkable writer.
Keywords: Critics' Views, anti-Forsterism**,** in A Passage to India**,** art for art's sake**.**

1. Introduction

Critics have expressed different views on Forster .They have not denied that Forster was an interesting novelist. His literary reputation invited critics to place him with major writers intellectually. Lionel Trilling spoke of him as:

> sometimes irritating in his refusal to be great. Forster's reputation was somewhat slow to emerge , it was not that he was found too difficult for comprehension, but too easy ; and thus even when the major writers , the great discoverers, in twentieth century fiction were acclaimed , Forster was held to be not quite one of them .(1)

Recent critics of Forster have tended to take a different approach. In a variety of ways it has demonstrated that Forster's intellectual and technical character is more complex and more modern than one may think. What has been stated over recent years is the complexity and resource of Forster's fictional method particularly in Howards End and A Passage to India. I believe that Forster was keen on order and art in his later books. He believes that art is the only area in which one finds order. Forster comments: "The past is really a series of disorders succeeding one another by discoverer able laws, no doubt, and certainly marked by an increasing growth of human interference, but disorders all the same. Works of art are "little" vantage grounds in the changing chaos". (2) Furthermore, Forster believes that music is the deepest of the arts and "deep beneath the arts". Music might civilize the barbarian more than the written word. The passage in which Howards End sets out the audience's reaction to Beethoven's Fifth Symphony illustrates the inadequacy of words to deal with musical experience.

> This passage is one of the most significant. It will be generally admitted that Beethoven's Fifth Symphony is the most sublime noise that has ever penetrated the ears of man. All sorts and conditions
> are satisfied by it . Whether you are like Ers. Munt, and tap surreptitiously when the tunes come of course , so as not to disturb the others or like Helen , who can see horses and ship wrecks in the music's flood ; or like Margaret , who can only see the music ; or like Tibby , who is profoundly versed in the counterpoint , and holds the full score open on his knee ; or like their cousin , Fraulein Mosebach, who remembers all the time that Beethoven is ' echt Deutsch'; or like Fraulein Mosebach's young man , who can remember nothing but
> Fraulein Mosebach: in any case, the passion of your life becomes more vivid, and you are bound to admit that such a noise is cheap at two shillings. (3)

In introducing his musical themes, Forster tries to express the inexpressible. In A Passage to India, the incident of the wasp is a good example of this .Godbole who directs the music at the Gokul Ashteml festival , evokes through the images of the rhythm, Mr. Moore, a wasp and the stone to which in clung. Forster's doctrine here, as Malcom Bradbury discovers is:

> of course a species of transcendence , a momentary vision of the whole , the invocation of a universe invested with spirit . It links up with the symbolist plot of the novel, its power as a radiant image,

> rather than with plot in the linear sense, with its world of ' and then …and then …' Threading its way through the novel , to an old woman and a wasp, it takes these 'soliciting images' and puts them in a new association not with all things, but with each other and with what else comes almost unbidden into the world of spirit… things , in freeing themselves from their traditional associations, social and historical , from a new order , beyond dialogue, beyond human plot, in the realm where poetic figures function on their own order of consciousness.(4)

On the one hand, Forster's critics have shown a positive stand towards his aesthetics. His novels have gained a reputation because of this distinctive feature. However, critics have touched on other literary characteristics that distinguished Forster as a remarkable novelist who understands human relationships. On the other hand, the early critics thought that Forster's novels presented problems and difficulties. These critics found Forster divided in his vision were and inclined to be over anxious in presenting it. Many of them (like Katherine Mansfield, I.A. Richard, Peter Burra, Rose Macaulay, and F. R. Leavis) found his work not only ambiguous and tentative, but also split in its intentions or in its effect.

I. A. Richards wrote the first important critical article about Forster's novel. He thinks that Forster revealed oddness in his work. This came, I think from Forster's unusual outlook on life.

