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The Re-Writings of Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* Aurae in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*:

A Comparative Study

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Magister in English Literature and Civilisation

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the substance of this dissertation is entirely the result of my own investigation and that due reference or acknowledgement is made, whenever necessary, to the work of other researchers.

DEDICATION

In awe-inspiring and hallowed memory of all the martyrs,

Men and women, who said no to colonisation,

Among them, were my two grandparents, Houcine Nacer and Salah Meftah…

God bless them

To my dear parents

To Meriem, to my lovely twin nephews Ayad and Jawad

To all my family and friends

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation discusses the relationship existing between *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness* by focusing on the process of rewriting in fiction. In terms of a range of critical theories, it throws light on the similarities and divergences operating between the two pieces of writing. Thus, Forster's text is discussed as a response to and a repetition of Conrad's. The point here, however, is not merely to show the way Forster's novel echoes Conrad's, but the way that discourses, as a set of statements involving certain assumptions and insights about specific issues, are transposed into one another. In this connection, the main focus is on how Forster uses his novel not only to reject the period's prevailing values in life and art, but also to defiantly assert his difference and re-appropriates this rebellious tone to criticise the Western mind. The two novels are examined and made to interact with each other in terms of dialogical and intertextual principles. In other words, they 'dialogise' with each other by adopting and rejecting each other's discourse, and by conveying the two authors' particular ways of seeing the world and social realities. This relationship is examined from a number of perspectives: Marxist, Feminist and Psychoanalytical. In the light of these theories, the study aims, broadly, at showing how Forster uses his text as an effective instrument to oppose the colonial assumptions and enterprise as Conrad did in his book, thus, exposing the whole colonial system as an ideological set of beliefs.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

*AH***:** *Abinger Harvest*

*AN***:** *Aspects of the Novel*

*API***:** *A Passage to India*

*HD***:** *Heart of Darkness*

*PT***:** *The Prince's Tale and Other Uncollected Writings*

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Joseph Conrad [1] is a writer who has exercised a very potent influence on his generation; but his impact has expanded well beyond. In 1907, when he already had some of the greatest novels in English to his name, Joseph Conrad confessed that *"l'Anglais m'est toujours une langue étrangère"* (Conrad, *The Collected Letters* 401). Despite this fact that he had to struggle with a foreign language, he achieved international recognition and fame during his lifetime, and the appreciation of his books is still evident by the number of critical works that are devoted to them. He could produce thirteen novels, two volumes of memoirs and twenty eight short stories which have been translated into several languages. His literary genius has enlarged his readers' ethical consciousness and inspired not only English, but also American, African and Polish novelists and poets like Edward Morgan Forster.

The examination of *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness* will reveal the extent of Forster's intertextual debt to Conrad. Intertextuality, as coined by Julia Kristeva, denotes the interdependence of literary texts in the sense that any literary text is not an isolated phenomenon but *"builds itself as a mosaic of quotations. Every text is absorption and transformation of another text [. . .] Many passages taken from other texts intersect and neutralize each other"* (146). Furthermore, in essays published in the late 1960s and the 1970s, particularly his provocative title, "Death of the Author" in *S/Z*, Roland Barthes put forward a theory of intertextuality which depended on the reader as the main centre of interpretation: *"A text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures, and entering in mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not as was hitherto said, the author"* (211). Far from being the unique creation of an author, every text is always (an) other text(s) which it distorts, comments, remakes. Every text therefore is bound to be repeated. Forster's writing is indeed an instance of 'repetition,' i.e., 'an including / excluding, an affirming / negating' (Bloom) of Conrad's fiction.

Re-Writing, therefore, implies influence, and influence as defined by Harold Bloom is not *"the transmission of ideas and images from earlier to later* [writers]" (Bloom,   *Anxiety*

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[1] Konrad Korzenowski was the original name of the writer which was chosen mainly for its patriotic literary associations. In Mickiewicz's (a Polish writer who had a great impact on Conrad and his father) *Konrad Wallenrod* (1828), a poem of historic legend, the hero is the leader of the Teutonic crusaders.

112). Influence means that: "*there are no texts, but only relationships between texts. These relationships depend upon a critical act, a misreading or misprision that one* [writer] *performs upon another*" (Bloom, *Map* 3). It is this very sense that is given here to Conrad's influence on Forster. Throughout his works and like many writers who preceded him, Conrad alludes to a variety of discourses and texts of his time and reacts to much of the western Zeitgeist of the period foreshadowing the concept of rewriting itself. According to Bloom, Conrad himself is a re-writer, he is: "*Originally the ephebe of Flaubert and of Flaubert's 'son', Maupassant, Conrad was reborn as the narrative disciple of Henry James, the James of 'The Spoils of Poynton' and 'What Maisie Knew', rather than the James of the final phase*" (Bloom, *Novelists* 211). As far as, *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* are concerned, there are many images and themes which are drawn, consciously or not, from Conrad's fiction. Yet, they are modified and twisted—at times questioned and transposed by Forster's fiction—allowing the writer to establish his own ethics and aesthetics and demarcating himself from Conrad. Therefore, an intertextual reading is necessary for decoding and fully appreciating the works of both writers.

The main purpose of the present dissertation, hence, is to investigate and elucidate what in Conrad exercised such power and fascination on Forster. Our aim is to reveal the numerous similarities between Conrad and Forster. Such study should take into account what qualities have been absorbed, and what have been transmuted, and rejected. The focus of interest should be on what Forster does with what he takes from Conrad, what effect it has upon his finished literary work. Has Forster succeeded in writing off the ghost of Conrad? If not, do the borrowings from Conrad undermine Forster's writing in any way? Such study is necessary for an understanding and evaluation of Forster's art, not only within the English literary tradition but also within today's world literature. In this connection, fascinating parallels have been drawn between Conrad and Forster. Here Forster, like Conrad, uses his travel experience to colonial lands as raw material for his fiction.

Like other writers whose literary reputations extended significantly beyond their own lives, Conrad and Forster have been read so radically differently at different times that it is tempting to talk of different Conrads and Forsters, imperialist /racist Conrad and Forster or anti-imperialist /anti-racist Conrad and Forster, feminist Conrad and Forster or misogynist Conrad and Forster. The differences may derive as much from the reader's angle of perception as from the intrinsic qualities of their colonial novels, which represent the most

significant encounter recorded in canonical literature between Europe and Europe's Other, or between the colonisers and the colonised lands and people represented in their fiction. Their problematical relationship to imperialism stimulates the question: were Conrad and Forster for or against European imperialism, and in their representation of non-European peoples were they even-handed or in fact 'bloody racists'?

Indeed, writers participate actively in shaping certain beliefs and voicing a number of discourses about contemporary events and situations of their times through their works. In this connection, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* does not merely mirror a 'social mentality;' it also re-evaluates, though ambivalently, the mainstream convictions on European Imperialism. The European expansionist enterprise was approved by the majority of the Europeans at the end of the nineteenth century. The notion of Empire became more and more self-congratulatory and those who dared express their antipathy to imperialism were accused of being "*pessimistic*" and "*unpatriotic roadblocks to progress*" (White 185). Most Europeans believed that it was important to "*open to civilization the only part of our globe which it has not yet penetrated, to pierce the darkness which hangs over entire peoples*" (King Leopold of Belgium, qtd. in Farn 16). As he described it, Conrad was almost certainly influenced by this discourse before his Congo journey: "*Before the Congo I was just a mere animal*," he confesses in one of his letters (Guerard 13). And he didn't learn the truth until "*he was there, which disillusioned him intensely*" (Farn 16).

Conrad is charged with racist discourse, mainly, for dehumanising Africans in *Heart of Darkness* by denying them the presence and individuality accorded to European characters in the novel. Conrad leaves out the names and characteristics of places and countryside, though he mentions them in his private 'Congo Diary'. Similarly he does not name most of his characters. This creates the impression that Marlow journeys through a featureless void, or a dark tunnel without distinctive traits and points of reference, and that atrocious deeds are done, but not by real people to real people. However, in Conrad's only other story with a Congo setting *An Outpost of Progress*, written before *Heart of Darkness*, African characters have names, they talk with the white characters ,and the setting is far less abstract or mysterious. This shows that his reductive image of places and people in *Heart of Darkness* is based on "*a conscious artistic decision, not on a deplorable limitation of his perception*" (Farn 17). But, and to the contrary of Conrad's, Forster's novel is generally well received and viewed in a positive light. Indeed, a "*semi-anonymous Indian*" ('A.S.B.'), wrote in 1928 that "*for the first time I saw myself reflected in the mind of an English author, without losing all*

semblance of a human face" (Forster, *PT* 22). In *A Passage to India*, Forster appears to be attempting what Conrad refuses to do in *Heart of Darkness*: to name the unnamed, and speak the unspoken.

E. M. Forster can certainly be considered one of Conrad's spiritual descendants, his career as a humanist activist and an early-twentieth century writer had some interesting parallels with Conrad's. Like Conrad, Forster models the relationships between colonisers and colonised in terms of European exploitation versus non-European victimisation. He recreates the experience of the coloniser in a different setting and recalls Conrad's perceptions of imperial subjugation and its aftermaths. Consequently, the attempt here is to elucidate how the concepts of power and dominance are exposed in the two works. I shall argue that in Conrad's and Forster's novels there is a rebellious tone that dares attack the European society in its fundamentally established principles. Therefore, despite the fact that they are set in two different continents, the two works are considered as representatives of the colonial phenomena with the colonised and colonisers subjects operating within it alike. I will also highlight those moments when Forster could not help but feel the 'gulf' that separates him from the Indians. Further, I will focus on the problem of race relations.

Much has been written about Forster's and Conrad's novels. However, the analysis of the texts from multi-dimensional perspectives reveals the precision with which Forster depicted the socio-psychological dilemma of Anglo-Indians during the period of the British Raj. A close examination of Forster's depiction of India will further our understanding of the psychological dilemma of Anglo-Indians who wish to call India home, and through this understanding we may understand better Conrad's characters and aberrations. Such analysis is vital for understanding the deep thematic meaning of the literary text and appreciating the problems of identity formation and the complexities of colonial discourse. At a time when the colonial era is showing signs of a strong comeback, with the beginning of the 21st century events, highlighting the traumatic effects of colonisation becomes even more critical.

Therefore, the two literary works to be discussed in this dissertation are examined and made to interact with each other eclectically, i.e., in terms of Marxist, Psychoanalytic, and Feminist assumptions. The three bodies of criticism are used sometimes together, sometimes alone, to highlight the intersections where both works meet. In other words, E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* relations to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* are looked at through a tripartite schema where each angle conveys the authors' particular ways of seeing the world

and social realities. Parallel to this, while the next chapters are to be a space for the analysis of the way *A Passage to India* reflects the discourse in *Heart of Darkness*, they are at the same time a space where the three critical theories are to interact in order to show how exactly the two novels treated the issues and the questions, which are meant to be answered by this study.

Marxist criticism is a theory of analysis of the literary text, of the "*socio-text*". Unlike traditional criticism, which focuses on the idea of "*chef d'oeuvre, literary miracle, genius, appreciating a text without its deep immersion in history*" (Achour 261), Marxist literary theory restitutes to the literary text the socio-historical factors that are believed to be the essence of any artistic work. Yet, the psychological import was equally significant; therefore, the study also called for a psycheoriented approach. It has concurrently resorted to Freudian and Lacanian criticism to trace signs of the writers' neuroses through their works. Feminist criticism is used here from two perspectives. The first is the western evaluation of the feminine as a world agency. The second is that new feminist stance represented mainly by third world feminist critics such as Gayatry Chakravotry Spivak and aims at analysing the third world or the colonised woman differently.

The work is structured along two main axes: a general theoretical background to the study (Chapter I) and the study proper of the novels selected in the corpus (Chapters two, three, and four).

The first chapter is a synthesis of the appropriate elements in those critical bodies of thought that may help us catch on better the relation between *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* and see through a tripartite interaction to what extent they are acquiescent or divergent. Each idea or subidea of every critical school will be approached through the lenses of their founders or the thinkers who followed them or developed their ideas.

In the second chapter, both Conrad's and Forster's novels dwell upon the failure rather than the success of modern values. The feelings of skepticism and moral decadence that characterised the period in which the two novels appeared and affected both personal and social schemes are to be dealt with here.

The third chapter considers Forster's and Conrad's representations of women and, more broadly, the changing understanding of what such representation might involve. What do women represent in *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*? How are they described? Contrasting the European or the coloniser woman and African, Indian or colonised woman,

are they both portrayed the same way? How does each function in the narrative? What is the status and relevance of the word 'woman' in their writings?

As sexuality is a source of both anxiety and revelation in Modern literature, it is of paramount importance to see how this factor shapes the two novels. I will attempt to analyse some of these effects among a range of European, African, and Indian characters in both novels in terms of the sexual connections between them, either these connections are hidden homosexual or outspoken heterosexual attractions. This is the task of the last chapter.

By the end of our study and through the examination of the common themes between the two novels, we hope we will be allowed to demonstrate that Forster, like Conrad, is a social critic thanks to their shared acute sense of observation and their search for authenticity. All in all, the argument of this dissertation is therefore twofold: first, to discover to what extent Conrad influences Forster in his novels. Second, to attempt some sort of revisionist criticism, i.e., a re-assessing and re-interpreting of Forster's canon so as to contribute to his 'individuation.'

CHAPTER ONE:

MARXISM, PSYCHOANALYSIS, AND FEMINISM: A THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Introduction

At the most basic level, we might say that the practice of literary criticism is applied to various given texts. The theory is devoted to examine the principles behind such texts. We might say that theory is a systematic explanation of a text; theory brings to light the motives behind it; it shows us the connection of a text to ideology, power structures, our own unconscious, our political and religious attitudes, our economic structures; above all, theory shows us that a text is not something natural but is a specific historical construct. Such reading entails a great deal more than merely close attention to the words on the page, or the text as it immediately confronts us. We need to know why a text was written, for whom it was written, what religious or moral or political purposes motivated it, as well as its historical and cultural circumstances. Then, indeed, we can move on to the issues of its style, its language, its structure, and its deployment of rhetorical and literary techniques. The discipline of literary criticism, as operating through both practice and theory, calls for a close, critical, and comprehensive reading.

From literary to scientific, from philosophical to experimental, the twentieth century has been marked by that intense emergence of a wide range of theories. This development, predictably, has created strains and stresses within the in-stitutional structures that contain and maintain the academic study of literature. They all meant mainly at an explanation of the mysterious and ambiguous human character and behavior that has been changing all over the time and mainly during that period. This change is sometimes due to and sometimes the cause of the tremendous change in the human life conditions and the technological development that paved the way to new ways of perceiving the relations between people either in the one society or between different societies. However, all the new ways of criticism can't, by no means, be separated neither from the previous bodies of thought nor from each other. The following is a summary of some critical schools that appeared in the last century and were crucial for the understanding of human character as reflected in literary works.

I. Marxist Criticism

Marxist criticism is a diverse body of writing that could give very diverse answers to the different problems that literature identifies. Important sectors of Marxist criticism consider art an ideal translation of the real conditions of the historical process. It aims, then, at a reading of a text while restituting to it its social value, to show that any artistic creation is both a social practice and an ideological production. The focus of this section is on Marxist trends and thinkers, who are akin to our study and broadly on the relation of Marxism to literature.

1. Ideology

Ideology has become a crucial concept in literary theory. It is involved to areas where unequal relations are reproduced as natural or normal. For Marxists, the term is much more encompassing; it "*describes the beliefs, attitudes and habits of feeling and behavior that a society inculcates in order to generate an automatic reproduction of its structuring premises. Ideology* [in this sense] *is what preserves social power* [coherence] *through culture in the absence of direct coercion*" (Atkins and Morrow 203). This ideology seems a natural and inevitable way of seeing, explaining and dealing with the environing world; but in fact, it has the hidden function of legitimising and maintaining the position, power, and economic interests of the ruling class. Bourgeois ideology is regarded as both producing and permeating the social and cultural institutions and practices of the present era—including religion, morality, philosophy, politics, as well as literature and the other arts. This leads inevitably to the question of how is it possible that we can be so blind to the real state of affairs around us? Furthermore, how can we come to believe such a hoax to be the logic order of things?

The Marxist critic Terry Eagleton defines ideology as follows: "*Ideology is not in the first place a set of doctrines; it signifies the way men live out their roles in class-society, the values, ideas and images which tie them to their social functions and so prevent them from a true knowledge of society as a whole*" (*Marxism* 15). In Marxist usage, ideology is what causes us to misrepresent the world to ourselves. For Marxism, the basis of any society is its economic organisation, which then gives rise to certain social relations. Marx and Engels developed a systematic philosophy they call the 'materialist conception of history'. According to this conception, a given society consists fundamentally of the forces and relations of production of its members' material lives. Out of this economic 'base' arises a 'superstructure', consisting of that society's legal and political institutions, and of all society's

forms of consciousness, or 'ideology', including literary and cultural production. The reigning ideology in any era is conceived to be, ultimately, the product of its economic structure and the resulting class-relations and class-interests: "*The ruling ideas*" Marx and Engels write, "*are nothing more than the ideal expression of the dominant material relationships, the dominant material relationships grasped as ideas*" (*The German Ideology* 39). The reigning ideology incorporates the interests of the dominant and exploitative class, the 'bourgeoisie,' which is the owners of the means of production and distribution, as opposed to the 'proletariat,' or wage-earning working class. The socio-economic base then conditions the cultural superstructure.

For Marx and Engels, ideology is not so much a set of beliefs or assumptions that we are aware of, but it is that which makes us experience our life in a certain way and makes us believe that that way of seeing ourselves and the world is natural and rational: "*Each new class* [. . .] *is compelled* [. . .] *to represent its interest as the common interest of all the members of society, put in an ideal form; it will give its ideas the form of universality, and represent them as the only rational, universally valid ones*" (*The German Ideology* 40-1). In so doing, ideology distorts reality in one way or another and falsely presents as natural and harmonious what is artificial and contradictory. If we succumb to ideology, we live in an illusory world, in what Marxism has often described as a state of 'false consciousness': "*Ideology is a process accomplished* [. . .] *consciously indeed but with a false consciousness*" (Marx and Engels, *Selected Correspondence* 65).

Another very influential answer was given in the 1960s by the French Marxist philosopher Louis Althusser (1918-1990) to how ideology is able to hide authentic reality from us. Althusser's thesis is that ideology is "*a 'Representation' of the Imaginary Relationship of Individuals to their Real Conditions of Existence*" ("Ideology" 162). This definition corresponds with what has been just said: ideology distorts our view of our true 'conditions of existence.' Moreover, Althusser connects ideology with its social sources. For him, ideology works through the so-called 'Ideological State Apparatuses' (ISAs), which, although they may have their own sub-ideology, are all subject to the ruling ideology. He writes,

> *To my knowledge, no class can hold State power over a long period*
> *without at the same time exercising its hegemony over and in the State*
> *Ideological Apparatuses* [. . .] *The ideology of the ruling class* [he

> adds] *does not become the ruling ideology by the grace of God, nor
> even by virtue of the seizure of State power alone. It is by the
> installation of the ISAs in which this ideology is realized and realizes
> itself that it becomes the ruling ideology.* ("Ideology" 146-85)

Althusser's ideological state apparatuses include organised religion, the law, the political, and the educational systems—in short, all the institutions through which we are socialised. They "*are part* [. . .] *of the private domain. Churches, Parties, Trade Unions, families* [. . .] *schools,* [. . .] *newspapers, cultural ventures, etc., are private*" ("Ideology" 144). Their function is to reproduce the social relations of production by producing individual 'subjects,' who recognise themselves in the dominant ideology, and therefore acquiesce to it. As a result, while we believe that we are acting out of free will, we are in reality "*acted by the system*" (Ferretter 87). This means that the Ideological State Apparatus logically precedes the individual member of it. It "*is not because we hold certain beliefs that we construct ISAs; rather, it is because ISAs have been constructed that we hold certain beliefs. The material apparatus—the institution, with all its practices and rituals—governs the beliefs of its members.*" Ideas are not the property of individual subjects, Althusser argues, but the result of the situation of those subjects, in class society, within a set of ISAs (Ferretter 87).

However, because within such a perspective there is no room for freedom, Althusser does not attribute the unequal distribution of wealth that we find within capitalist societies to the direct manipulations of the bourgeoisie or the ruling members. In other words, the driving mechanism behind ideology is not the self-interest of those who profit from the way a given society has economically organised itself and who work hard to hide the exploitative nature of that organisation from the lower classes. Those who profit are as blind as everybody else. If that is the case, then where does ideology come from and how has it acquired this immense influence upon us (its subjects)? To answer these questions, Althusser draws on the writings of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan (1901-1981). As his essays "Freud and Lacan" and "Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses" imply, Althusser's return to Marx has affinities with Lacan's reworking of psychoanalysis through a return to Freud. He uses Lacanian conceptions of the subject to describe how subjects are 'interpellated' by social structures.

For Lacan, the processes that we go through, when we grow up, leave us forever incomplete. Aware of that deep lack and yearning for completion, we turn to ideology. For

Althusser, ideology creates subjects through interpellation; it constantly 'hails and interpellates' (addresses) us as 'concrete subjects' as if we are complete already: "*all ideology hails or interpellates concrete individuals as concrete subjects, by the functioning of the category of the subject*" ("Ideology" 173). In so doing, it may 'interpellate' us in the different social roles that we play, or the different 'subject positions' that we occupy. Althusser summarises the process by which we become subjects in the following passage:

> *Ideology* [. . .] *'functions' in such a way that it* [. . .] *'transforms' the individuals into subjects (it transforms them all) by that very precise operation* [. . . of] *interpellation or hailing, and which can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police* [. . .] *hailing: 'Hey, you there!'*

> [. . .] *the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a subject. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was 'really' addressed to him, and that 'it was really him who was hailed' (and not someone else).* ("Ideology" 174)

This is what Althusser means by the term 'interpellation': ideology calls me into being as a subject, as if it were calling me by name in the street. It causes me to believe that I am a subject, although in the reality, I have none of the attributes of that ideological concept. For Althusser, "*ideology has always already interpellated individuals as subjects*" and "*that individuals are always already subjects,*" i.e., subjects of ideology ("Ideology" 176). Ideology addresses me, before I am even born, as I grow up and throughout my life, as an 'I', as a subject, as a site of identity, thought and action. Althusser's analysis implies that the interpellation of individuals as subjects presupposes the existence of a unique and central other 'Subject' which is written with a capital 'S' (Subject) to distinguish it from ordinary subjects, with a small 's'. In this case, there are only ever subjects through the interpellation of the individual into a subject by a Subject who names him, as Althusser shows: "*tu es Un tel, et c'est à toi que Je m'adresse*" (qtd. in Balibar and Macherey 289). A subject, therefore, is created "*through the Subject and subjected to the Subject*" (Althusser, "Ideology" 179). When we become subjects, we become obedient and unresisting agents of the mode of production within which the ISAs to which we belong function. As Althusser puts it, the subjects of ideology "*work all by themselves*" ("Ideology" 165). We fulfill our different roles in the system of production relations, which is a system of exploitation, without arguing and without imagining—indeed positively disbelieving—that there could or should be any other

system of relations. Within ideology, although apparently free and responsible agents, we are in reality precisely the opposite; we are thinking as we are told to think, and acting as we are told to act, in the interests of the economic dominance of the ruling class.

Individuals perceive themselves as subjects and recognise their rights and duties exactly as their Ideology aims at. Each ideology has its specific mode: each gives to the 'subject' one or more appropriate names. It convinces us that we are whole and real, that we are the 'concrete subjects' we want to be. Althusser writes: *"the individual is interpellated as a (free) subject in order that he shall submit freely to the commandments of the Subject, i.e. in order that he shall (freely) accept his subjection, i.e. in order that he shall make the gestures and actions of his subjection 'all by himself'"* ("Ideology" 182). No wonder, then, that we see whatever ideology makes us see as natural, as belonging to the natural, and harmonious order of things. The duplicate mirror-structure of ideology ensures that the subjects recognise what they are and behave accordingly, so, *"everything will be all right: Amen—'So be it'"* ("Ideology" 181).

2. Hegemony/Counter-Hegemony

Althusser's deterministic character of his view of ideology would seem to leave no room at all for autonomous, non-ideological thought or action. With the Italian socialist Antonio Gramsci, whose work is one of the major turning-points in Marxist cultural theory, the concept was significantly reformulated and enriched. Gramsci's writings—carried out in a Fascist prison between 1927 and 1935—are fully aware of the power of ideology, which leads to "[t]*he 'spontaneous' consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group. This consent is 'historically' caused by the prestige (and consequent confidence) which the dominant group enjoys because of its position and function in the world of production*" ("Hegemony" 673). His notion of hegemony makes an important contribution to the theory of ideology.

Hegemony is traditionally defined as political rule or domination, especially in relations between states. The innovation of Marxism was to use the term with reference to social classes instead of polities. According to Raymond Williams, *"Marxism extended the definition of rule or domination to relations between special classes and especially to definitions of a ruling class"* (108). Gramsci retained the idea that hegemony involved the leadership of a fundamental social class defined by its relation to the means of production.

More importantly, hegemony for Gramsci meant not just a set of strategic and political alliances with other social groups, but a distinctive form of political, moral and intellectual leadership. Hegemony, for Gramsci, therefore, is not a matter of brainwashing, the simple imposition of ruling ideas, false consciousness and straightforward ideological mystification. Instead, it is "*the capacity of a fundamental class to articulate to its discourse the ideological elements characteristic of a given social formation*" (Gramsci, *Selections* 198). Hegemony is a concept that helps to explain, on the one hand, how state apparatuses, or political society—supported by and supporting a specific economic group—can coerce, via its institutions of law, police, army and prisons, the various strata of society into consenting to the status quo. On the other hand, and more importantly,

> *hegemony is a concept that helps us to understand* [. . .] *how and where political society and, above all, civil society, with its institutions ranging from education, religion and the family to the microstructures of the practices of everyday life, contribute to the production of meaning and values which in turn produce, direct and maintain the 'spontaneous' consent of the various strata of society to that same status quo.* (Holub 5)

In this sense hegemony is related to both civil and political society.

Whereas the state (political society) establishes and reproduces the dominance of a ruling group or class through direct forms of domination ranging from legislation to coercion, civil society reproduces its hegemony by ensuring that the mass of the population spontaneously consents to the general direction imposed upon social life by the ruling group. Like Althusser's ISAs, Gramsci's Civil Society includes religious organisation, educational system, sports teams, the media, the family, and indeed the practices of everyday life. In Gramsci's widest definition of the term, it is "*the ensemble of organisms commonly called 'private'* "", and it is therefore as much a matter of individual behaviour, tastes and values as it is a matter of regulated cultural institutions (Gramsci, *Selections* 12). If "*political society potentially disciplined the bodies, civil society disciplined above all the mind*" (Holub 190-1). Power was, thus, not only a relation, which was operative between the state and the citizens, but also and beyond the state, it was operative in the relation between civic institutions and the practices of everyday life, which leads to a spontaneous acceptance of the ruling ideas: "*With the various strata of semiprofessionals and professionals mediating between political*

*and civil society and the ordinary people, validating the way of seeing and doing things of the
class in power as natural, a consensus to the status quo arises 'spontaneously'* " (Holub 191).

Hegemony in Gramsci's view, Timothy Mitchell notes, is not merely about
"*domination at the level of ideas,*" but concerns "*non-violent forms of control exercised
through the whole range of dominant cultural institutions and social practices, from
schooling, museums, and political parties to religious practice, architectural forms, and the
mass media*" (553). Mitchell argues that in this context, there is no such thing as free
rationality, as rational calculations "*will always depend on estimations and suppositions that
are the effect of a set of hegemonic relations*" (555). Power works in part therefore through
"*creating truths and subjects and sites of apparent autonomy*" (564). Gramscian notion of
hegemony involves subtler combinations of coercion, inequality and consent in the production
of common sense and the forging of dominant values, meanings and aesthetics in the context
of their effectivity in power relations. As Jackson Lears puts it, "*hegemonic culture depends
not on the brainwashing of 'the masses' but on the tendency of public discourse to make some
forms of experience readily available to consciousness while ignoring or suppressing others*"
(577).

Nonetheless, Gramsci's explanation of the power of ideology has the merit of allowing
us to resist the hegemony and the domination of a set of ruling beliefs and values. Though it
establishes and maintains itself through civil and cultural institutions, Gramsci's hegemony is
far less inescapable than Althusser's ideology. We can catch on to (understand) it and resist
its workings with counter hegemonic actions. Thus, hegemony within this schema is argued to
be, in principle, a process, an open-ended form of construction, not a once-and-for-all
achievement. Hegemonic forms "*are contingently strong.*" They are "*partial, relatively thick
or thin and include latent contradictions and fractures, as well as meanings and resources
that are not fully controllable*" (Chalcraft and Noorani 16). As Mark Rupert puts it,
"[hegemony is] *the unstable product of a continuous process of struggle, a 'war of position'* [.
. .] *hardly a foreclosure of the horizons of meaningful political contestation*" (11). These
instabilities and contradictions, as well as forms of historical contingency, can be exploited by
intellectuals and subaltern groups and other political subjects.

The Marxist critic Raymond Williams (1921-1988) emphasised this aspect of
Gramsci's thought. Although, Williams asserts, "*hegemony* [. . .] *is a realized complex of*

experiences, relationships, and activities", it is by no means homogeneous and omnipotent. He writes:

> *In practice [. . .] hegemony can never be singular [. . .] it does not just passively exist as a form of dominance. It has continually to be renewed, recreated, defended, and modified. It is also continually resisted, limited, altered, challenged by pressures not at all its own. The reality of any hegemony*, [he continues], *in the extended political and cultural sense, is that, while by definition it is always dominant, it is never either total or exclusive. At any time, forms of alternative or directly oppositional politics and culture exist as significant elements in the society.* (112-3)

From Williams' perspective, with its far more flexible notion of ideology, hegemony and counter hegemonic tendencies struggle with each other in a literature and culture that are constantly in motion. For Williams, alternative political and cultural emphases, and the many forms of opposition and struggle, are important not only because they have to be included in any historical analysis, but as forms, which have had significant effect on the hegemonic process itself. That is to say, "*as indicative features of what the hegemonic process has in practice had to work to control*" (113). In this active process, the hegemonic has to be seen as more than the simple transmission of an unchanging dominance. On the contrary, any hegemonic process must be especially alert and responsive to the alternatives and opposition, which question or threaten its dominance. Marxist critics, who follow Williams' example see literature as an important vehicle for ideology, but are very attentive to the dissenting voices and views that literature may also present. The reality of cultural process must, then, always include the efforts and contributions of those who are, in one way or another, outside or at the edge of the terms of the specific hegemony.

Finally, it is worth mentioning that Gramsci's counterhegemony involves not an outright, violent assault on the established order, but a gradual process, a '*war of attrition*' ('*guerra di posizione*') in the redoubts and trenches of civil society (Gramsci, *Selections* 11). Hence, Gramsci's version of counterhegemony was a gradual process of criticism, a "*strategy of power pursued through a cultural work*", in Nadia Urbinati's words, "*involving reform, disarticulation and rearticulation of ideological elements in such a way as to create a new collective will—a political, moral and intellectual unity—bound to the leadership of the proletariat*" (370).

3. Marxism and Literature

Although the writings of Marx and Engels abound with literary references and allusions, they produced no systematic theory of literature or art. They, Terry Eagleton supposes, "*had rather more important tasks on their hands than the formulation of a complete aesthetic theory. Their comments on art and literature are scattered and fragmentary, glancing allusions rather than developed positions. This is one reason why Marxist criticism involves more than merely re-stating cases set out by the founders of Marxism*" (*Marxism* 2). The tradition of Marxist literary criticism begins long after Marx and Engels, with figures like Leon Trotsky (1879-1940), Theodor Adorno (1903-69), György Lukács (1885-1971), and Bertolt Brecht (1898-1956). Marxist principles and attitudes and modes of thought and inquiry have been adapted to create a Marxist theory of literature. The Marxist critic, who tends to be primarily interested in content, writes from the definite standpoint of Marx's philosophical ideas, and from his view of history in which the class struggle is fundamental.

Conspicuously absent in the major approaches to literature, like Formalism and Structuralism, is a serious interest in what many literary academics would now consider very important issues such as the historical situatedness, or historical embedment, and the politics of literary texts. Hence, Marxist criticism has "*traditionally opposed all kinds of literary formalism, attacking that inbred attention to sheerly technical properties which robs literature of historical significance and reduces it to an aesthetic game*" (Eagleton, *Marxism* 19). Marxist criticism has been devoted to a reconstruction of the past on the basis of historical evidence in order to find out to what extent a text is a truthful and accurate representation of social reality at any given time. As Léon Trotsky suggested: "*artistic creation is a changing and a transformation of reality in accordance with the peculiar laws of art*" (qtd. in Cuddon 493). Or, as Mao Tse-Tung writes, "*works of literature and art, as ideological forms, are the product of the reflection in the human brain of the life of a given society*" (qtd. in Balibar and Macherey 278).

Terry Eagleton defines Marxist criticism as

> *part of a larger body of theoretical analysis which aims to understand ideologies—the ideas, values and feelings by which men experience their societies at various times. And certain of those ideas, values and feelings are available to us only in literature. To understand*

ideologies is to understand both the past and the present more deeply;
and such understanding contributes to our liberation. (*Marxism* xiii)

The purpose of Marxist criticism, therefore, is to enable an understanding of the social and cultural world that will contribute to its transformation. Marxists study literature as part of a larger political project, but in consequence they sacrifice a purely literary study of literature. Their focus on a political understanding of culture necessarily excludes a broader investigation into nonpolitical or aesthetic phenomena. For Marxism, literature does not exist in some timeless, aesthetic realm as an object to be passively contemplated. Rather, like all cultural manifestations, it is a product of the socioeconomic and hence ideological conditions of the time and place in which it was written, whether or not the author intended it so. Because human beings are themselves products of their socioeconomic and ideological environment, it is assumed that authors cannot help but create works that embody ideology in some form. As György Lukács puts it: "*Achilles and Werther, Oedipus and Tom Jones, Antigone and Anna Karenina: their individual existence* [. . .] *cannot be distinguished from their social and historical environment. Their human significance, their specific individuality cannot be separated from the context in which they were created*" (136).