In Richards' view, Forster's fiction has a mystical concern with survival or continuity, and also a strong sociological emphasis , a concern with the separation within society. This view is obviously seen in Howards End: the Schlegels stand for the first theme and the Wilcoxes for the second one. Richards suggested something other critics were later to take up " that two modes and intentions , one concerned with the mystical, the other with manners, exist in his novels , somewhat at odds with each other." (5)

Montgomery Belgion, like Richards, attacked Forster strongly. He criticized the mysticism and the way in which Forster used characters. Belgion believes that Forster's characters are peculiarly symbolical, and they are not associated with any particular meaning. Belgion adds that response to these symbolical moments stands "for some eternal principles". (6) What Rickie says in The Longest Journey reveals truly these moments, and the characters operate diabolically. However, Peter Burra expressed an opposite view. He says: "Forster has an aspiration to abstractness but at the same time possesses a serious concern with the political and economic question of the outer world."(7) Burra, in his article argues that Forster pays close attention to rhythm and pattern, to the creates elemental characters (like Gino, Stephen, Mrs. Wilcox, Mrs. Moore) who are "utterly percipient of the reality behind appearances". (8)

Burra, in fact, thinks that Forster's characters are symbolical, but they are related to meanings. I agree with Burra's consideration that Forster's characters stand for symbols. Yet, these symbols are relevant. It is noticed that Forster's characters are derived from the real society that he belonged to. Thus, his characters are real. This would lead us to the conclusion that his symbolism is real too. A distinctive and original attitude to Forster's novels was expressed by Dorothy M. Hoare; who agreed in many ways with Burra. She believed that Forster's novels contained dissonant elements. Yet she called them "romantic", and "ironic". Nevertheless, this produces a new view that had not been expressed by Forster's critics until that time. Dorothy M. Hoare laid stress on the progress that Forster made in his early novels. She thought that these novels showed a debt to Meredith. She also thought that Forster was a pagan. Moreover, his paganism reminded her to D. H. Lawrence. The effect is " an extremely subtle and constant juxtaposition of opposing values, of a mood of detachment alternating with a sense of the religious which is unattached to any religion".(9) In his earlier novels, D.M. Hoare believed that Forster developed a clear virtue from a sense of harmony or rightness, a contact with the life of earth ; but this is modified in the later books. The value of the free response is justified radiantly at the end of A Room With A View, soberly at the end of The Longest Journey, left wavering at the end of Where Angels Fear to Tread. The belief in pagan freedom, in particular, is modified in Howards End and A Passage to India.

2. The Concept of Religion

Forster did not embrace a specific religion. His religious tendencies were quite humanistic. Forster's humanistic is " both romantic and, in a perfectly acceptable sense of the word, religious".(10) But in the absence of any firm sanctions for the imaginative life ,the rational, skeptical spirit is liable to make very severe inroads into it , and the inroads clearly became sharper as Forster grew older. The faith, central to Howards End, not only that the two kinds of humanism can be united, but that their combined force may even transform civilization. This had declined or even disappeared in A Passage to India , and it may not be entirely fanciful to see the parting of the ways between Aziz and Fielding at the end of the novel as symbolic , not only of the gap between East and West, but of the growing gulf between the two voices. It should be noted, however, that in spite of the Marabar nightmare,

Forster does not surrender his imaginative faith. In the last pages of the book, Fielding says that his wife's ideas seem ridiculous when she is away from him, but when she is with him he feels half dead and half blind by comparison.

I think Fielding by no means should be identified with Forster, but Forster must surely have known this double awareness: a sense of the absurdity of the unseen and a sense of inadequacy in its presence. Forster welcomed religion as "spirit". Rose Macaulay sees Forster as a writer who, though a liberal, asserts a vision of reality, a way of life, with the urgency of a religion. She thinks highly of Forster for putting stress on the importance of his theme of human relationships, and not treating sex with insistence. In this regard, she states that Forster treats sex "Now casually, Now with a gingerly aloofness, Now with a welcome in which its peculiar incidence appears submerged or sublimated by reference for it is a token coin of further, and more important immensities."