Understanding the total social process of which literature is part is, then, understanding literature itself. Approvingly, the Russian Marxist critic Georgy Plekhanov writes: "*the social mentality of an age is conditioned by that age's social relations. This is nowhere quite as evident as in the history of art and literature*" (12). Literary works are not mysteriously inspired, or explicable simply in terms of their authors' psychology. They are forms of perception, particular ways of seeing the world; and as such, they have a relation to that dominant way of seeing the world, which is the social mentality or ideology of an age. Therefore, to account for any literary work is to account, too, for its relation with the prevailing status quo, as Eagleton puts it:

> *To understand King Lear, The Dunciad or Ulysses is therefore to do*
> *more than interpret their symbolism, study their literary history and*
> *add footnotes about sociological facts which enter into them. It is first*
> *of all to understand the complex, indirect relations between those*
> *works and the ideological worlds they inhabit*—*relations which*
> *emerge not just in 'themes' and 'preoccupations', but in style, rhythm,*
> *image, quality and* [. . .] *form.* (*Marxism* 6)

The fact that literature grows out of and reflects real material/historical conditions creates two extreme, opposite positions of interest to Marxist critics: (1) literature is nothing but ideology in a certain artistic form—that works of literature are just expressions of the ideologies of their time. The literary work might tend to reinforce in the reader the ideologies it embodies. They are prisoners of 'false consciousness', unable to reach beyond it to arrive at the truth. It is a position characteristic of much 'vulgar Marxist' criticism, which tends to see literary works merely as reflections of dominant ideologies. As such, it is unable to explain, for one thing, why so much literature actually challenges the ideological assumptions of its time. Or, (2) it might invite the reader to criticise the ideologies it represents. This opposite case seizes on the fact that so much literature challenges the ideology it confronts. Authentic art "*always transcends the ideological limits of its time, yielding us insight into the realities which ideology hides from view*" (Eagleton, *Marxism* 16). These two opposite positions are elaborated by the French Marxist critics, Louis Althusser and his compatriot Pierre Macherey, who show how literature is part of the ideological subjection process for the first, and how literature can also embrace a counterhegemonic speech for the second.

The kind of literary and cultural criticism that follows from the materialist conception of history, such as Althusser's, interprets the meaning of a given work in society by tracing the complex network of forces that have produced it as such. Literature, which is ideological, promotes an imagery relation to one's real material conditions of existence. Art, then, is for Marxism part of the 'superstructure' of society. It is part of a society's ideology—an element in that complex structure of social perception, which ensures that the situation in which one social class has power over the others, is either seen by most members of the society as natural, or not seen at all: "*All art* [literature] *springs from an ideological conception of the world; there is no such thing*" Georgy Plekhanov comments, "*as a work of art* [literature] *entirely devoid of ideological content*" (15-6).

Althusser's analysis shows the way for explorations of the way ideology works in literature. His theory on the ideological constitution of subjects enables us to talk about how a literary text, as a production of ideology, constitutes us as subjects. For the Marxist critics of the 1970s and 1980s, usually influenced by Althusser and his grim view of an enormously powerful ideology, texts (subsequently novels) do not so easily allow us a view of an undistorted reality: "*literature is historically constituted in the bourgeois epoch as an ensemble of language—or rather of specific linguistic practices—inserted in a general*

schooling process so as to provide appropriate fictional effects, thereby reproducing bourgeois ideology as the dominant ideology" (Balibar and Macherey 280). Such novels invite their readers to become part of a world that is essentially free and to look over the shoulders of people, who make autonomous decisions. In so doing, they create a specific subject position for their readers and give them the illusion that they, too, are free. Just like ideology, such novels give their readers the idea that they are complete: they make them believe that they are free agents and in that way make them complicit in their own delusion: "*Through the endless functioning of its texts, literature unceasingly 'produces' subjects, on display for everyone. So paradoxically using the same schema we Can say: literature endlessly transforms (concrete) individuals into subjects and endows them with a quasi-real hallucinatory individuality*" (Balibar and Macherey 289).

We can now say that the literary text is the agent for the reproduction of ideology in its ensemble. In other words, it induces, by the literary effect, the production of new discourses, which always reproduce the same ideology under constantly varied forms. It enables individuals to appropriate ideology and make themselves its free bearers and even its free creators. Novels, just like ideology, address ('hail') their readers and make them complicit in their own ideological delusion. Ideology is seen as such a strong presence in the text that we more or less have to break down its resistance to get at a truer picture of the reality the text pretends to present. Etienne Balibar and Pierre Macherey summarise this function of the literary text in the following passage:

> *The literary text is a privileged operator in the concrete relations*
> *between the individual and ideology in bourgeois society and ensures*
> *its reproduction. To the extent that it induces the ideological discourse*
> *to leave its subject-matter which has always already been invested as*
> *the aesthetic effect, in the form of the work of art, it does not seem a*
> *mechanical imposition, forced, revealed like a religious dogma, on*
> *individuals who must repeat it faithfully. Instead it appears as if*
> *offered for interpretations, a free choice, for the subjective private use*
> *of individuals. It is the privileged agent of ideological subjection, in*
> *the democratic and 'critical' form of 'freedom of thought.'* (292)

However, art does more than just passively reflect that experience of subjecting subjects to the Subject. It is held within ideology, but also manages to distance itself from it, to the point where it permits us to feel and perceive the ideology from which it springs. How literature can do this is more fully developed by one of Althusser's colleagues, the French

Marxist theorist Pierre Macherey. For Macherey, the literary work cannot be considered the creation of an individual mind but is the product of a socially determined process of production. As Marx has shown us, in a way that Althusser has specified, the process of forming and expressing ideas occurs within social history and is determined by it. As a result of the nature of this process, Macherey argues, literary works do not simply contain the meaning their authors intended to express in them, but they are in fact made up of many different and conflicting meanings. He writes:

> *The necessity of the work is founded on the multiplicity of its meanings; to explain the work is to recognize and differentiate the principle of this diversity. The postulated unity of the work which, more or less explicitly, has always haunted the enterprise of criticism, must now be denounced: the work is not created by an intention (objective or subjective); it is produced under determinate conditions.* (78)

As a result of the conditions of their production, for Macherey, literary works comprise a complex and conflicting set of relations between different meanings. They do not have a unity, nor are they whole or complete, as literary criticism has often assumed. Rather, they are 'incomplete' or 'insufficient', or, as Macherey puts it most precisely, 'decentred' (79). The principles by which their elements are related cannot be found in them. The model of literary criticism that Macherey proposes, therefore, is one that does not interpret the meaning of a text but, rather, explains what the work itself does not, namely the reasons for its composition by a series of conflicting meanings. He states:

> *What begs to be explained in the work is* [. . .] *the presence of a relation, or an opposition, between elements of the exposition or the levels of composition, those disparities which point to a conflict of meaning* [. . .] *The book is not the extension of a meaning; it is generated from the incompatibility of several meanings, the strongest bond by which it is attached to reality in a tense and ever-renewed confrontation.* (79)

Why do the conditions of production of literary works result in the kind of incompleteness, disparity or 'decentred-ness' that Macherey sees in them? It is because they are made out of ideology. The raw materials out of which literary works are produced are ideological materials—systems of belief and value, popular opinion, and all kinds of contemporary discourse, as well as the prevailing literary forms, themes and devices.

Although ideologies seem to constitute a complete account of the world and to have an apparent coherence, they are in fact necessarily incomplete since their function is precisely to efface the reality of the exploitative relations upon which society is based. As Macherey writes, "*Like a planet revolving around an absent sun, an ideology is made of what it does not mention; it exists because there are things which must not be spoken of*" (132). Now, when such ideological materials are worked up into literary texts, this incompleteness is shown up in the gaps, contradictions and other flaws in those texts. When we live inside the everyday language of ideology—when we participate in everyday speech, assume popular opinions, read the newspapers, watch television, and so on—its limits are not immediately apparent. However, when ideologies are represented in the form of a literary work, their incompleteness is also represented:

> *Since it is built from the formless language of illusion, the book revolves around this myth* [i.e. the ideology out of which it is made]*, but in the process of its formation the book takes a stand regarding this myth, exposing it* [. . .] *The book gives an implicit critique of its ideological content, if only because it resists being incorporated into the flow of ideology in order to give a determinate representation of it.*
> (Macherey 64)

When this language is fixed into the aesthetic form of a literary work, however, ideology's unspoken limits—the social realities of which it cannot speak, of which it exists in order not to speak—become apparent. Writing approvingly on this point, Terry Eagleton says,

> *Macherey distinguishes between what he terms 'illusion' (meaning, essentially, ideology), and 'fiction'. Illusion—the ordinary ideological experience of men—is the material on which the writer goes to work; but in working on it he transforms it into something different, lends it a shape and structure. It is by giving ideology a determinate form, fixing it within certain fictional limits, that art is able to distance itself from it, thus revealing to us the limits of that ideology. In doing this, Macherey claims, art contributes to our deliverance from the ideological illusion.* (*Marxism* 17)

A novelist, for Macherey, attempts to produce a unified, coherent text, but he, instead, ends up producing a work containing lapses, omissions and gaps. This happens because within ideology, there are subjects that cannot be covered, things that cannot be said, and contradictory views that aren't recognised as contradictory. This is the reason for the

disparate, conflicting and contradictory structure of literary works. A literary work is made up of a series of conflicting elements, which do not form a coherent or consistent unity, because the ideologies out of which it is made are themselves only coherent or consistent to a limited extent and are contradicted by the historical realities of which they exist not to speak. The internal disunity of the work is the result of the misrepresentative and limited character of the ideology from which it is made. This is the basis for Macherey's model of literary criticism as explanation of the conflicting elements of literary works. Literary criticism based on the principles of historical materialism, in contrast to ideological literary criticism, will explain the gaps, flaws and contradictions in literary texts in terms of their conditions of production from the raw materials of contemporary ideologies. It will explain the reasons for which the work fails to be the coherent or consistent unity that ideological literary criticism believes that it is (Ferretter 62).

To sum up, Pierre Macherey stresses the supplementary claim that a literary text not only distances itself from its ideology by its fiction and form, but also exposes the contradictions that are inherent in that ideology by its 'silences' or 'gaps'—that is, by what the text fails to say because its ideology makes it impossible to say it. Such textual 'absences' are symptoms of ideological repressions of the contents in the text's own 'unconscious'. For Macherey, literary works are pervaded by ideology. So, in order to get beyond a text's ideological dimension, we will have to begin with the cracks in its façade, with those sites where the text is not fully in control of itself (a lack of control summarised in the title of one of Macherey's essays, 'The Text Says What It Does Not Say') ,i.e., what the literary text says is less important than what it does not. Literature is a form of intellectual production that works ideological raw material into literary texts, and in doing so, it transforms the raw material. Thus, in order to expose a text's ideology, interpretation must paradoxically focus on what the text does not say, on what the text represses rather than expresses. We find what the text does not say in gaps, in silences where what might have been said remain unarticulated. Literature, as Macherey puts it, reveals the gaps in ideology. The text might almost be said to have an unconscious to which it has consigned what it cannot say because of ideological repression. The aim of Marxist criticism, Macherey asserts, is to make these silences 'speak' and so to reveal, behind what an author consciously intended to say, the text's unconscious content—that is, its repressed awareness of the flaws, stresses and incoherence in the very ideology that it incorporates (Habib 543). In this way, a critique of ideology could emerge through the literary text.

The following questions Marxist critics, usually, ask about literary texts are offered to summarise Marxist approaches to literature. How does the literary work reflect (intentionally or not) the socioeconomic conditions of the time in which it was written? What do those conditions reveal about the history of class struggle? To what extent are literary texts the product of the historical period in which they were written? What sort of view of the prevailing socio-economic and political condition do we find in a given text? Does the work reinforce (intentionally or not) the status quo? If so, then the work may be said to have a capitalist, imperialist, or classicist agenda, and it is the critic's job to expose and condemn this aspect of the work. Does the text take an openly or more implicitly critical stance? i.e., in what ways does the text reveal and invite us to condemn oppressive socioeconomic forces (including repressive ideologies)? If a work criticises or invites us to criticise oppressive socioeconomic forces, then it may be said to have a Marxist agenda.

II. Psychoanalytic Criticism

The great changes in social life resulting from the scientific and technological progress gave rise to new ideas in the field of psychology and psychoanalysis; ideas which had a great impact on the development of literature. Another generation of literary critics drew upon psychoanalysis in their interpretations of literary texts. Such psychoanalytic insight would lead us to a better understanding of the interrelatedness between the two works. Therefore the aim in this section is to cast light on psychoanalytic features that are very close to our study, starting by Freudian classical psychoanalysis to more modern trends represented mainly by Jacques Lacan.

1. Freudian Psychoanalytic Criticism

The 'classical psychoanalysis' theory had been developed by Sigmund Freud as a means of analysis and therapy for neuroses. However, he soon expanded it to account for many developments and practices in the history of civilisation and literature. At the core of Freud's sexual theory is the so-called 'Oedipus Complex,' something Freud believed all children experience as a rite of passage to adult gender identity. In the following passage from *The Interpretation of Dreams*, Freud inaugurates the theory of the Oedipus Complex: "*King Oedipus, who slew his father Laius and married his mother Jacasta, merely shows us the fulfillment of our own childhood wishes* [. . .] *and we shrink back from him with the whole*

force of the repression by which those wishes have since that time been held down within us" (*Psychological Works* 262-3).

Freud sees the child's relationship with its parents as critical for the achievement of its proper sexual identity. The difficulties begin with the child's dependence on the nurturing mother. All male children, Freud argued, experience an early attachment to the mother that is sexual in nature. Thus, his self-analysis would have been used to confirm the existence of the Oedipus Complex. That would explain why he wrote "*I have found, in my own case too,* [the phenomenon of] *being in love with my mother and jealous of my father, and I now consider it a universal event in early childhood"* (*The Complete Letters* 272). The love of the mother remains dominant in the early formative years. Inevitably, according to Freud, a perception of the father as rival in this love becomes insistent for the boy-child to the point where he is drawn into fantasies of the killing of this rival and of possessing the mother. This is the Oedipus Complex. The way out of it is provided by the fears of the castration complex. The father is experienced as the source of all authority, all direction of desire, and thus as capable of castrating the boy-child, who unconsciously believes this to be the reason for the absence of the penis in the girl. The boy, thus, abandons his love for the mother and moves towards identification with the father, with the understanding that he, too, can in time occupy such a position of power. Louis Althusser describes this phase as follows: "*When the little boy lives and resolves the tragic* [. . .] *situation of castration, he accepts not having the same right (phallus) as his father, in particular, not having the father's right over the mother,* [. . .] *he gains in the process the assurance of one day having, later on, when he will have become an adult"* ("Freud and Lacan" 28).

However, the end of the Oedipus Complex marks the beginning of a new phase in every child's life, a period marked by the appearance of what Freud called 'The Unconscious'. The Oedipus Complex is for Freud the nucleus of desire, repression and sexual identity. Its residue is a life-long ambivalence towards the keeping and breaking of taboos and laws. Memories of these experiences, i.e., images and ideas associated with them, or with the Oedipus Complex, become charged with unpleasurable feelings and are thus barred from consciousness. This is the operation known as repression: "*the essence of repression lies simply in turning something away, and keeping it at a distance from the conscious"* (Freud, *Psychological Works* 147). Initially, the notion of the unconscious enters Freud's theory in connection with repression. The unconscious is made up of all that has been kept out of the

preconscious conscious system. The unconscious consists of instinctual representatives, ideas and images originally fixated in a moment of repression. Writing admittedly, D. H. Lawrence says: "*The mind, that is, transfers the idea of incest into the affective-passional psyche, and keeps it there as a repressed motive*" (203). Hence, the father's prohibitions and threats are internalised and the incestuous wish is repressed. The unconscious, thus, is created by our initial repression of our desire for the union with our mother, our overwhelming sense of loss, our frustrated desire, and the fears that accompany a loss of such magnitude. For the lack we experienced was repressed, it is repression that first creates the unconscious.

In terms of the Oedipus Complex, the major conclusion to be drawn is that the 'unconscious' is a repository of repressed desires, feelings, memories and instinctual drives many of which, according to Freud, have to do with sexuality and violence. As each child grows and enters first the family then society, he or she learns to repress those instinctual drives and the conscious desires they instigate and to mold aggressive and sexual impulses as well as an initially grandiose sense of self to the demands of life with others. Repression is essential to civilisation, the conversion of animal instinct into civil behavior, but such repression creates what might be called a second self, a stranger within, a place where all that cannot for one reason or another be expressed or realised in civil life takes up residence. Thus,

> *the Oedipus complex is the dramatic structure, the 'theatrical machine,' imposed by the Law of Culture on every involuntary and constrained candidate to humanity, a structure containing in itself not only the possibility but the necessity of the concrete variations in which it exists, for every individual who manages to reach its threshold, live it, and survive it.* (Althusser, "Freud and Lacan" 29)

Hence, the unconscious is a realm where the subject's history, his or her prohibited desires live on, where such impulses as the urge to incest, patricide, unconventional expressions of sexuality, are not subject to the negatives placed upon them by the conscious in the interests of 'civilised' behavior. In other words, it is the impulse to enter the social life that obliges us to harbor our initial whims and aberrations and move them to the unconscious part of our psyche: "*Society's injunction that desire must wait* [. . .] *is what effects the split between conscious and unconscious*" (Wright 101). This idea of the repressive mission of the society or civilisation and the implications of this theory of a subject or text, which is split, divided between two realms, is followed through from Freud to the French psychoanalyst Jaques Lacan.

Freud observed that there is no word in the unconscious for 'no'. The unconscious works by its own logic and even language, and it is the task of analysis to tap into this logic as it is one of the tasks of psychoanalytic criticism to tap into the text's unconscious logic. It expresses itself, as Freud suggested, most obviously in everyday life through dreams, bodily symptoms, jokes, slips of the tongue, and small inexplicable interruptions in the smoothly regulated social flow. It would seem that we are not the autonomous, rational creatures that pre-Freudian or some current strands of anti-Freudian thought has suggested, for not everything we do is under our conscious control.

Assertively, the positing of an unconscious as the ultimate source and explanation of human thought and behavior represented a radical disruption of the main streams of Western thought, which, since Aristotle, had held that man was essentially a rational being, capable of making free choices in the spheres of intellection and morality. For Rafey Habib:

> *To say that the unconscious governs our behavior is to problematize all of the notions on which philosophy, theology, and even literary criticism have conventionally rested: the ideal of self-knowledge, the ability to know others, the capacity to make moral judgments, the belief that we can act according to reason, that we can overcome our passions and instincts.* (571)

Freud challenges also many of the central impulses of Enlightenment thought: the view of the human self as an independent unit; the belief in conscious thought as the ultimate datum of our experience; the picture of the human mind as a unified whole that can achieve full awareness of itself; the notion of man's rational potential: his very capacity to reason is premolded to conform to his deepest-rooted instinctual demands.

Moreover, far from being based on reason, our thinking is intimately dependent upon the body, upon its instincts of survival and aggression, as well as obstinate features that cannot be dismissed. Freud taught us that we witness our nature "*as much and more in our whims, our aberrations, our phobias and fetishes, as in our more or less civilized personalities*" (Lacan, *Écrits* 174). What Freud gives to cultural and literary theory is a view of the human self as constructed to a large extent by its environment, as a product of familial and larger social forces; a profound sense of the limitations of reason and of language itself; an intense awareness of the closure effected by conventional systems of thought and behavior, of the severe constraints imposed upon human sexuality; a view of art and religion as issuing from broader patterns of human need and an acknowledgment that truth-value and moral

value are not somehow absolute or universal but are motivated by the economic and ideological demands of civilisation. Clearly, this general problematisation of conventional notions extends to literature: if the unconscious is a founding factor of our psyche, we can no longer talk unequivocally of an author's intention, or take for granted that a drama structured according to certain rules will produce a precise effect upon its audience. We cannot presume that our intended meanings will be conveyed, or that our conscious purposes represent our true aims.

As far as literature is concerned, Freud's argument concerning art is fundamental: the human psyche, frustrated in its attempts to mold the world in a self-comforting image, resorts to art to create its world in fantasy. Art is the highest form of such an impulse and is the embodiment of civilisation itself, whose foundations are erected on the graveyard of repressed instincts. A text can be approached in terms of its probing of deeper, unconscious, impulses that lie hidden in recurring human obsessions, fears and anxieties. Such paths will be further explored by Lacan, and others. For Freud, dreams eventually came to be regarded as "*the royal road to a knowledge of the unconscious*" (*Psychological Works* 608). And literary texts are like dreams; they consist of the imagined, or fantasied fulfillment of wishes that are either denied by reality or are prohibited by the social standards of morality and propriety. As Marie Bonaparte states,

> *Works of art or literature profoundly reveal their creator's psychology and, as Freud has shown, their construction resembles that of our dreams. The same mechanisms which, in dreams and nightmares, govern the manner in which our strongest though most carefully concealed desires are elaborated, desires which often are the most repugnant to consciousness, also govern the elaborations of a work of art.* (209)

The works of literature embody or express unconscious material in the form of complex displacements, i.e., the substitution for an unconscious object of desire by one that is acceptable to the conscious mind, and condensations, i.e., the omission of parts of the unconscious material and the fusion of several unconscious elements into a single entity. The forbidden wishes come into conflict with, and are repressed by, the 'censor' (the internalised representative within each individual of the standards of society) into the unconscious realm of the artist's mind but are permitted by the censor to achieve a fantasied satisfaction in distorted forms, which serve to disguise their real motives and objects from the conscious

mind. The disguised fantasies that are evident to consciousness are called by Freud the 'manifest' content of a dream or work of literature; the unconscious wishes that find a semblance of satisfaction in this distorted form he calls the 'latent' content. The same rule that he prescribes for dream interpretation, however, also applies to literature: it (literature) is not a direct translation of the unconscious into symbols that stand for unconscious meanings. Rather, literature displaces unconscious desires, drives and motives into imagery that might bear no resemblance to its origin but that nonetheless permits it to achieve release or expression.

Freud, also, asserts that the artistic person possesses to an especially high degree the power to sublimate; the ability to elaborate fantasied wish-fulfillments into the manifest features of a work of art in a way that conceals or deletes their merely personal elements and so makes them capable of satisfying the unconscious desires of people other than the individual artist and to mold the artistic medium into "*a faithful image of the creatures of his imagination*," as well as into a satisfying artistic form (Abrams 249). Supporting this idea, "*Poetry,*" i.e., literature―John Keble claimed―"*is the indirect expression* [. . .] *of some overpowering emotion, or ruling taste, or feeling, the direct indulgence whereof is somehow repressed*." This repression is imposed by the author's sentiments of 'reticence' and 'shame'; the conflict between the need for expression and the compulsion to repress such self-revelation is resolved by the poet's ability to give "*healing relief to secret mental emotion, yet without detriment to modest reserve*" by a literary "*art which under certain veils and disguises* [. . .] *reveals the fervent emotions of the mind*"; and this disguised mode of self-expression serves as "*a safety valve, preserving men from madness*" (48). The result is a fantasied wish-fulfillment of a complex and artfully shaped sort that allows both the artist to overcome personal conflicts and repressions, and the artist's audience "*to obtain solace and consolation from their own unconscious sources of gratification which had become inaccessible*" to them (Freud, *Reader* 249). Literature and art, therefore, unlike dreams and neuroses, may serve the artist as a mode of fantasy that opens "*the way back to reality*" (*Reader* 249). Freud's inquiry moves to the connection between the life of a writer and his works. He applies to the creative artist his earlier formula for fantasies: "*A strong experience in the present awakens in the creative writer a memory of an earlier experience (usually belonging to his childhood) from which there now proceeds a wish which finds its fulfilment in the creative work*" (*Reader* 442). Freud points out that his emphasis on a writer's childhood

memories derives from his assumption that a creative work is "*a continuation of, and a substitute for, what was once the play of childhood*" (*Reader* 442).

Therefore, our job, when we read psychoanalytically, is to see which of the previous concepts are operating in the text in such a way as to enrich our understanding of the work and to yield a meaningful, coherent psychoanalytic interpretation. From the perspective of Freudian classical psychoanalytic theory, we might attend mainly to, first, the work's representation of oedipal dynamics or of family dynamics in general; that is: are there any oedipal dynamics at work here? Is it possible to relate a character's patterns of adult behavior to early experiences in the family as represented in the work? How do these patterns of behavior and family dynamics operate and what do they reveal? Second, what can the work tell us about human beings' psychological relationship to death or to sexuality; that is how can characters' behavior, narrative events and/or images be explained in terms of psychoanalytic concepts of any kind, for example, regression, crisis, projection, fear of or fascination with death, sexuality—which includes love and romance as well as sexual behavior—as a primary indicator of psychological identity? Third, to the way the narrator's unconscious problems keep asserting themselves over the course of the story; that is (1) how do the operations of repression structure or inform the work? And how are the unconscious desires of either the author, or the characters are presented in the text? That is, what unconscious motives are operating in the characters? What core issues are thereby illustrated? And how do these core issues structure or inform the piece? And (2) in what ways can we view a literary work as analogous to a dream? That is, how might recurrent or striking dream symbols reveal the ways in which the narrator or speaker is projecting his or her unconscious desires, fears, wounds, or unresolved conflicts onto other characters, onto the setting, or onto the events portrayed? Fourth, what does the work suggest about the psychological being of its author? In this case, the literary text is interpreted much as if it were the author's dream, or, to any other psychoanalytic concepts that seem to produce a useful understanding of the text.

2. The Writer's Oedipus Complex

Harold Bloom's theory of literary influence, which he expounds in his book *The Anxiety of Influence*, draws upon Freud's account of the 'Oedipus Complex' and specifically adapts it to the composition and writing of poetry, i.e., literature. Bloom's theory is essentially about what happens when a poet arrives on the scene to find his place already taken, the poem already written, a battleground already occupied, where a space for the imagination and

creativity has to be cleared perforce. The poet becomes disappointed because he "*cannot be Adam early in the morning. There have been too many Adams, and they have named everything*" (Bloom, *Anxiety* 96). Bloom states that he finds Freud's 'family romance' the most useful model for explaining these problematic and analysing relations between poets: "*to examine* [. . .] *the relations between poets as cases akin to what Freud called the family romance* [. . .] *in order to center upon intra-poetic relationships as parallels of family romance*" (*Anxiety* 8).

For instance, a putative poet now is growing up as a poet in the shadow; he becomes inspired to write because he has read and admired the poetry of previous poets. This poet stands in the relationship of 'son' to the great poets of the past, or to one of them in particular, and feels oppressed by that relationship. The 'son', powerfully influenced by a parent-poem or poems of the 'father', experiences ambivalent feelings, compounded not only of love and admiration but also of envy and fear—and perhaps even hatred. The fear and hatred are caused by the son's great need to reject and rebel against the 'father', to be autonomous and original and find his own 'voice'. The "*Initial love for the precursor's poetry is transformed rapidly enough into revisionary strife, without which individuation is not possible*" (*Anxiety* 103). Hence, the anxiety provoked by the Oedipal condition reappears in matters of poetic influence, and the attitude of the 'ephebe' (the son) to the 'precursor' poet may well be ambivalent, if not hostile. A "*man's unconscious fear of castration manifests itself as an apparently physical trouble in his eyes; a poet's fear of ceasing to be a poet frequently manifests itself also as a trouble of his vision*" (*Anxiety* 78). Every poet is, in a sense, belated and oppressed by anxiety because of 'precursor' poets. Carrying through the Oedipal idea, Bloom suggests that such a 'son' is a rival to the father poet, who is a 'castrating precursor'.

As it happens in the Oedipus complex, poets battle with their artistic fathers in order to gain authority for themselves, in the same way that Oedipus and all other male infants battle with their own fathers for supremacy as a necessary part of becoming adult men. It "*is a battle fought* [by] *every generation as successive poets attempt to shake off the influence of older writers, and to prove that they are superior and original*" (Vice 14). Just as sons may, and Oedipus did, imagine they are self-created, not even dependent on the father for their existence, so poets may also claim that they have no influences, and what they write is all their own work. Like "*the Oedipal child, the new poet tries to prove he is not indebted to a parent for his appearance in the world, and to deny the 'anxiety of influence' his precursors*

may at first cause him" (Vice 14). As Wallace Stevens does in a letter quoted by Bloom to the poet Richard Eberhart:

> *While, of course, I come down from the past, the past is my own and not something marked Coleridge, Wordsworth, etc. I know of no one who has been particularly important to me. My reality-imagination complex is entirely my own even though I see it in others. I sympathize with your denial of any influence on my part. This sort of thing always jars me because, in my own case, I am not conscious of having been influenced by anybody and have purposely held off from reading highly mannered people like Eliot and Pound so that I should not absorb anything, even unconsciously. But there is a kind of critic who spends his time dissecting what he reads for echoes, imitations, influences, as if no one was ever simply himself but is always compounded of a lot of other people.* (*Anxiety* 6-7)

However, this disclaimer of any kind of influence exercised by the father-poet on the son-poet, according to Bloom, is another evidence of how strong is the anxiety felt by the 'ephebe': "*This view, that poetic influence scarcely exists, except in furiously active pedants, is itself an illustration of one way in which poetic influence is a variety of melancholy or an anxiety-principle*" (*Anxiety* 7). Furthermore, poetic influence means by no means making poets less original. Along the lines of Oedipal rivalry, the belated poet unconsciously safeguards his own sense of autonomy and priority by reading a parent-poem defensively, in such a way as to distort it. Authors of real power, Bloom argues, must inevitably 'misread' their precursors' works in order to make room for fresh imaginings. He drew a sharp distinction between 'strong poets,' who perform 'strong misreading' of their precursors, and 'weak poets,' who simply repeat the ideas of their precursors: "*Strong poets* [writers] *become strong by meeting the anxiety of influence, not by ignoring it. Poets* [writers] *adept at forgetting their ancestry write very forgettable* [works]" (*Map* 199). It is this very feeling of anxiety that makes a writer strong or weak. The strong ones are those who recognise it and wrestle with their ancestors in order to achieve their own vision: "*My concern* [he adds] *is only with strong poets, major figures with the persistence to wrestle with their strong precursors, even to the death. Weaker talents idealize; figures of capable imagination appropriate for themselves. But nothing is got for nothing, and self-appropriation involves the immense anxieties of indebtedness*" (*Anxiety* 6–7).

Poets misread previous masters to produce a new work, and then deny their paternity. Thus, the challenge of a newcomer to the work of an established poet takes essentially the

form of a turning of his meaning, which arises from the newcomer's reactions of defence against the strong paternal assertion "*To live, the poets* [or the writers] *must misinterpret the father, by the crucial act of misprision which is the re-writing of the father*" (*Map* 19).

The final stage in which the anxiety of influence makes a newcomer into a 'strong' poet is marked by the moment when the precursor's image structure appears uncannily in the newcomer's poem, as if it were now. He cannot avoid embodying the malformed parent-poem into his own doomed attempt to write an unprecedentedly original poem. This uncanny return of the precursor makes the latecomer seem to be the true author. According to Bloom, the extent to which the previous poet's voice has been subdued to the ephebe's own is the measure of how 'strong' a poet is: "*The dead mayor may not return, but their voice comes alive, paradoxically never by mere imitation, but in the agonistic misprision performed upon powerful forerunners by only the most gifted of their successors*" (*Anxiety* xxiv).

3. Lacan and Ideology

In contemporary literary theory and criticism, the work of the French psychoanalyst Jacques Lacan is often evoked to explain how power works, why the individual—the subject—is so extraordinarily susceptible to power or to ideology. Before tackling the relation between the unconscious and ideology, it is of paramount importance to return to Lacan's reformulation of Freud's explanation of the child's early phases of development.

Especially important in Lacanian literary criticism is Lacan's reformulation of Freud's concepts of the early stages of psychosexual development and the formation of the Oedipus complex into the distinction between a prelinguistic stage of development that he calls the imaginary and the stage after the acquisition of language that he calls the symbolic. In the imaginary stage, there is no clear distinction between the self and other selves, or between the subject and the object. In this state, in which the child cannot yet speak, it is subject to impressions and fantasies, to all sorts of drives and has no sense of limitations and boundaries; it simply does not know that its body is not the world. The child develops a false narcissistic sense of unity through his original symbiotic relationship with the mother. The child assumes the mother is himself, and his primary desire is for her desire (of him). In the phase of the pre-Oedipal dual relation,

> *the child deals only with an alter ego, the mother, who scans his life*
> *with her presence* [. . .] *and absence* [. . .]*, lives this dual relation in*

> *the mode of the imaginary fascination of the ego, being himself that*
> *other, some other, every other, all the others of the primary*
> *narcissistic identification without ever being able to take, in relation*
> *to either other or self, the objectivizing distance of a third party.*
> (Althusser, "Freud and Lacan" 25-6)

With the transition from the 'Imaginary' to the 'Symbolic', in which we submit to language and reason, we lose a feeling of wholeness, of undifferentiated being. Our entrance into the Symbolic Order thus involves the experience of separation from others, and the biggest separation is the separation from the intimate union we experienced with our mother during our immersion in the Imaginary Order. For Lacan, this separation constitutes our most important experience of loss, and it is one that will haunt us all our lives. In the phase of the Oedipus Complex, the child-mother 'dual fascination' turns into a 'ternary structure' where a 'third party' (the father),

> *combines as an intruder with the imaginary satisfaction of the dual*
> *fascination, overthrows its economy, shatters its fascinations, and*
> *introduces the child to what Lacan calls the Symbolic Order, that of*
> *the objectivizing language that will allow him finally to say 'I,' 'you,'*
> *'he,' or 'she,' which will thus allow the little being to situate himself*
> *as a human child in a world of adult thirds.* (Althusser, "Freud and
> Lacan" 26)

This entrance into the 'Symbolic' necessitates an acceptance of the language and of the social and cultural systems that prevail in the child's environment. And since the structures of language are marked with societal imperatives—the father's rules, laws and definitions, among which are those of 'child' and 'mother'— the infant subject, when it enters the symbolic stage, assimilates the inherited system of linguistic differences as it learns to accept its pre-determined position in such linguistic oppositions as male/female, father/son, mother/daughter. Language is first and foremost a symbolic system of signification, that is, a symbolic system of meaning-making. Among the first meanings the child makes—or more correctly, that are made for him—are that he is a separate being ('I' am 'me,' not 'you') and that he has a gender (I am a girl, not a boy, or vice versa). As Lacan writes, the infant resorts to words only when the things it wants are unavailable: "*the symbol* [the word] *manifests itself first of all as the murder of the thing, and this death constitutes in the subject the eternalization of his desire*" (*Écrits* 104). According to A. Vergote, for Lacan, the apprenticeship of language is an alienation for the psyche: "*The symbol,*" he writes "*is an imaginary figure in which man's truth is alienated. The intellectual elaboration of the symbol*

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cannot disalienate it. Only the analysis of its imaginary elements, taken individually, reveals the meaning and the desire that the subject had hidden within it" (qtd. in Jameson, "Imaginary" 11). Therefore, that symbiosis with the mother must be left behind as the child develops and enters that social world. The shattering of it occurs when the child is confronted with the father's 'no,' which is to say, with the incest taboo that declares the mother an inappropriate object. The child then learns to accept his place in the Symbolic Order, that symbolic language, which assigns social roles and dictates proper behavior in society. With the initiation of the Symbolic, the original desire for the mother is repressed. The result is "*a determination of the subject by language*" (Jameson, "Imaginary" 20). It is language that gives us identity and assigns us an 'I,' before it we possess no sense of self.