She adds: "Forster is divided Split by the difficulties of Edwardian liberalism- highly committed to personal relationships, yet revealing a sense of a transcendental realm in which human relations are finally unimportant."(11)

Macaulay's book stimulated another critic F. R. Leavis. Its views are similar to those of Rose Macaulay, but with a rather different emphasis. He sees that Forster's novels are coloured by socio-moral comedy; and his characters are reminiscent of Jane Austen's. Leavis's article offers a close reading of the novels and distinguishes between them. Forster's weakness, Leavis thinks, does not come from his twentieth century liberalism, but from a lack of forceful intelligence that Leavis identifies with Bloomsbury. In this respect, Forster differs from the Bloomsbury group. His strength is that he manifests the virtues of the liberal tradition against the weakness of Bloomsbury. We have noticed that Forester was associated with the Bloomsbury group. Nevertheless, he did not fully support them. From time to time, he took his own position.

3. Major Critics on Forster

Virginia Woolf's criticism praised Forster for his highly sensitive and creative intelligence. Yet, she criticized him for failing to recognize poetry and realism."When Forster shifts from reality to symbolism the subject which has been so uncompromisingly solid becomes, or should become, luminously transparent"(12).

Virginia Woolf criticized Forster for the fact that he composed his novels in a lower mode, a mode that is attentive to ordinary reality; it lacked in fact the luminosity that she herself pursued throughout her novels. She expressed a contrary point to Leavis's; however, it suggests the ambiguity. Yet, Forster was able to give something to his critics to admire him. Leavis and Lawrence were offered that admiration. Though Lawrence preached of him and they quarreled, Forster felt warmth for Lawrence, and Forster, on Lawrence's death, made a statement that shocked and dismayed Bloomsbury, but one that Leavis thinks will be classical. Perhaps nothing that Forster ever said shows more clearly his independence of mind:

> Now he is dead, and the low brows, whom he scandalized, have united with the high brows, whom he bored, to ignore his greatness. This cannot be helped; during his life no one who alienates both Mrs. Grundy and Aspatia can hope for a good obituary press. All that we can do… is to say straight out that he was the greatest imaginative novelist of our generation. (13)

Though Forster and Lawrence differ extremely in superficial ways, the kinship between them is profound. The kinship between the two writers has many other aspects. They are both pagan haunted by Christianity, trying to rediscover in the forms of creative imagination a new vision of the whole. Both remember the old dualisms, but want to transcend them: I think there is the dual way of looking at things", writes Lawrence." The other way is to try to conceive the whole, to build up a whole by means of symbolism , because symbolism avoids the I and puts aside the egotist".(14) This is very close to what Forster attempts in The Longest Journey, Howards End, and A Passage to India.

Lawrence did not stop condemning Forster's work. Forster said to Angus Wilson: "Lawrence could be very trying. He spent one whole afternoon condemning my work". At last I asked him if there was anything good on it." Yes , ' he said, 'Leonard Bast. That was courage's'." (15) However, Forster was quite upset when he learned that Lawrence had totally misread Howards End. Lawrence wrote to Forster from Taos on September 20, 1922: "You did make a nearly deadly mistake glorifying those business people in Howards End. Business is no good".(16) Critical views of Forster's work were not only confined to England .Very important critics in America discussed his work there , notably E.K. Brown , Austen Warren , Lionel Trilling , and Morton D. Zabel. Brown brought out a quite brilliant point that " Forster was a novelist of ideas, and then as a subtle user of rhythm in the novel". (17)

Brown believes that rhythm is a fundamental element of Forster's technical method. Brown pursued his view with care and subtlety. The idea of ' rhythm in the novel' has been developed by Reuben A. Brower. He thinks that Forster is

"Very keen on the rhythm particularly in A Passage to India". (18) Brown supports this view by saying : " One of the reasons why I set A Passage to India … its greatness is intimately dependent on E.M. Forster's mastery of expanding symbols and thematic structure, and on that element in his spirit for which expanding symbols and thematic structure are appropriate language".(19)

I hold the same view that Brown expresses. I believe that the main effect in A Passage to India is that of

order in the universe, but order that can be merely glimpsed, never seized for sure. A Passage to India is a prophetic novel, a singing in the halls of fiction: the infinitive resourcefulness of Foster has given it a rhythmic form that enables one to respond to it as prophecy and song. Forster completed his novel more than twenty years before the partition of India. His analysis of the possibilities of rapprochement was prophetic.