Lacan inserts the self into culture. We are all shaped by the Symbolic order into which we are born, an order that determines our gender identity and our place in our families. When we learn to make symbols, we also learn to separate from our ambient childhood world of objects and achieve an independent selfhood that is experienced as loss. That lack can never be filled, and all human desire circulates around it, yearning to hark back to the lost unity. For Lacan, there is a direct connection between the repressive character of language and culture and the coming into being of the unconscious. As Frederic Jameson states, "*One of the 'effects' of the becoming-human of the little biological being issuing from human childbirth is that there, in its place, is* [. . .] *the unconscious*" ("Imaginary" 22). Indeed, our being is not founded on the mythic identity of the ego; rather it is founded on what Lacan calls our initial 'lack-of-being' ('*manque-d-être*'), the initial experience of being ripped out of an original imaginary fullness of being and separated from the object—the mother—that provided us with it (Rivkin and Ryan 393). The arrival of the Symbolic and the shattering of the Imaginary thus consist of the installation of a combined linguistic/psychological separation of the child both from its initial object, the mother, and from the undifferentiated matter of natural existence. We learn to be social, to have social identities, by learning to say no, to sacrifice or give up both the initial contact one has with the natural world and with one's first human objects. The mother's body is barred, and the desire for it enters the unconscious (Rivkin and Ryan 394). Therefore, it is the Symbolic Order, as a result of the experience of lack just described, that marks the split into conscious and unconscious mind.

The acceptance of repression and the entry into the Symbolic is itself comparable to language in that once one learns to name something, one accepts separation from it; by

naming, one sacrifices the object, since the presence of the sign/word is the absence of the signified thing. The naming of objects separates one from them. For the acquisition of a name results in a thorough-going transformation of the position of the subject in his object world: "*That a name, no matter how confused, designates a particular person—this is precisely what the passage to the human state consists in. If we must define that moment in which man becomes human, we would say that it is at that instant when, as minimally as you like, he enters into a symbolic relationship*" (Jameson, "Imaginary" 18).

Lacan's psychoanalytic model has also been invoked to explain the hold ideology has over us. Althusser has been struck by the overlap of Lacan's register with Marx's characterisation of ideology. Both "*serve to define consciousness not as a relatively autonomous vehicle of enlightenment but as a wholly reflexive, deeply heteronomous imposture*" (Rabaté 160). According to Althusser, Lacan has shown that the passage from biological existence (Imaginary stage) to human existence (Symbolic stage) is effected under the Law of the Order that he calls the Law of Culture and that this Law of Culture can be conflated in its formal essence with the order of language: "*All the stages traversed by the infant,*" Althusser maintains, "*are done so under the reign of the Law, of the code of human assignment* [. . .]*; his 'satisfactions' bear within them the indelible and constitutive mark of the Law,* [. . .] *the human infant receives and submits to that rule with his first breath*" (Althusser, "Freud and Lacan" 26). He draws too on Lacan as his means of illustrating the claim that "*ideology has always already interpellated individuals as subjects*" and "*that individuals are always already subjects,*" i.e., subjects of ideology ("Ideology" 176). Althusser says: "*Lacan demonstrates the effectiveness of the Order, the Law, that has been lying in wait for each infant born since before his birth. And seizes him before his first cry, assigning to him his place and role and hence his fixed destination*" ("Freud and Lacan" 27). Ideology conceived in this sense is therefore

> *the place of the insertion of the subject in* [. . .] *the Symbolic or in other words the* [. . .] *network of society itself, with its kinship-type system of places and roles.* [. . .] *The ideological representation must rather be seen as that indispensable mapping fantasy or narrative by which the individual subject invents a 'lived' relationship with collective systems which otherwise by definition exclude him insofar as he or she is born into a pre-existent social form and its pre-existent language.* (Jameson, "Imaginary" 38)

So enormous is the role of the Symbolic Order in the formation of what we refer to as our 'selves.' In fact, we are not the unique, independent individuals we think we are. Our desires, beliefs, biases, and so forth, are constructed for us as a result of our immersion in the Symbolic Order. We may think that what we want out of life, or even what we want at any given moment, is the result of our own unique personalities, our own wills and judgments. However, what we desire is what we are taught to desire. This is what Lacan means by his claim that "*desire is always the desire of the Other*" (*The Seminar* 235). If we were raised in a different culture—that is, in a different Symbolic Order—we would have different desires. In other words, the Symbolic Order consists of society's ideologies: its beliefs, values, and biases; its system of government, laws, educational practices, religious tenets, and the like. And it is our responses to our society's ideologies that make us who we are. For Lacan, we need the response and recognition of others and of the 'Other' to arrive at what we experience as our identity. Our 'subjectivity' is construed in interaction with 'others'. We become ourselves by way of other perspectives and other views of who we are, by the drives, the unconscious, and the Symbolic Order of our culture, the social languages that identify us and lend us identities, all of which exceed consciousness and never assume the form of knowable or conscious identity (which, for Lacan, is always fantasmatic). Our identity is given to us from outside, and we are constitutively alienated (Rivkin and Ryan 393). We also become ourselves under the 'gaze' of the 'Other' or 'great other' ('*grande autre*'). This 'Other' is not a concrete individual, although it may be embodied in one (father or mother, for instance) but stands for the larger social order. 'Other' refers to anything that contributes to the creation of our subjectivity, or what we commonly refer to as our 'selfhood': for example, the Symbolic Order, language, ideology—which are virtually synonymous—or any authority figure or accepted social practice (Tyson 31).

Ideology might be seen in Lacanian terms as 'the Other' whose 'misrecognition' of us becomes incorporated in our identity. The misrepresentation that it reflects back leads us to misrepresent what we are to ourselves—a formulation that evokes Althusser's definition of ideology—and this misrepresentation becomes a cornerstone of our identity. We may expect everything that is ideologically undesirable within a given culture to have found refuge in the unconsciousness of its members. If we see ideology in psychoanalytic terms, that is as the conscious dimension of a given society, then we may posit an unconscious where everything that ideology represses—social inequality, unequal opportunity, and the lack of freedom of the subject. Ideology gives us the illusion that it makes us whole; it would seem to neutralise

the desire that results from our entry into the 'Symbolic'. Lacanian criticism sees this repeated on a smaller scale when we read literary texts. In the process of reading, we enter into a complex relationship with a text in which we allow it to master us, to fill our lack.

What, then, are the implications and applications of Lacan's theory of the subject for literature and the arts? As Lacan shows: the unconscious informs the play of word and sense in all texts: "*all discourse is inhabited by the unconscious*" (*The Seminar* 218). Thus, Lacanian psychoanalysis in particular can be used to hypothesize a sort of social, or political, unconscious that manifests itself in literary texts, usually in passages that, from the point of view of the conscious or ideology, seem trivial or irrelevant. In order to interpret a literary work through a Lacanian lens, we need, therefore, to explore the ways in which the text might be structured by some of the key Lacanian concepts and see what this exploration can reveal. For example, do any characters, events, or episodes in the narrative seem to embody the Imaginary Order? In which case would they involve some kind of private and either fantasy or delusional world? What parts of the text seem informed by the Symbolic Order? That is: where do we see ideology and social norms in control of characters' behavior and narrative events? How is the relationship between these two orders portrayed? What do we learn about characters if we can discover where they've invested their unconscious desire? In other words, where has a given character displaced his or her unconscious desire for the haunting, idealised mother of infancy? In what ways does the text seem to reveal characters' emotions in the Symbolic Order, and the Imaginary Order? Do any Lacanian concepts account for so much of the text that we might say the text is structured by one or more of these concepts? A Lacanian critique of a literary text allows us, then, not simply to understand a particular literary text, or even literary language itself, but to give us a better understanding of our own fictive and textual constructions as subjects.

III. Feminist Criticism

Feminist interventions in the production and reception of the arts have made a distinct contribution towards revealing art to be a cultural practice that has historically excluded the subjectivities of women: much of feminist criticism has been a concerted effort to challenge the representation of woman as constructed within a patriarchal symbolic. Since the way female characters were standardly portrayed, these characters were constructions, put together —not necessarily by the writers, who presented them themselves, but by the culture they belonged to—to serve the continued social and cultural domination of males. Not

unexpectedly, then, the attempt here is to call for specific feminist ways of reading and theorising that could tell us how typically female experience has been reflected in the two novels.

1. An Overview of Feminist Premises

As a distinctive and concerted approach to literature, feminist criticism was not inaugurated until late in the 1960s. Behind it, however, lie many centuries of struggle for the recognition of women's cultural roles and achievements, and for women's social and political rights. Broadly defined, "*feminist criticism examines the ways in which literature (and other cultural productions) reinforces or undermines the economic, political, social, and psychological oppression of women*" (Tyson 83). Feminist criticism has grown to encompass a vast series of concerns: a rewriting of literary history so as to include the contributions of women; the tracing of a female literary tradition; theories of sexuality and sexual difference, drawing on psychoanalysis, Marxism, and the social sciences; the representation of women in male literature; the role of gender in both literary creation and literary criticism. In fact, feminists share several important assumptions, which might be summarised as follows:

First, women are oppressed by patriarchy economically, politically, socially, and psychologically; patriarchal ideology is the primary means by which they are kept so. Patriarchy, which can be defined, in short, as any culture that privileges men by promoting traditional gender roles casting men as rational, strong, protective, and decisive; women as emotional (irrational), weak, nurturing, and submissive (Habib 683). In every domain where patriarchy reigns, woman is 'other'*:* she is objectified and marginalised, defined only by her difference from male norms and values, defined by what she allegedly lacks and that men allegedly have. From the Greek philosophic writings to the present, the female tends to be defined by negative reference to the male as the human norm. She is defined as an Other, or kind of non-man, by her lack of the identifying male organ, of male powers, and of the male character traits that are presumed, in the patriarchal view, to have achieved the most important scientific and technical inventions and the major works of civilisation and culture. Summarising these long traditions of thought, Simone de Beauvoir states: "*Thus humanity is male and man defines woman not in herself but as relative to him; she is not regarded as an autonomous being* [. . .] *she is the incidental, the inessential as opposed to the essential. He is the Subject, he is the Absolute—she is the Other*" (xvi).

Second, Jacques Derrida offers a critique of western metaphysics, arguing that western thought is grounded in a series of binary oppositions. Put briefly, they are structured as follows: "*light/darkness, good/evil, soul/body, life/death, mind/matter, speech/writing, and so on*" (qtd. in Woods 165). The terms are not conceived of as equal but exist in a hierarchical structure. Fundamentally, Derrida argues, western thought has privileged unity, identity, and immediacy, or presence, over absence. An early and influential claim for the relevance of binary oppositions for feminism is offered by the French writer and literary critic Hélène Cixous. Thought, Cixous asserts, has always worked by dual, hierarchised oppositions: Superior/Inferior. Cixous extended Derrida's argument by focusing on gender, contending that implicit in each binary opposition is a distinction between man/woman, masculine/feminine. She argues that language reveals what she calls 'patriarchal binary thought,' which might be defined as seeing the world in terms of polar opposites, one of which is considered superior to the other. Then, she presents the following list: "*Activity/passivity, Sun/Moon, Culture/Nature, Day/Night, Father/Mother, Head/Heart, Intelligible/Sensitive, Logos/Pathos.*" Oppositions like these organise the way we think, and for each opposition Cixous asks, "*Where is she?*" ("Sorties" 264). That is, which side of each opposition is assumed to define some aspect of the female?

For Cixous, the answer is that the inferior term is always associated with the femininity, while the term that occupies the privileged position is associated with masculinity. According to patriarchal thinking, the woman occupies the right side of each of these oppositions, the side that patriarchy considers inferior: heart, mother, nature, night, moon, sensitive and passivity. While it is assumed that the male is defined by the left side of each opposition, the side that patriarchy considers superior: head, father, culture, day, sun, intelligible, and activity. "*Traditionally,*" Cixous notes, "*the question of sexual difference is treated by coupling it with the opposition activity/passivity*" ("Sorties" 265). In other words, patriarchal thinking believes that women are born to be passive while men are born to be active because it is natural for the sexes to be different in this way. Thus, if a woman is not passive, she is not really a woman. It follows that women are naturally submissive to men, that men are natural leaders, and so forth.

Third, the prevailing concepts of gender—of the traits that are conceived to constitute what is masculine and what is feminine in identity and behavior—are largely, if not entirely, cultural constructs that were generated by the pervasive patriarchal biases of our civilisation.

As Beauvoir put it, "*One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman* [. . .] *It is civilization as a whole that produces this creature* [. . .] *which is described as feminine*" (88). While biology determines our sex (male or female), culture determines our gender (masculine or feminine). The word 'gender' refers not to our anatomy but to our behavior as socially programmed men and women. In fact, all the traits we associate with masculine as active, dominating, adventurous, rational, creative, and feminine as passive, acquiescent, timid, emotional, and conventional are learned, not inborn.

Fourth, not least among the factors inhibiting woman's social and economic freedom is the perpetuation of certain obstinate myths of woman, in the realms of art and literature as well as in daily life. Of all these myths, the one most deeply anchored in masculine hearts is that of the feminine 'mystery.' This myth allows man the luxury of legitimately not understanding woman, and, above all, it enables man to remain alone by living in the company of an enigma. The male perspective is elevated into an absolute and normal perspective, and from that vantage point, woman appears essentially mysterious. In short, what the mythical treatment of woman does is to pose woman as "*the absolute Other, without reciprocity, denying against all experience that she is a subject, a fellow human being*" (Beauvoir 238). The female appears as the "*privileged Other, through whom the subject fulfills himself: one of the measures of man, his counterbalance, his salvation, his adventure, his happiness*" (Beauvoir 233).

Finally, repression is, however, gender-blind and represses males as much as it represses females. Hence, feminists are also very aware of the ways in which patriarchal gender roles are destructive for men as well as for women. For example, because traditional gender roles dictate that men are supposed to be strong (physically powerful and emotionally stoic), they are not supposed to cry because crying is considered a sign of weakness, a sign that one has been overpowered by one's emotions. For similar reasons, it is considered unmanly for men to show fear or pain or to express their sympathy for other men. Expressing empathy and concern for other men is especially taboo because patriarchy assumes that only the most mute, stoic or boisterous forms of male bonding are free of homosexual overtones (Habib 686). In addition, men are not permitted to fail at anything they try because failure in any domain implies failure in one's manhood. For Cixous, this never-ending privileging of the masculine, which results from what she calls "*the solidarity of logocentrism and phallo-centrism*", damages us all, females and males alike, because it curbs the imagination and is

therefore oppressive in general. "[T]*here is no invention possible,*" Cixous argues, "*whether it be philosophical or poetic, without the presence in the inventing subject of an abundance of the other, of the diverse*" ("Sorties" 269).

2. Feminism and Literature

Feminist approaches to literature have taken two main forms: the recovery of writing by women, including many texts that were lost or neglected; and the study of the image of woman in literature and culture. The American feminist critic Elaine Showalter puts it as follows: "*Its* [feminism's] *subjects include images and stereotypes of women in literature, the omissions of and misconceptions about women in criticism, and the fissures in maleconstructed literary history*" ("Towards a Feminist Poetics" 128). It is often held, in addition, that the traditional aesthetic categories and criteria for analysing and appraising literary works, although represented in standard critical theory as objective, disinterested, and universal, are in fact infused with masculine assumptions, interests, and ways of reasoning, so that the critical treatments, of literary works have in fact been tacitly but thoroughly gender-biased. Cixous emphasises that writing has sustained the opposition between male and female. Woman has been defined in language, as a signifier, defined in opposition to man: "*nearly the entire history of writing is confounded with the history of reason* [. . .] *it has been one with the phallocentric tradition*" ("The Laugh of the Medusa" 249).

Feminism attacks male notions of value in literature by offering critiques of male authors and representations of men in literature. The aforementioned patriarchal, 'masculinist,' or 'androcentric' ideology pervades those writings, which have been traditionally considered great literature, and which until recently have been written mainly by men for men. It questions the long-standing, dominant, male, phallocentric ideologies (which add up to a kind of male conspiracy), patriarchal attitudes and male interpretations in literature and critical evaluation of literature. Feminist critics demonstrate how often literary representations of women repeat familiar cultural stereotypes. Such stereotypes include the woman as an immoral and dangerous seductress, as eternally dissatisfied shrew, as cute but essentially helpless, as unworldly, self-sacrificing angel, and so on. Literature, says Beauvoir, reflects the "*great collective myths*" (233) of woman: "*woman as flesh,*" adds Rafey Habib, "*as first womb then lover to the male; woman as the incarnation of nature and the door to the supernatural; woman as poetry, as the mediatrix between this world and the beyond*" (689). De Beauvoir's point is that, no matter how exalted or debased woman is in literary works, she

fulfills the role of otherness, being always an integral aspect of man's self-definition, of the fulfillment of his being, rather than enjoying true autonomy.

Typically, the most highly regarded literary works focus on male protagonists—Oedipus, Ulysses, Hamlet, Tom Jones, Faust, the Three Musketeers, Captain Ahab, Huck Finn, Leopold Bloom—who embody masculine traits and ways of feeling and pursue masculine interests in masculine fields of action. To these males, the female characters, when they play a role, are marginal and subordinate, and are represented either as complementary to or in opposition to masculine desires and enterprises (Habib 690). Such works, lacking autonomous female role models, and implicitly addressed to male readers, either leave the woman reader an alien outsider or else solicit her to identify against herself by taking up the position of the male subject and so assuming male values and ways of perceiving, feeling, and acting. However, Beauvoir notes, some writers view woman not merely as object but as a subject in her own right. They reject "*the mystifications of the serious, as* [they] *reject the false poetry of the myths. Human reality suffices* [them]. *Woman, according to* [them]*, is simply a human being*" (233).

Because feminist issues range so widely across cultural, social, political, and psychological categories, feminist literary criticism is wide ranging, too. Whatever kind of analysis is undertaken, however, the ultimate goal of feminist criticism is to increase our understanding of women's experience, both in the past and present, and promote our appreciation of women's value in the world. Therefore, I think it useful to examine first the ways in which literary texts reinforce patriarchy because the ability to see when and how patriarchal ideology operates is crucial to our ability to resist it in our own lives. Second, it is also important to be able to recognise when a literary work depicts patriarchal ideology in order to criticise it or invite us to criticise it. Finally, many literary works have a conflicted response to patriarchal ideology. On the one hand, the text undermines patriarchy's belief in female weakness through its portrayal of women's strength. On the other hand, the novel reinforces patriarchal ideology through its admiration of the way in which female characters conform to traditional gender roles.

All in all, a feminist critic asks questions of the following kind. How are women portrayed? How do these portrayals relate to the gender issues of the period in which the novel was written or is set? What sort of roles do female characters play? With what sort of themes are they associated? What are the implicit presuppositions of a given text with regard

to its female characters? What does the work reveal about the operations (economically, politically, socially, or psychologically) of patriarchy? In other words, does the work reinforce or undermine patriarchal ideology? In the first case, we might say that the text has a patriarchal agenda. In the second case, we might say that the text has a feminist agenda. Texts that seem to reinforce and undermine patriarchal ideology might be said to be ideologically conflicted.

3. Third World Women and Western Feminist Thought

Aware of the fact that patriarchy operates differently in different countries—there are significant differences between patriarchy in the North, the West, or the Coloniser and patriarchy in the South, the East, or the Colonised—some feminists have been especially helpful in revealing the political and theoretical limitations inherent in white mainstream feminists' neglect of cultural experience different from their own. A new interpretation by Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak stakes out new political and theoretical terrain. Implicit in her analysis is the view that, first, a feminism so rooted in the philosophical ground of capitalism and empire cannot be progressive, and second, Third World woman cannot be accommodated in the First World discourse because she has been doubly displaced.

Spivak's literary criticism has greatly informed and influenced the practice of reading literary texts in relation to the history of colonialism. Noting that "[t]*he role of literature in the production of cultural representation should not be ignored*" ("Three Women's Texts" 269), Spivak examines throughout her different essays how the civilising mission of imperialism was written and disseminated in and through several classic texts from the English literary tradition, including Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), Charlotte Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847) and Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). Like the theorists of postcolonial criticism, mainly Edward Said and Homi Bhabha, Spivak repeatedly emphasises that the production and reception of nineteenth-century English literature was bound up with the history of imperialism. In "Three Women's Texts and a Critique of Imperialism", Spivak argues that literature provides a cultural representation of England as civilised and progressive: an idea which serves to justify the economic and political project of imperialism. She tells us: "*It should not be possible to read nineteenth-century British literature without remembering that imperialism, understood as England's social mission, was a crucial part of the cultural representation of England to the English.*" For her, because this "*obvious 'fact' continues to be disregarded in the reading of nineteenth-century British literature* [. . .]*, the*

imperialist project—displaced and dispersed into more modern forms—continues successfully" ("Three women's texts" 269).

Spivak's literary criticism has worked to criticise this ideological function of English literature in the colonial context, which provided an insidious effective way of executing the civilising mission of imperialism. Literature has been instrumental in the construction and dissemination of colonialism as a ruling idea. In *Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India*, Gauri Viswanathan argues that "*the discipline of English came into its own in the age of colonialism*" and that "*no serious account of its growth and development can afford to ignore the imperial mission of educating and civilizing colonial subjects in the literature and thought of England*" (2). In this respect, Spivak's work has contributed much to the study of literature as a colonial discourse. Nevertheless, Spivak emphasises the importance of literary and activist writing to articulate the unwritten histories of tribal, subaltern women and to begin to imagine an alternative to contemporary social, political and economic oppression.

Another important and complex aspect of Spivak's thought is her ongoing attempt to find a critical vocabulary that is appropriate to describe the experiences and histories of particular individuals and social groups, who have been historically dispossessed and exploited by European colonialism. She draws our attention to that large majority of the colonised that has left no mark upon history because it could not, or was not allowed to, make itself heard. Millions and millions have come and gone under the colonial dispensation without leaving a trace: men and women alike. Spivak's focus is on the female subaltern, a very large—and of course differentiated—category among the colonised that, she argues, has traditionally been doubly marginalised: "*If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow*" ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 280). Since colonised women went unheard within their own patriarchal culture, they were doubly unheard under a colonial regime. The notion of 'double colonisation,' i.e., "*that women in formerly colonized societies were doubly colonized by both imperial and patriarchal ideologies*"—became a catch-phrase of postcolonial and feminist discourses in the 1980s (Ashcroft, Griffiths, et al 250).

In her essay "Can the Subaltern Speak?," Spivak examines the nineteenth-century controversy between the colonised Indians and their British colonisers. Spivak concludes that neither party allowed women to speak. The British texts construct a position for the woman in

which she is made to represent Western individualism and, by implication, a superior Western civilisation that emphasises modern freedom. The Indian ones present her as choosing for duty and tradition, they back the cultural norms that prevent women from participation in a wide range of activities said to be the preserve of men. Spivak's discussion of widow self-immolation or 'sati'[1] in "Can the Subaltern Speak?" explains how the third world women themselves remain unheard, although both parties claim that they have them on their side.

In the terms of ancient Hindu religious texts, Spivak emphasises that the practice of widow self-immolation is coded as an exceptional sacred practice, or pilgrimage, rather than an act of suicide—which is strictly forbidden in the terms of Hindu religious law. As Spivak goes on to assert, however, "[r]*oom is made*" for the practice of widow sacrifice as an exceptional sacred practice, where the widow physically repeats her husband's death in a sacred place. Yet, this exception to the strict rules of 'sati' engenders a patriarchal structure of domination. As Spivak argues, "*the proper place for the woman to annul the proper name of suicide through the destruction of her proper self*" is "*on a dead spouse's pyre*" ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 300). She emphasises that the practice of widow self-immolation is not prescribed or enforced by Hindu religious codes, but is a signifier of the woman's conduct as a good wife.

In the terms of British colonial legislation in India, the practice of 'sati' epitomised the abhorrent and inhuman characteristics of Hindu society. By representing 'sati' as a barbaric practice, the British were, thus, able to justify imperialism as a civilising mission, in which white British colonial administrators believed that they were rescuing Indian women from the reprehensible practices of a traditional Hindu patriarchal society. Indeed, the practice of 'sati' was outlawed by the British colonial government in 1829. Spivak argues that the British colonial representation of widow self-immolation overlooks the voice and agency of Hindu women. Such a claim repeats the silencing of the Hindu woman's voice, which is already displaced on to her dead husband's funeral pyre in the traditional Hindu religious codes. Rather than defending the woman's agency, however, the British colonial administration used the body of the widow as an ideological battleground for colonial power. In doing so, the British were able to justify colonialism, or the systematic exploitation and appropriation of territory, as a civilising mission. In both the Hindu and British discussions of widow sacrifice,

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[1] The Hindu custom of a woman being burnt alive in the same fire as that in which her dead husband's body is burnt.

the voice and political agency of the woman is thoroughly repressed from official historical discourse and political representation. As Spivak suggests, the complex construction of the legally displaced female subject within Hindu religious codes and the British constitution of the widow as a passive victim of patriarchal violence each ignore the social and political agency of the subaltern woman. It is in this context that Spivak argues that "*there is no space from which the sexed subaltern can speak*" ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 307). In the colonial era, both the determinations of Hindu law and the prohibition of 'sati' by the British represent a male, patriarchal confluence of interests.

Spivak further concludes that "*the subaltern cannot speak*" because the voice and agency of subaltern women are so embedded in Hindu patriarchal codes of moral conduct and the British colonial representation of subaltern women as victims of a barbaric Hindu culture that they are impossible to recover ("Can the Subaltern Speak?" 308). As Spivak states in an interview, "*'the subaltern cannot speak' means that even when the subaltern makes an effort to the death to speak, she is not able to be heard*" (*The Spivak Reader* 292). This is not to suggest that particular disempowered groups cannot speak, but that their speech acts are not heard or recognised within dominant political systems of representation.

Therefore, Spivak has shifted the focus of the feminist debate from a concern with sexual difference between men and women to a focus on cultural differences between women in the 'Third World' and women in the 'First World'. By doing so, Spivak expands and complicates the critical terms and political objectives of feminism in a way that is more sensitive to questions of difference. She identifies a tendency in western feminist thought to describe the experiences of 'Third World women' in the terms of western female subject constitution. Such an approach clearly ignores some very important differences in culture, history, language and social class. She, thus, challenges the universal claims of western feminism to speak for, and to adequately represent the histories and lives of all women, regardless of differences in class, religion, culture, language or nationality. More specifically, Spivak has argued that the everyday lives of many 'Third World' women are so complex and unsystematic that they cannot be known or represented in any straightforward way by the vocabularies of western critical theory. Spivak highlights the ethical risks at stake when privileged western intellectuals make political claims on behalf of oppressed groups. These risks include the danger that the voices, lives and struggles of 'Third World' women will be silenced and contained within the technical vocabulary of western critical theory. According

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to Stephen Morton, Spivak "*has questioned the 'lie' of a global sisterhood between 'First World' and 'Third World' women, pointing instead to the complicity of western feminism and imperialism*" (8).

Spivak means that the enlightened morality of the western female individual in the domestic sphere simultaneously defined the non-western woman as a "*not-yet-human Other*". Therefore, the Western feminist texts "*could be a problem, merely reproducing the drive for knowledge of 'West' about 'East' *" (*In Other Words* 135). This othering of the nonwestern woman has contributed to the larger justification of British imperialism as a social mission because it implicitly defines British cultural values as more enlightened and civilised than those of the colonial world. As Benita Parry points out, the formation of gendered identity in the nineteenth century is re-worked by colonial discourse, so that the white European female individual is defined as socially and culturally superior to the non-western woman:

> *because the construction of an English cultural identity was inseparable from Othering the native as its object, the articulation of the female subject within the emerging norm of feminist) individualism during the age of imperialism, necessarily excluded the native female, who was positioned on the boundary between human and animal as the object of imperialism's social-mission or soul-making.* ("Current Theories of Colonial Discourse" 38-9)

Finally, the benevolent, radical western feminist intellectual can paradoxically silence the subaltern by claiming to represent and speak for their experience, in the same way that the benevolent colonialist silenced the voice of the widow, who chooses to die on her husband's funeral pyre. The benevolent impulse to represent subaltern groups effectively appropriates the voice of the subaltern and thereby silences them. As Spivak argues, the history of western feminism is implicated in the larger history of European colonialism. As a consequence, contemporary western feminism is in danger of repeating the colonial attitudes of nineteenth-century bourgeois female individualism towards 'Third World' women. To counter this problem, Spivak repeatedly emphasises the following points: the crucial need to challenge the universal humanist assumption, prevalent in some western feminist thought, that all women's lives and histories are the same; the importance of rethinking feminist thought from the perspective of different non-western women's lives and histories; the ongoing need to guard against colonial thinking in contemporary feminist scholarship; and finally the importance of

a global political awareness of the local economic, political, social and cultural conditions that structure women's oppression in different parts of the world.

Conclusion

The three bodies of thought discussed above are closely interrelated. Their interrelatedness stems from different angles; their different branches and premises are either rejections of each other or compulsory to each other. As a point of fact, the use of psychoanalysis, as a feminist theoretical tool, is a precarious enterprise in classical psychoanalytic theory describing female psychosexual development. The concept of penis envy, developed by Freud in his account of the female version of the castration complex, came to represent for many feminists the misogynist bias of psychoanalytic theory, a sufficient ground for rejecting psychoanalysis as a feminist theoretical tool. However, Gayle Rubin moved beyond this initial rejection of psychoanalysis to explore its feminist potential. He argued that the feminist critique of psychoanalysis is justified to the extent that Freudian theory is a rationalisation of women's subordination, but, Rubin proposed, this is not the only legitimate way to understand Freud's theory. It can also be read as "*a description of how phallic culture domesticates women, and the effects in women of their domestication*" (Rubin 197-8).

Psychoanalysis can, therefore, be used as a description of processes that contribute to women's oppression. Furthermore, it follows that Feminist movement, which originates and operates within patriarchal civilisation, must be initially discussed in terms of the actual status of women in the male dominated civilisation. Though women are not a class in the Marxian sense, the male-female relationship cuts across class lines, and the immediate needs and potentialities of women are definitely class-conditioned to a high degree. Therefore, women should be discussed as a general category versus men, namely the long historical process in which the social, mental and even physiological characteristics of women developed as different from and contrasting with those of men. So, Marxist assumptions of ideology, classes, and classes struggle are of paramount importance to understand feminist thought or feminist tools to find about such discourses in literary texts. At the same time, Marxism and Psychoanalysis can, by no means, be detached from each other. Psychoanalysts, like Lacan, drew on Marxists to understand the human psyche while Marxists, like Macherey, drew on Psychoanalysts to fathom the social structures operating in one society as reflected in literary texts.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE FIN THE SIÈCLE MALAISE AND FAILURE

Introduction

A Passage to India and *Heart of Darkness* are the most controversial of Forster's and Conrad's novels. The majority of critics regard them as their finest works, yet no consensus has emerged about their meanings, partly because the books have proven highly responsive to so many approaches. Despite literary criticism's changing focal points over the decades, it has always kept *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness* firmly in their sights. Both Forster's and Conrad's novels offer fertile ground for the broadest range of analytical and theoretical perspectives. This, in turn, is precisely because of the narrative's simultaneous breadth of reference and radical indeterminacy. Both novels deal in many ways with the implications of failure, including the failure of the British Raj, of friendship, of attempts to achieve 'connection' in general; and they are also an exploration of their own failure, of the impossibility of escaping the curse of the eclectic. But, as Mrs Moore says, "*there are so many kinds of failure*" (*API* 42). The attempt in this chapter is to highlight those areas where both novels are echoing the fin the siècle mood. A period, due to many factors, characterised more by skepticism, chaos and rupture rather than by assertiveness, harmony and connection.

I. Failure of the 'Idea that Redeems'

The central question of *A Passage to India*—in addition to What really happened in the caves?—which is broached in its first pages, is: Can an Englishman and an Indian be friends? (*API* 5). It takes the whole long complex novel to come to the mournful conclusion: 'Not yet'. The possibility of such a friendship, Forster thought, could only be entertained when Indians were citizens of their own independent nation, a view emotively expressed in the novel's last page by Aziz: "*Aziz* [. . .] *cried: 'Down with the English anyhow. That's certain. Clear out, you fellows, double quick, I say. We may hate one another, but we hate you most* [. . .] *We shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then'—he rode against [Fielding] furiously—'and then* [. . .] *you and I shall be friends*'" (*API* 287-8).

All the relationships, in the novel, between the English and the Indians and also between the English themselves, suffer from a frustration and failure, which are predominantly connected with the historical dimension of the novel–British rule in India. The

ending is historical here as two men of different races, the liberal Mr Fielding and the Muslim doctor Aziz, cannot be friends until India becomes independent. Indeed, Forster could not write outside certain lines that were firmly drawn. There is not even the suggestion of an idea of a more intimate long-term relationship between an Indian and an Englishman. James McConkey writes that "*India is more than a foreign land which the English may leave at their wish: it is the contemporary condition, the separation between all mankind and all earth*" (82). India is a very special case, important to Forster precisely because the general problem is there met in an unusually acute form.

One of the ways in which one can chart how far Forster has travelled down this path is to compare *A Passage to India* with the poem, which provides the title of the novel: Walt Whitman's "Passage to India" written in 1871. Whitman's poem, commemorating the opening of the Suez Canal, celebrates connection and conciliation:

> *Passage to India!*
> *Lo, soul, seest thou not God's purpose from the first?*
> *The earth to be spann'd, connected by network,*
> *The races, neighbors, to marry and be given in marriage,*
> *The oceans to be cross'd, the distant brought near,*
> *The lands to be welded together.* (Whitman 25)

Forster's novel stands in deeply ironic relationship to this, for *A Passage to India* charts instead the inability of people to 'connect' racially and, thus, to achieve the cosmic 'neighbourliness' Whitman envisages. It also reveals the seemingly insurmountable chasms, which confound the quest for the spiritual solace described later in the poem:

> *Then not your deeds only O voyagers, O scientists and inventors, shall*
> *be justified,*
> *All these hearts as of fretted children shall be sooth'd,*
> *All affection shall be fully responded to, the secret shall be told,*
> *All these separations and gaps shall be taken up and hook'd and*
> *link'd together,*
> *The whole earth, this cold, impassive, voiceless earth, shall be*
> *completely justified . . . .* (Whitman 30)

However, in *A Passage to India* The 'secret' is decidedly not 'told'; responding to affection is shown to create problems of its own; the separations and gaps proliferate; the earth, rather than being 'justified', produces the Marabar Caves, which are beyond justification, beyond language, and beyond conciliation. Between Whitman's poem and

Forster's novel lies a shift in perception of gargantuan proportions. The use of the poem as a subtext may refer nostalgically to dreams of connection which can no longer prevail; the novel, the fullest expression of Forster's modernism, considers what has to be countenanced when nostalgia, however attractive, will not suffice. Vasant A. Shahane points out the difference between Forster's and Whitman's vision. He says,

> *Whereas Walt Whitman seeks a synthesis between the scientific achievements of civilization (such as the Suez Canal or American railroads) and man's religious and spiritual quest symbolized by a passage to India and more than India, E. M. Forster as a novelist seeks to blend human reality with transcendent reality, man's experience in the Indian setting with his quest for ultimate truth.* (116)

Another Indian critic, G. Nageswara Rao makes this comment: "*Only when Forster depicts man's alienation and his struggle to regain his oneness with the universe do we find the universality of particular themes*" (qtd. in Shahane 26). Thus, even after Adela has withdrawn her charge against Aziz and even when Fielding and Aziz meet months later not in British India, but significantly as Lord David Cecil points out "*in a native state where Indian and English are not pitted one against the other*" (185), it is impossible for them to 'connect'. They discuss the future of India, and Aziz proudly proclaims that she will someday be a nation, and that when the English have been driven out, he and Fielding can be friends:

> *'Why can't we be friends now?' said the other, holding him affectionately. 'It's what I want. It's what you want.' 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; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau beneath: they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, 'No, not yet' and the sky said, 'No, not there'.* (*API* 288)

This passage clinches the point that Forster has throughout the novel been concerned to make. Personal relationships are nearly impossible between Indians and English: "*A pause in the wrong place, an intonation misunderstood, and a whole conversation went awry*" (*API* 243). In India, then, mere good intentions are not enough, and the English are not altogether to blame for the failure to connect. They are officials; and as Forster has expressly put it in *Abinger Harvest*, "*as soon as one is enclosed in a capacity one's last chance of being attractive to the Oriental disappears*" (277). Or, in the words of *A Passage to India* itself,

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"where there is officialism every human relationship suffers" (187); and *"every human act in the East is tainted with officialism"* (167).