Another American critic, Austen Warren, stated that Forster preferred the social rather than the inward, psychological novel. However, Forster succeeded in showing his interest in the "inner life". He does so because the novel must, like life, have equilibrium, balancing the claims of existence, personalities and ideas. Thus technically, and humanly too, Forster is in search of a reconciliation of the inner and outer worlds. To Forster, values are more important than facts; and the real values are friendship, intellectual exploration, insight and imagination, and the values of the "inner life". Warren's view of Forster's balance is clearly expressed in this quotation:

> But Forster's humanity will know all; The earth, passion and friendship, thirst for the truth, and hunger for the Absolute. For him, the "Greek view of life" is the right one; and the problem of morality is not to set mind against body or soul against either, not to antithesize but to reconcile, by proportion and sub ordination to effect a harmony. In the language of metaphysics, Forster must be described as a naturalist; but he is a naturalist with wings and humanistic manners and balancing perceptions. (20)

Is this balance attainable by the individual? That is to ask whether the individual can exemplify the universal man; and the answer seems clear; never completely; often not at all. Forster's character, who most closely approaches universality, is Margret Schlegel. Though she processes her own personal mark and stamp, she can comprehend natures as diverse from her own as Mrs. Wilcox , Helen , and Henry ; and she achieves the triumph not only of marrying a philistine but of achieving with him a marriage of spiritual union. This marriage indicates that Forster is able to comprehend the "inner life" of his characters. However, the inner life should not be an end in itself in the novel; otherwise the novel would turn into a psychological treatise and the persons decompose into their constituent moods to avoid the confinement to the inner life, the novel must be more " A memoir" says Forster:

> Is history , it is based on evidence…And it is the function of the novelist to reveal the hidden life at its source : to tell us more than could be Known. In daily life we never understand each other ; neither complete clairvoyance not complete confession exists. But people in a novel can be understood completely by the reader, if the novelist wishes; their inner vision as well as their outer life can be exposed. (21)

In 1943, Lionel Trilling's *E. M. Forster* appeared. This book played a decisive role in establishing Forster's reputation as a distinctive novel writer. Trilling was able to defend the cogency of Forster's mind in a way that no other critic has succeeded in doing: " No one is likely to take with perfect literalness , as representing Forster's actual belief , the religious ideas of the last part of A Passage to India. Yet, Forster certainly has always had a strong tendency to "accept" the universe and in a way that has some affinity with Hindu religious thought". (22)

Trilling, like Leavis, attends to the culture Forster manifests and explores . However, Leavis criticized Trilling and his book writing:

> This book does not, as one might have hoped it would, exhibit the presumable advantages to be enjoyed by a critic who sees England, and the particular milieu to which Mr. Forster as a writer belongs, well from the outside. Its interest for the English reader is quite other: it lies in the light it seems to throw on the American academic world, to which, I believe, Mr. Trilling belongs. Can it be that for certain elements there the Cambridge of The Longest Journey represents something like an ideal – an ideal of the kind of centre of sweetness and light university should be ? At any rate, Mr. Trilling appears to be as uncritical as Mr. Forster himself. In that novel, of the Cambridge
> that emancipated and formed him…(23)

Leavis also disagreed with Trilling on the critical points, and Trilling expressed on Forster's work in his book:

> Mr. Trilling's own dealings with Forster prose are not adequately critical. He doesn't seem to see the disconcerting nature of the inequalities which should have been enough to advert him against
> taking the palpable intention for achievement , the thing too vaguely
> aimed at for the thing grasped , so that he can pronounce Howards End " undoubtedly Forster's masterpiece " It is not perhaps , so strange that an American should have been less disconcerted than an English man by the unreality of Leonard Bast , the clerk.(24)

At any rate, both critics, Trilling and Leavis, look upon Forster from two different angles: Forster writes his novels at two levels social and symbolic. Leavis considers the first level, and Trilling represents the second.

The sense that Forster proceeds simultaneously in two areas of the novel normally brought together – the area of social observation and comedy , and the area of symbolic romance has , I think , been common enough among critics of Forster; and in most post – war criticism one or the other side of Forster has been stressed . In post war criticism of Forster, different critics, as lying in both of these areas, have recognized his main effort. English critics, generally speaking, have emphasized Forster's qualities as a social novelist, whereas American critics tended to emphasize his qualities as a social novelist, where as American critics tended to emphasize his qualities as a romance novelist. Forster's reputation in America grew perhaps proportionality with the realization that he had strong analogies with the interest and techniques of the American novel.

James Moconkey was the first among the American critics to apply certain terminology is: People, Fantasy, Rhythm and Prophecy. Forster elaborated on these terms in his Aspects of the Novel. Moconkey considered the Forsterian hero incomplete, "incompleteness being the result of a dissociation between the character and his universe, between the individual in a seemingly chaotic, temporal world and the unifying, eternal reality ". [(25)] Forster's universality is sensed, Moconkey believes, in his writings "only when he implies man's inability to perceive his oneness with the universe" [(26).] However, Forster's voice is not that of a man who has pierced the heavens; he also is not distinguished as a mystic. Nevertheless, his intimations are made by symbols. Forster's symbolism, some critics believe, is mystical.

Using the musical element in Howards End, Forster produces evidence of this view. In addition, his drawing of the Marabar Caves in A Passage to India is another example of his mysticism. Besides, the mystical conception of order in art is more accessible to Forster than to his young contemporaries. However, though his mysticism is a distinctive feature of his writings, some critics consider it a defect and because of his, they have attacked Forster.

H. J. Oliver stressed another quality. He laid emphasis on the 'relatively immature' element present in Forster's first three novels. But the last two, Howards End and A Passage to India , revealed " the most interesting product of the cultured mind in modern literature".[(27)]J. B. Beer made very important study on Forster . He was mainly concerned with stressing Forster's romantic affiliations. Bear argues that "Forster is ultimately a romantic writer and that his work reflects some of the tensions and conflicts peculiar to romanticism". [(28)] He picks out the way in which Forster employs the imagination to confirm the validity of passion. The pursuit of honesty also links Forster's moral seriousness with his approval of spontaneous passion.

Forster's morality is more likely to guide his characters towards passion than to lead them away from it. However, that does not involve the condemnation of those who control passion. His satire is directed against those who try to ignore it, to forget its existence. Such characters are muddling themselves, and their muddling will lead them into triviality and peevishness.

Forster sometimes goes further and suggests that despite the moral orientation of a character, his imagination retains its proper nature, subconsciously ministering to the forces of life. Therefore, in A Room With A View, Miss Bartlett fights against the forces of life. When Lucy and George tumble into each other's arms, she describes the embrace to Miss Lavish in a way that shows that it must have burnt into her. And towards the end of the novel , though fully aware that George's father entering . These unexpected touches make Miss Bartlett a 'round' character in Forster's sense of the word; they also suggest that even if her muddled beliefs have enrolled her in the 'armies of the benighted', her unconscious imagination remains, however obliquely, on the side of life.

Forster's imagination involves itself in his novels in a much deeper way, however, by giving rise to symbolic patterns within the works as a whole. The word "symbolic" is not one with which Forster himself is entirely happy. In Aspects of the Novel, for example, he discusses the way in which rhythm can be produced in a novel by the discrete use of leitmotiv . He goes on to warn that " Done badly , rhythm is most boring , it hardens into a symbol and instead of carrying us on it trips us up ".[(29)] Several exchanges with Forster, recorded in an interview in *Paris Review* , help to bring out his views more fully, these are quoted later.