The failure to 'conciliate' also implies a troubled awareness of the contingency of truth claims and the dilemmas, which ensue when they prove to be incompatible:

> *Especially in A Passage to India* [. . .] *Forster experiments with narrative techniques to educate the reader about what has come to be seen in contemporary theory as a central dilemma of political life: How can one commit oneself to the realization of particular values and beliefs while maintaining an ironic awareness of their contingency and contestability, their incommensurability with other equally plausible ways of thinking?* (Armstrong 365).

Given that, as Mrs Moore says, *"everyone fails"* (*API* 42), a failure at the heart of the novel is Adela's inability to live up to her liberal principles in the face of the prejudice against Indians in which she has been immersed, just as it is Fielding's failure, in the same circumstances, to succeed in being Aziz's friend. In *A Passage to India*, humankind seems *"to have reached not maturity but exhaustion"* (Rosecrance 237). This appears, significantly, between the two versions of 'chaos' depicted in the novel—the Marabar Caves and their denial of value, and the Gokul Ashtami festival, which Forster describes as *"represent*[ing] *the same thing as the scene in the cave, 'turned inside out'* " (qtd. in Wilde 151). The one is a chaos which reduces everything to nothing, the other a fructifying chaos that strives to attain the unity of everything. In the 'Mosque' section, exclusion was heavily satirised; in the 'Temple' section, by contrast, there is the suggestion that *"total inclusion is perhaps only another name for chaos"* (Wilde 131).

The panic forces in the Marabar have different effects on Mrs Moore and Adela. For Mrs Moore, the experience reinforces a feeling of humanity's lack of importance to the universe or to nature, just as the British lack importance for the majority of Indians: *"It matters so little to the majority of living beings what the minority, that calls itself human, desires or decides"* (*API* 105). The caves, thus, function as a metonym, implicitly for colonial alienation and explicitly for the anti-sublime infinite: like the Kawa Dol mirroring *"its own darkness in every direction infinitely"* (*API* 111), they are presented as *"a claustrophobic microcosm of that which the human mind cannot encompass"* (Jameson, "Modernism and Imperialism" 57). The spiritual weight of the novel, that which rests on the Mrs Moore–Godbole axis, therefore, appears to pivot on the message and meanings of the cave, but for

Adela it is the physical aspect to her experience that seems most important. While Mrs Moore finds a devastating echo of her own fears over her mortality and significance, Adela is met by reflections of her corporeal and marital fears. Forster's description of the caves runs thus:

> *There is little to see, and no eye to see it, until the visitor arrives for his five minutes, and strikes a match. Immediately another flame rises in the depths of the rock and moves towards the surface like an imprisoned spirit; the walls of the circular chamber have been most marvellously polished. The two flames approach and strive to unite, but cannot, because one of them breathes air, the other stone. A mirror inlaid with lovely colours divides the lovers.* (*API* 110)

The story of the caves echoes not only the inability of Aziz and Fielding to join together at the end of the novel, but also the frustrated union of Ronny and Adela. This presupposes the failure to build a bridge between North and South, and suggests the impossibility of any sort of fruitful contact between the two poles or even between the British themselves.

In this sense, Forster is echoing Conrad's view of the modern temper in *Heart of Darkness* which emphasises the corruption of self, the absence of social morality, the manipulation of people for purely egoistic ends, i.e., the failure to remain faithful to man and society, in the absence of "*the policeman, in the holy terror of scandal and gallows and lunatic asylums* [. . .] *without a policeman—by the way of silence—utter silence, where no warning voice of a kind neighbor can be heard whispering of public opinion*?" (*HD* 70). Kurtz failed in his mission because he lacked moral sense. He had given way to his baser instincts. All his "*burning noble words*" (*HD* 72) proved to be a varnish that cracked under the fire of the wilderness. The foundation of the so-called civilising mission is hollow. It shows the impossibility for man to remain unstained by evil when let loose in the wilderness. Despite all his achievements, the white man has failed and his failure symbolises the failure of the so-called superior race.

The disparity between the discourse of colonialism and its actuality, as expressed in *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*, shows, then, that Conrad and Forster were sceptic about the imperial enterprise. Conrad wrote his book during the heyday of Victorian Imperialism; a period characterised by "*a turn –of – the –century preoccupations with the new global imperialism*" (White 187). In his re-consideration of Western expansionism in Africa, Joseph Conrad exposes through *Heart of Darkness* another view of colonialism; he sets his

story in a climate of doubt and vagueness and leaves the reader with no definite conclusion. Unlike Kipling, who readily acquiesces to the idea of the British Empire, Conrad shows colonialism as both brutal and brutalising, alienating natives and settlers alike. Thus, he demythologises current beliefs about Western Imperialism without however giving alternative views. He refutes their disastrous effects on humanity. Benita Parry, arguing that Conrad's attitude towards Empire reveals his own anxiety and contributes to a revaluation of imperialism, writes:

> *If Conrad did not see imperialism steadily, he did, in fictions that dramatize the war of the hemispheres within a structurally joined and spiritually divided universe, see it whole, thereby inviting readers to scrutinize the ethical foundations to the civilization of expansionist capitalism and engaging them in a critical view of imperialism's urge to conquer the earth.* (*Conrad and Imperialism* 8)

Kurtz stands for the Great Lie of civilisation in Conrad's novel. The depiction of Western agents and Congo hangers as murderous people is an important cultural perception in the two novels. Forster like Conrad, shows egoism in the individual and in society as a perverse historical force. Kurtz's final utterance: "*the horror! The horror!*" (*HD* 100) strikes a great note at a life wholly directed by greed and wild ambition. Both Forster and Conrad reveal that materialism and profit have become the virtues of all virtues. The only justification behind the crimes that are committed seems to be an 'idea that redeems'. Thus, behind every conquest, there is a purpose:

> *The conquest of the earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much. What redeems it is the idea only. An idea at the back of it; not a sentimental pretence but an idea; and an unselfish belief in the idea—something you can step up, and bow down before, and offer a sacrifice to. . . .* (*HD* 10)

However in *Heart of Darkness*, despite the aura of success and greatness that surrounds Kurtz, Marlow discovers that such 'idea,' as it is, is lacking at the station, in the Congo. There is yet much to redeem in modern civilisation. When Marlow encounters the dying natives, he is horrified: "*Black shapes crouched, lay, sat between the trees leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the light, in all the attitudes of pain,*

abandonment and despair [. . .] *they were dying slowly* [. . .] *they were nothing earthly nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation*" (*HD* 24).

One of the many ways in which Forster and Conrad signal the Europeans failed pretensions and also the absence of their goodwill is through their conceited self-image. Thus, they are repeatedly portrayed posing as gods, as when Mrs Moore accuses Ronny of just this "*Your sentiments are those of a god*" (41) or when Mr Turton the Collector "*was now revealed like a god in a shrine*" (*API* 144) and "*the Turtons were little gods*" (22). Like Kurtz, who is worshipped as a God by the black natives so much so that when he is carried onto the steamer, his subjects come down the river to see their deity. Only then does Marlow realise that there is no such idea behind the atrocities of Western civilisation. They are just blinded men like the woman in Kurtz's painting (*HD* 36), carrying the "*sword* [before] *the torch*" (*HD* 7), advancing in the darkness.

Repeatedly, images prove to be paradoxical. The customary associations of white and black, of light and dark, are variously exploited and subverted. The city is 'sepulchral'(35); London is associated with 'brooding gloom' (*HD* 5); and the very title of the tale refers not only to the heart of 'darkest Africa' but also to Kurtz's corruption, to benighted London, and to innumerable kinds of darkness and obscurity, physical, moral, and ontological (Watts 21). For Terry Eagleton, Conrad's art is an art of ideological contradiction resulting in stalemate: "*Conrad* [. . . didn't] *believe in the cultural superiority of the colonialist nations* [. . .] *The 'message' of Heart of Darkness is that Western civilisation is at base* [. . .] *barbarous*" (*Criticism and Ideology* 135).

Furthermore, Marlow emphasises the similarity between the Roman conquerors and the Western Europeans: greed, violence, and ruthlessness have always existed and that 'redeeming idea' has been evoked in Virgile's epic poem *The Aeneid*. It is the heroic purpose which justifies the plunder and cruelty of the Romans as it justifies modern man's exploitation and colonisation:

> *'I've seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but, by all the stars! these were strong, lusty, red-eyed devils, that swayed and drove men—men, I tell you. But as I stood on this hillside, I foresaw that in the blinding sunshine of that land I would become acquainted with a flabby, pretending, weak-eyed devil of a rapacious and pitiless folly.'* (*HD* 23)

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The fragility of civilisation and its liability to collapse are on full display at the Central Station. The steamer, Marlow has come to command, has been foolishly wrecked, and it seems impossible to obtain the rivets needed for its repair. The collapse of civilised values is also most clearly evident, perhaps, in the station's manager. He has achieved his position of authority despite the fact that he has "*no learning, no intelligence,*" (*HD* 31) no initiative, and no organisational ability, as "*the deplorable state of the station*" testifies (31). What he has is "*triumphant health in the general rout of constitutions*" (31). While those around him sicken and die, he is never ill. His power derives from his animal health and his amorality, from the fact that he is one of 'the hollow men'. As various tropical diseases lay low his agents, he observes that "*men who come out here should have no entrails*" (31). He inspires not respect but unease: "*He was great by this little thing that it was impossible to tell what could control such a man. He never gave that secret away. Perhaps there was nothing within him. Such a suspicion made one pause—for out there there were no external checks*" (31).

The closing scenes of both novels emphasise the vulnerability of the imperialistic project. When Marlow returns to Brussels, the city is depicted in sepulchral terms (*HD* 102). He scorns the inhabitants who "*hurry [. . .] through the city to filch a little money from each other*" (*HD* 102). They are 'hollow,' 'bogus' people living in a dead city. And when the directors want to get back the documents Kurtz has left, Marlow replies that: "*Mr Kurtz's knowledge however extensive, did not bear upon the problems of commerce and administration. He invoked the name of science*" (*HD* 103). The black shadow of Kurtz seems to fall not only on the city but on the whole world as well. It is a demonic darkness that shrouds even the Intended's house. It is darkness generated by finance capital and it has contaminated all of Europe like a plague. According to Terry Collits:

> *Arguably the first internationalist novelist, Conrad saw the old European colonialism as dying. But far from feeling his present to be the dawn of a new world order, his diagnosis of the Zeitgeist—before, during, and after the Great War—corresponded roughly with the description of the crowd gathered at Schomberg's in Surabaya, as "the age in which we are camped like bewildered travellers in a garish, unrestful hotel"* (139)

This is the attitude inherited in *A Passage to India*, in the aftermath of Aziz's trial. The hope of a reformed, or chastened Raj, seems irrevocably to be lost, and what follows is a very powerful instance of a perception of the 'vulnerability' of Europe. According to Peter Childs,

Forster was a liberal humanist, who believed in personal relationships, and a writer who was principally concerned with "*the restrictions placed on personal freedom by English sensibilities*" (197). When Forster began the book in 1913, it was as a further exploration of sympathy and goodwill—a novel about connection between East and West—but it became much bleaker in the writing as the war and Forster's own periodic depressions intervened. Instead of representing liberalism's power for consensus and compromise, the finished manuscript came "*to signify liberal impotence*" (Medalie 27). After his second trip to India, Forster was both more pessimistic and quicker to impute cynicism, claiming that his experiences at Dewas left him unable to make the emotional appeal that he felt was necessary for him to connect with an Indian, either in person or in imagination.

As he stated in *The Prince's Tale and Other Uncollected Writings*, Forster believed in 1914 that the Raj was capable of being rehabilitated politically; by 1922, he had moved to a position where he felt that the colonisers' refusal to take "*their stand upon a common humanity instead of the pedestal of race*" (*PT* 250), as well as the increasing militancy of the Indians—seen, for instance, in the widespread antipathy to the Prince of Wales's visit in 1922, described as an example of the imposition of "*Imperial pride and the will of a viceroy*" (*PT* 247)—had led to a situation where the hope of a 'democratic empire' (*PT* 250), which he himself had cherished, must now be abandoned. The reforms, which he noted in 1922, had come too late; when he resumed the writing of *A Passage to India*, he was presenting a situation, which he now saw as irredeemable, beyond the reach of reform:

> *The mischief has been done, and though friendships between individuals will continue and courtesies between high officials increase, there is little hope now of spontaneous intercourse between the two races. The Indian has taken up a new attitude. Ten or fifteen years ago he would have welcomed attention, not only because the Englishmen in India had power, but because the etiquette and customs of the West, his inevitable destiny, were new to him and he needed a sympathetic introducer. He has never been introduced to the West in the social sense, as to a possible friend. We have thrown grammars and neckties at him, and smiled when he put them on wrongly – that is all. For a time he suffered, and it was with shame and resentment that he found himself excluded from our clubs. . . . Today he has ceased to suffer. He has learnt to put on neckties the right way, or his own way, or whatever one is supposed to do with a necktie. He has painfully woven, without our assistance, a new social fabric, and, as he*

proceeds with it, he has grown less curious about the texture of ours.
(*PT* 243-4)

Nirad Chaudhari dismissed the novel, saying that "*both the groups of characters in A Passage to India are insignificant and despicable*" (71). Both Aziz and Fielding do have their silly side, but are not so easily dismissed, being complex characters, whose doomed struggle to attain an ultimately impossible friendship is conveyed with sympathy for both. Even the statement "*The Mediterranean is the human norm,*" (*API* 250) while it testifies to certain types of cultural value, is also an admission of failure. It is a provocatively excluding observation; even the voice that satirised exclusion must now find itself culpable of taking up the very same stance as the missionaries: "*We must exclude someone from our gathering, or we shall be left with nothing*" (*API* 30).

The Turn of the century with the growing tension either between European powers or between Europeans and the colonised peoples made it an era of skepticism and wonder about how could be the future of the European civilisation under the current zeitgeist. The First and the Second World War showed how men could be engulfed, diminished, and destroyed by man-made organisations and technology. Conrad and Forster seemed to have anticipated this in their depiction of the ways in which men in Africa and India served, and died for, a remorseless organisation. They both portray men dwarfed by the system that dominates them and by an alien environment. Kurtz, potentially "*a splendid leader of an extreme party*" (*HD* 104), celebrated for his intoxicating eloquence, is the persuasive genius whose grandiose ambitions are reduced to the exclamation "*Exterminate all the brutes!*" (*HD* 72). Here, we also approach the vision Mrs Moore has in the Marabar: "*that state where the horror of the universe and its smallness are both visible at the same time—the twilight of the double vision*" (184). It is a vision in which the inconsequentiality of human life is envisaged, as well as its contingency: "*Everything exists, nothing has value*" (*API* 132). Mrs Moore's quest for God's blessing before her death is met in the Marabar by a seeming indifference, as everything is reduced to the same sound of 'ou-boum' (*API* 131). In this regard, Forster wrote: "*The divine is so confounded with the earthly that anyone or anything is part of God. In this chaos, where shall a man find guidance? What promise does he receive?*" (*PT* 223). While such comments seem to express bafflement, they also suggest the failure of the raj gods, of the European values and their representatives whose indifference to their charges has resulted in smallness amid a vast chaos.

Familiar characteristics of Modernist texts are the sense of absurdity or meaninglessness, of human isolation, and of the problematic nature of communication. T. S. Eliot's "The Hollow Men" takes as its epigraph 'Mistah Kurtz—he dead' and develops the Conradian theme of the absurdity of secular existence. This symbolises the spiritual hollowness of modern civilisation (Eliot 135). Like Marlow, Fielding, Mrs Moore and Adela Quested are standing in the midst of this vast landscape of malevolence and decay. They feel unsatisfied. They feel mutilated if not physically, at least spiritually. All their worldly success is inane and unhelpful. The very choice that they enunciate, after the hope that 'personal relations' could be a mechanism for social transformation, is stark, polarising, and implacable. They are representatives of failure, not of triumph. They speak more of despair than of an overweening Bloomsbury sensibility. In such distressing times, despair may be the most appropriate response.

II. Failure of Representation

Another point to be mentioned in this area of failure is the failure of the novels themselves. Daniel Schwarz characterises Forster aptly when he claims that Forster's plots reflect discontinuity and flux and that his characters are victims of confusions (136). According to him, it was the first anti-colonial novel to admit the inability of Eurocentric values to embrace what Forster considered to be the complex, polyvalent evasive and incomprehensible character of India. The postcolonial critic Edward Said noticed that Forster's approach was diametrically different from Kipling's attitude in his novel *Kim*. While Kim, through empirical and rational means, succeeds in accurately mapping, describing and confidently explaining all the mysteries of India, as to know means to master (*Culture and Imperialism* 156). Forster's characters, by contrast, face permanent frustration as their efforts to understand India end—due to the deficiency of western epistemology—in complete failure. He says: *"I have always felt that the most interesting thing about A Passage to India is Forster's using India to represent material that according to the canons of the novel form cannot in fact be represented—vastness, incomprehensible creeds, secret motions, histories and social forms"* (*Culture and Imperialism* 241).