Modern general criticism on Forster had tended to see in him an inheritor of the experiences and the assumptions of romanticism, a seeker after vision and after a revelatory order; and critics see him as one who modifies those assumptions, and who does this in the spirit of the neo-symbolist aesthetics that characterize the modern movement in art. Such views have helped critics to recognize the essentially unified nature of Forster's varied modes of writing. Yet, I think that many of the critics of Forster have had a sense of disquiet about his work. These critics have found it difficult to reconcile the two main elements of Forster's work the first element that deals with the standard of the unseen, with spontaneous passion and the hearts affection, and the second element that deals with rational and moral liberal dilemmas. Such critics have, I feel, come from Marxist viewpoints. D. S. Savage's Marxist analysis of Forster is representative. The following paragraph:

> Forster is a significant writer, but significant writers are of two kinds.
> There are those, whose creative work proceeds from an achieved centre of beings, and whose continual creativeness is the expression of the constant extension of their grasp upon and penetration into reality. And there are those others, necessarily more numerous, whose work

> takes its shape from the exteriorization of an inner conflict which derives, that is to say from a condition which is antecedent to an achieved integration. These latter writers work out in the course of their art, a more or less significant personal logic, and with its conclusion, if they have not succeeded in achieving a valid inner integration, which will remove them to the plane of the craters, they relapse into non significance. Forster is a writer of the latter type. (30)

In dealing with Forster, D. S. Savage concentrates on the heart of the liberal dilemma, the liberal confusion. The interest of Forster's novels is that they reveal very clearly to the perceptive eye the inner motions, which prevent at attachment to the liberal outlook. Savage does not favour Forster's liberalism. He writes:

> Forster, in which I believe, cleverly attempts to discredit faith by attributing that quality to the blind collective hysteria of the dupes of totalitarianism, thereby making it responsible for the evil and violence in the modern world. This, an age of unfaith, And consequently of greedy materialism and the worship of brute force, is characterized by Forster as an age of faith. (31)

However, Forster's faith lies in human relations. The main concern of his novels is to delineate this feature, and show the moral values of these relations.

Throughout Forster's novels there exists an unfortunate tendency which, at moments when Forster feels necessary, indicates something beyond the level of human relations in their social setting (A level upon which he alone is perfectly at case) , and which drifts vagueness of the most embarrassing kind . An example of this is to be found in The Longest Journey, when Rickie glimpses Agnes and her lover, Gerald Dawes, at the moment of critic passion.

> Rickie limped away without the sandwiches crimson and afraid. He brought, "Do such things actually happen?" and he seemed to be looking down colored valleys. Brighter they glowed till gods of pure flame were born in them, and then he was looking at pinnacles of virgin snow. While Mr. Pembroke talked , the riot of fair images increased. They invaded his being and lit lamps at unsuspected shrines. Their orchestra commenced in that suburban house, where he had to stand aside for the maid to carry in the luncheon. Music flowed past him like a river. He stood at the spring of creation and heard the primeval monotony. Then an obscure instrument gave out a little phrase. The river continued unheeding .The phrase was repeated, and a listener might know it was a fragment of the Tune of tunes. Nobler instruments accepted it, the clarionet protected, The brass encouraged, and it rose to the surface to the whisper of violins. In full unison was love born, flame of the flame, flushing the dark river beneath him and the virgin snows above. His wings were infinite, his youth eternal; the sun was a jewel on his finger as he passed it in benediction over the world . Creation, no longer monotonous, acclaimed him , in widening melody, in brighter radiances. Was love a column of fire? Was he a torrent of song? Was he greater than either the touch of man on a woman? (32)

Forster's books contain many passages of this sort. These passages, however, represent merely an intensification of Forster's normal sensitive and charming style. Savage, in this respect, states:

> the prevalence of this sort of false , overripe , writing indicates some basic uncertainty in Forster's grasp of life , and to apprehend the roots of that uncertainty it is necessary to investigate the disparity between the religious drama which he unfolds and the ultimate principles to which it is referred .(33)

It is easy to perceive the connection existing between the false social circumstances with set limits to reality for the sake of their own perpetuation , and the inhibiting factors which prevent Forster from reaching out to ultimate's for the validation of his religious drama. In Savage's opinion, the religious drama:

> Proffers the possibilities of salvation or of damnation, as we may see in the cases of Philip Herriton and Lucy Honey church in the other novels. Philip, granted a vision of "infinite pity and… majesty", (which incidentally, had an critic source), "underwent conversion. He was saved (34).

In The Longest Journey, there are indications that the issue of salvation depends upon the acceptance or rejection of a "symbolic moment".

> It seems to me (says Rickie) that here and there in life we meet with
> a person or incident that is symbolical. It's nothing in itself, yet for the moment it stands for some eternal principle. We accept it, whatever cost, and we have accepted life. But if we are frightened are reject it, the moment, so speak, passes; the symbol is never offered again. (35)

The symbol, for Rickie is his illegitimate half brother, Stephen; when Rickie has discovered the relationship between himself and Stephen, he is shocked and disgusted. He tried to inform Stephen of the relationship. Agnes told him not to do so. Rickie yielded inwardly to the false life represented by Sawston. Rickie's spiritual part' proceeded towards ruin'. This is the touchstone of reality and salvation that Forster proposes, and it is not difficult to penetrate its clear inadequacy. It in no way justifies the emotional intensity of the drama, which is indicated as taking place in Richie's soul.

In short, I believe that the drama, which is proposed, is intrinsically unreal. Forster has made it unreal, because it is set in such limited and lateral perspectives. Forster, in Howards End affirmed the primary reality of the social pattern. This shift could only have necessitated a transition from the drama of personal salvation to the social level, a movement from the centre to the periphery. Savage does not fail to stress the significance of Forster's work as an expression of the liberal tradition.

Arnold Kettle, another critic, countered Savage's view:

> It is a dangerous game to try to pin E.M. Forster down. And yet such words as liberal , individualist , agnostic ,certainly help , though I think they refer more usually to his attitudes than to a more specific, coherent philosophy...And yet just as there is a subtle contradiction within Forster's attitude to himself – he who clings to a view of life which he sees clearly is basically not satisfactory - so there is a subtle contradiction in his attitude to his characters. They are what their world had made them. Yes , and they have, like their creator , a resilience, an almost insolent power of recuperation from the buffets and cruelties of life ; yet they never quite manage to master life , even their odd particular corner of it, so that there is always a certain sense in an E.M. Forster novel of life's being rather more casual than it is ,not dull, but arbitrary somewhere deep down .(36)

Arnold Kettle thinks that Savage's view on A Passage to India is a very unjust one: " The ugly realities underlying the presence of the British in India are not even glanced at and the issues raised are handled as though they could be solved on the surface level of personal intercourse and individual behavior"(37).

Kettle defends Forster by stating:

> The reply to this is , of course, that Forster is writing a novel about personal introduces and not a tract of the political situation ; it is not an entirely convincing reply because Forster by his own constant movement from the individual to the general, so clearly recognizes that the two are subtly intertwined. It is , for instance, a weakness of the novelist and not merely of the social thinker, that one should constantly feel that Forster hates the public schools more than he hates what gives rise to them (38).

What makes Kettle unhappy about Forster is the weaknesses in Forster's positive values. At any rate, Arnold Kettle admires Forster and finds him a remarkable writer. He states: "he seems to me a writer of scrupulous intelligence, of touch and abiding insights, who has never been afraid of the big issues or the difficult ones and has scorned to hide his doubts and weaknesses behind a facade of wordiness and self- protective conformity. His very vulnerability is a kind of strength" (39).

The point is, I think, that though Forster must be recognized as a major novelist, one must accept that his difficulties are often due to ambiguities within himself. Modern criticism has given Forster the kind of attention he deserves; and the critics I have discussed in this paper have revealed his various distinctive tendencies, and presented him, in one way or another, as a successful novelist.

Forster's critics, generally speaking, do not develop the same attitudes towards his literary qualities and works. Most of the critics agreed on considering A Passage to India Forster's masterpiece, though slight differences appeared in their discussions. These differences, however, in no way devaluate his library position. Bradbury reveals the same view when considers "Howards End is a remarkable and complex work and A Passage to India is surely a major novel by any measure" (40). Meanwhile some critics, in particular I. A. Richards and Virginia Woolf, speak of Forster as a novelist. Richards says, "at the heart of his work there is less satisfaction with human existences as he sees it than in the work of any living writer" (41). However, I think, though it has often mentioned that Forster had a special coterie of admires, his novels have been given very little serious attention by critics of modern English literature.

These are reasons for this comparative neglect. The first principle, I think can be expressed in a simple fact of chronology: there is a gap of fourteen years between his last novel, A Passage to India, and its predecessor, Howards End. As a consequence of this fourteen years silence, A Passage to India, though had considerable popular success, was reviewed almost entirely without relation to its author's earlier work and was generally set down as simply a book on India.

Nonetheless, his early novels were reviewed, but they did not contribute a great deal to Forster's reputation as a major novelist.

It is an idle pursuit to arrange Forster's novels in order of merit or to find the correct place for him among other distinguished writers. Popular taste is fickle, and the most outstanding critics have adopted totally different criteria. That he is great, there is no doubt, that he is greater than most of the British novelists seems to be probable. However, the complexity the difficulty of his work, his depth of insight into the human condition, his consummate artistry, and his ambiguities could be the flaws that made his critics formulate their own critical views on Forster.

Critics' approaches to Forster are different. Strictly speaking, these approaches can be distinctly divided into two groups. One group assumes Forster's mastery of his medium and tries to decide what Forster's essential

theme or basis is. The other group attempts to pin down the reasons why Forster's novels are not, for them, completely successful. Even the second group usually assumes assumption , however , that Forster is a novelist of more than ordinary importance. Most reviewers liked Forster's characters, finding them admirably and absolutely life-like, as well as a narrative one.

I think that such original approaches demonstrate how much Forster's novels had to offer to different people, yet, the subtlety of his art and his ability to write with detachment and passion, created an ambiguity, which made the critics pass unfavorable judgments. Nevertheless, his ambiguity is accepted as a positive virtue, his vigor of mind and pursuit of truth are more fully recognized. Forster, like many other great writers, evoked many different responses from critics . Though some of them were ill at ease, yet, they could not deny that Forster was a quite able novelist who attempted to recognize human relationships. Though Forster has given us an account of the nature of these relationships, yet he could not definitely determine the cause of their failure.

In my opinion, Forster's critics, though have considered most of his literary features; have not given much thought to Forster's concern for human relationships. Nor did they discuss Forster's ideas about culture. In Forster's novels, one has noticed that the failure to establish friendships or relationships between the characters of his novels is due to the limitations of culture. Once Forster's characters are exposed to another culture, they are converted, and finally they are saved. His Italian novels are quite typical examples, which confirm this view. Thus, critics have concentrated on Forster as a believer in art, an able writer, of fiction and nonfiction .Furthermore, Forster's position in the realm of English literature remains imposing. However, his philosophy and the themes of his novels, since they derive from his liberalism, are, I believe no longer appropriate to modern and struggle for it. Unfortunately, Forster did not have a specific message in his life, and he did not create followers that would carry the torch of his message after his death.

4. Conclusion

Forster's critics, though they have considered most of his literary features, have not given much thought to Forster's concern for human relationships. Nor did they discuss Forster's ideas about culture. In Forster's novels, one has noticed that the failure to establish friendships or relationships between the characters of his novels is due to the limitations of culture. Once Forster's characters are exposed to another culture, they are converted, and finally they are saved.

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