Therefore, the novel progresses from one that set out to chart various failures as has been suggested in the previous section, to a work that includes within that task the failure and partial success of its own quest. It moves from disappointment in what is to be commented

upon, to disappointment also within the commentary itself. India becomes the site where the techniques of novel writing, as designated by Forster, are subjected to the same intense scrutiny as the other codes or traditions, which are investigated. There is a sense in which India, as subject matter, proves too demanding for even the most ingenious of methods.

The novel demonstrates that once anything is put into prose, particularly if the subject is India, it becomes untrue. And seen in this way, *A Passage to India* marks a point beyond which the novel, given Forster's theories, simply could not be developed. Characters such as Aziz, Adela and Mrs Moore are haunted by the episode at the Caves; beyond that, the entire novel is haunted by the constant presence of failure—its form by the prospect of formlessness and chaos, its very words by the possibility of their collapse into nothingness or the obverse of the meanings they customarily communicate. Just like "*the Brahman Godbole's songs, India is for them a labyrinth of sounds which their western ear cannot distinguish*" (Roy 25). Adela and Heaslop cannot name the birds they see, they do not know what animal crashed into their car and these are only an anticipation of the events in the Marabar caves. The epistemological skepticism, which is part and parcel of the modernist paradigm in general, clearly has some features in this novel. All of Forster's novels are structured around contrasts.

Forster was writing in the era of early modernism. Modernism means experimentation in content and form; it means stream-of-consciousness and fractured chronology. It means using not the language of the past, not the language of formal address but the language you hear. It means that you can decide the novel does not need narrative. Hence, instead of providing a sense of 'cultural heroism', Forster's modernism underscores the extent to which innovation may also be an admission of defeat and failure. Lionel Trilling identified modernism as "*the disenchantment of our culture with culture itself*" (61). Forster was a modernist; he questioned the apparently obvious cultural imperatives.

The fin the siècle period was far from tranquil and neither are Forster's and Conrad's novels. The more we read them, the more we feel their fissures and fractures and sense all manner of ideological pressures at work between their covers. Forster's novels are texts that emphasise "*the cryptic, furtive and singular*" and that accommodate "*subterranean feelings and strange subtexts* [. . .] *the discontinuous and the unpredictable*" (Royle 6).

Perhaps Forster glimpsed the shortcomings of his own fiction in diagnosing the limitations of the English as a people. In his 1926 essay "Notes on the English Character",

Forster comments that the English must act in a world "*of whose richness and subtlety they have no conception. They go forth into it with well-developed bodies, fairly developed minds, and undeveloped hearts* [. . . The Englishman] *is afraid to feel*" (*AH* 4-5). Further, he argues that although "*No national character is complete* [. . . The] *English character is incomplete in a way that is particularly annoying to the foreign observer. It has a bad surface—self-complacent, unsympathetic, and reserved*" (*AH* 13). Muddle, he implies, is the most characteristic condition of the English man or woman, and it is that single concept that echoes through Forster's novel. Tellingly, Forster is impelled by a sense of urgency to make what he calls "*this feeble contribution*" to understanding the English character: "*The nations must understand one another, and quickly* [. . .] *for the shrinkage of the globe is throwing them into one another's arms*" (*AH* 13). This perceptive observation about the tendency of the world informs all of Forster's novels.

A Passage to India, in other words, is closely aligned with modernism's new awareness of epistemological complexities, showing Forster responding in cognate terms to historical factors underlying each. The Marabar Caves lie beyond human understanding, art, or reason. It is like Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* in envisaging another set of horrors supposedly beyond civilisation or understanding; another kind of utter hollowness at the heart of life. Yet, Conrad communicates incertitude and incomprehension differently and more immediately, dramatising the limits and relativity of cognition through a narrator, Marlow, repeatedly concerned with the inadequacies of his own version of events. "*Do you see the story? Do you see anything?*" Marlow asks, concluding with confidence only that "*you see me, whom you know*" (*HD* 39). His conclusion extends beyond his immediate audience, within the novel, to its readers generally—also to readers of modernist literature more widely. Randall Stevenson says that:

> *By habitually interpolating some 'first person singular'—whether narrator or transcribed inner consciousness—between reader and events represented, modernist writers ensure that the relativity of all truth, and the uncertain nature of its construction within individual minds, remain issues inescapably apparent throughout their fiction.* (217)

The modernist writers felt the precipitation of their society towards anarchy, the shattering of values and the imminence of disaster and conveyed them powerfully in their writings. If experience, moreover, had been felt to be very complex, a new art was needed.

Modernist writers then looked for 'new forms,' and 'new languages' to accommodate the preferences of a new age. While the realist writer concentrated on outward reality, the modernist writer strove to escape it for it had become a nightmare. He, thus, focused on inner reality. He explored the individual mind, the subconscious. He moved therefore from the objective to the subjective. In an age of lost beliefs and uncertainties, modernists inevitably turned to the 'individual soul' as the only remaining 'clue to the universe' (D. H. Lawrence 201-2). The urge to 'look within' and place everything in the mind 'rather than in the objet' reflects indeed contemporary thinking, which saw nowhere else to look wholly 'sure' or 'real' beyond the 'individual mind' (D. H. Lawrence 201-2).

The development of this new kind of literature seems to have been triggered off by Joseph Conrad. Critics indeed viewed Joseph Conrad as a transitional figure, a forerunner of modernist initiative. Frederick Jameson in *The Political Unconscious: Narrative as A Socially Symbolic Act* (1981) remarks that: "*Conrad marks* [. . .] *a strategic fault line in the emergence of contemporary narrative* [. . .] *In Conrad, we can sense the emergence* [. . .] *of what will be contemporary Modernism*" (206). Jameson, likewise, sees that the emergence of this new trend entails a new form of narrative as a result of "*a structural breakdown of the older realism*" (206), older realism or the supposition that "*things present themselves as they are*" (Proust 914). For Conrad as for Forster, what is significant and real is what remains hidden and dwells within, not the tangible, visible object. In *Heart of Darkness*, Conrad, very much like Forster, moves his interest from 'the human scene' to the mind. This suggests, as Jameson puts it, an abrupt break with tradition, with 'old realism.'

'Inconceivable,' 'impenetrable,' and 'inscrutable' are Marlow's favorite adjectives in *Heart of Darkness* that fill out the lexicon. The urgency of Marlow's narration on board the *Nellie*—he plunges into it without warning, "*the speech that cannot be silenced*" (*HD* 52)— bespeaks his need to be purged of thoughts he still finds disturbing: "*No, it is impossible; it is impossible to convey the life-sensation of any given epoch of one's existence—that which makes its truth, its meaning—its subtle and penetrating essence. It is impossible. We live, as we dream—alone. . . .*" (*HD* 39). The skeptical implications of this passage reverberate throughout Conrad's novel. Marlow gives voice to a more measured skepticism in his subversion of the frame narrator's naïve celebration of "*the great spirit of the past*" on the Thames (*HD* 6). Skepticism continually threatens to become more radical and inclusive.

Heart of Darkness introduces more complex instances of the skeptical crises that both generate and threaten Marlow's discourse.

Marlow's words demonstrate Conrad's epistemological shortcomings. In Marlow, Conrad dramatises a gradual recognition and acceptance of the limits of human knowledge and, consequently, of what can be represented in Marlow's discourse: *"the emphasis shifts in 'Heart of Darkness' from the idea of a 'reality' beyond language to the limitations within language that were seen as evidence for the existence of such a reality"* (Guetti 3). But the effort to evoke the ineffable by describing what it is not sometimes amounts to more than an acknowledgment that language is an imperfect tool. Marlow's discourse often finds rapture in its inadequacy and consummation in the release into silence: *"Words become gestures, and they gesture toward a presence that resists verbal articulation"* (Brooks 77). While backed against his beached steamer by the garrulous brickmaker, Marlow wonders

> *whether the stillness on the face of the immensity looking at us two were meant as an appeal or as a menace* [. . .] *The moon had spread over everything a thin layer of silver—over the rank grass, over the mud, upon the wall of matted vegetation standing higher than the wall of a temple, over the great river I could see through a sombre gap glittering, glittering, as it flowed broadly by without a murmur. All this was great, expectant, mute.* (*HD* 38)

The oppositions of inner/outer and surface/depth continue throughout the narrative, and Marlow's occasional glimpses beyond the enigmas and opacities of outer or surface reality only intensify the ambiguity about what is concealed: *"I felt how big, how confoundedly big, was that thing that couldn't talk, and perhaps was deaf as well. What was in there?"* (*HD* 38). Though he is intensely aware of an intention hidden within the 'impenetrable forest,' Marlow's efforts at interpreting it are completely frustrated.

Therefore, does Conrad actually have any coherent philosophy or consistent world view to offer in the first place? One of the earliest critics to voice such doubts was E. M. Forster himself. In his essay "The Pride of Mr Conrad," first published in 1921, he claimed that

> *What is so elusive about him is that he is always promising to make some general philosophic statement about the universe, and then refraining with a gruff disclaimer* [. . . Conrad's work] *suggest*[s] *that he is misty in the middle as well as at the edges, that the secret casket*

of his genius contains a vapour rather than a jewel; and that we need not try to write him down philosophically, because there is, in this particular direction, nothing to write. (396-97)

Of the white fog incident of *Heart of Darkness*, H. M. Daleski argues that

> *the difficulties of pushing up the river and down into the unconscious are in part rendered in terms of sight, that artistic imperative of the preface* [. . .] *Just before Kurtz's station is reached, the steamboat is enveloped in "a white fog, very warm and clammy, and more blinding than the night", with the result that the travellers' eyes are 'of no more use' to them than if they 'had been buried miles deep in a heap of cotton wool'.* (52)

For Daleski, then, the white fog obscures sight, which Conrad had argued was his primary artistic goal: "to make you *see*" (Conrad, *Narcissus* xiv; original italics). Both Daleski and Said see the fog's obscuring quality as one of its primary purposes. The fog that appears in the white fog incident in *Heart of Darkness* does obscure—but it does more than merely obscure. In many ways, it actually clarifies certain issues for Marlow and his listeners (and perhaps his readers as well): the fog in fact uncovers—rather than obscures— issues concerning western civilisation and western world view.

The final paragraph of the white fog incident synthesises all that has come before; the narrative reaches a climax in its threat to rationality: "*You should have seen the pilgrims stare! They had no heart to grin, or even to revile me: but I believe they thought me gone mad—with fright, maybe*" (*HD* 62). This reference to madness epitomises all that has preceded because madness is the ultimate form of chaos. Inexplicable, unpredictable, and illogical, it is the paradigm of a world at odds with the western cosmology of Marlow's listeners—but such is the world of *Heart of Darkness*.

In the white fog incident, Marlow establishes a microcosm of human existence and cuts away the moorings that keep his listeners firmly anchored in the concrete, physical world, and by so doing, he continually seeks to displace them from their comfortable environment. But more than this, Marlow removes the veneer of civilisation that his listeners traditionally use to construct order for their existence. And so, whereas his listeners may assume that western civilisation is based upon a solid and absolute foundation, Marlow, instead, presents images of unexpectedness, absurdity, mystery, and chaos that serve to uncover a shifting and relative foundation for their world view (GoGwilt 15-42). These

images are in keeping with Conrad's own world, which Ian Watt describes as "*a panorama of chaos and futility, or cruelty, folly, vulgarity, and waste*" (32). Image after image disorients Marlow and his listeners, forcing them to look at the possibility of a world of disorder and indifference, and although the individual images vary considerably, they work together to point toward such a world (Watt 154). In the end, Marlow will come to see life as "*that mysterious arrangement of merciless logic for a futile purpose*" (*HD* 100). The white fog incident is a precursor to that conclusion.

Another instance of Conrad's use of limited descriptions is when Marlow hesitates about choosing a channel for the final approach to the Inner Station, and finally decides on a choice based on his ignorance of his surroundings. His choice will make him realise that his eyes deceived him, and that what he thought he saw from a distance differed from what it actually was: "'*Now, as far as I did see, I could go to the right or to the left of this* [the shores]. *I didn't know either channel, of course. The banks looked pretty well alike, the depth appeared the same; but as I had been informed the station was on the west side, I naturally headed for the western passage*'" (*HD* 62).

A Passage to India also suggests that language can restrict; it can imprison people and make them define things inadequately. The inability of language to convey the complexity of India has been implied. Forster suggests still another paradox notion of language when in *Aspects of the Novel* he playfully compares his favourite writer André Gide to the 'apocryphal' old lady, who proclaimed: "*How can I tell what I think till I see what I say*" (*AN* 99). *A Passage to India* is about "*an unimaginable space which cannot be inhabited by the present tense, resisting even the European attempt to coax it into metaphoricity*" (Suleri 250). When Ronny and Adela are being taken for a drive by the Nawab Bahadur, there is a bump and nobody knows what has happened; and it is Adela, who there also suggests the explanation: "*We ran into an animal*" (*API* 76). But was it a 'buffalo'? A 'hyena'? (77) Or, as Aziz later maintains, a 'savage pig'? (85) There are no clear tracks. In his "Author's Notes" to the Everyman's Library edition of *A Passage to India*, Forster, alluding to the accident that happened to him while he was in India, briefly informs us that "*The animal once frequented the Indore-Dewas road; I never saw it, but encountered evidence which was startlingly circumstantial*" (xxxi). On a second example, the author actually comments himself. Ronny and Adela are sitting under a tree watching a polo match, and Adela's attention is diverted to

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a bird above their heads. 'The common lora', Forster laconically explains in the Everyman's Library notes. But what he writes in the novel is this:

> *'Do you know what the name of that green bird up above us is?' she asked, putting her shoulder rather nearer to his. 'Bee-eater.'*
> *'Oh no, Ronny, it has red bars on its wings.'*
> *'Parrot.' he hazarded.*
> *'Good gracious no.'*
> *The bird in question dived into the dome of the tree. It was of no importance, yet they would have liked to identify it, it would somehow have solaced their hearts. But nothing in India is identifiable, the mere asking of a question causes it to disappear or to merge in something else.* (*API* 73)

It may be noted that these two examples all have some foundation in Forster's own experiences in India. He normally has real places in mind; and the scenery of the Marabar Caves, for example, is based on that of the Barabar Hills, near Gya. Forster's first essay under the title of "Adrift in India" in *Abinger Harvest* is particularly interesting in this connection. Forster tells how he set out to see the ruins of Ujjain of which he had heard. His guide had no idea where they were, and *"the track we were following wavered and blurred and offered alternatives; it had no earnestness of purpose like the tracks of England"* (*AH* 295). Forster had to find the ruins himself and then find his way back again, getting wet in the process. And there is no 'glow' in his experience at all: *"One confusion enveloped Ujjain and all things. Why differentiate? I asked the driver what kind of trees those were, and he answered 'Trees'; what was the name of that bird, and he said 'Bird'; and the plain, interminable, murmured, 'Old buildings are buildings, ruins are ruins'"* (*AH* 300).

The inexplicability of India is itself authentic; India's refusal to be explained in terms of 'fact', one may say, is itself a fact. One of the key words in the book is 'extraordinary'. Not only are the Marabar Caves described as extraordinary in the first and last sentences of the opening chapter, but, later, Adela also refers to her 'mistake' within them as extraordinary (*API* 231). Neither of these things—the Marabar Caves nor Adela's 'mistake'—is considered by the novel to be definable, not least because Forster's book is itself concerned with more than just spiritual uncertainty, such as misinterpretation and the problematic negotiation of cultural difference. *A Passage to India* is littered with misunderstandings and misreadings: the reason for Aziz's missing collar stud, the purpose of the bridge party, the 'snake' seen from the train, and the person Fielding has married. According to Paul B. Armstrong: *"The novel*

repeatedly uses words such as 'muddle' and 'mystery' to characterise what is happening in the narrative, but it is also a matter of interpretation how far this is a reflection of Forster's pessimism, or of British–Indian relations, or of an Orientalist view of India" (365). All that is left behind by such confusions, textually and psychically, is a puzzling echo. The Indian landscape is presented throughout the novel as at least so ineffably indifferent—so immeasurably vast and formless—that it disrupts not only cohesive human relations, but coherence itself, overwhelming possibilities of order, morality, or understanding.

If one accepts that Forster and Conrad are conscious of this difficulty, one can claim that those 'grey areas' where the origin of voice is unclear, in fact, constitute a framing of the perils of a European writer representing India and Africa. Ultimately, *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness* might be described as the limit texts of Modernism's critique of empire. Forster and Conrad present difference and 'unknowability'; knowledge is inevitably blind in certain areas. Forster and Conrad address this problem in the recurrent mystifications and ambiguities they leave intact—for example, we never discover what did happen in the caves or during the white fog incident—problematising the reader's interpretative interaction with the text. That is, they adopt a posture of disavowal. And that area, they know least about—the 'undiscovered India and Africa'—provides the truly radical narrative dynamic. This is the text beyond *A Passage to India*; the text Forster could never, himself, have written. Yet, in setting up spaces which anticipate a power beyond the already known, they mark both the existence of another voice and concede the inability of their own discourse to speak for it. Forster's India and Conrad's Africa are a geographical space abundantly occupied by histories and cultures distinct from the Western narrative of the world and the meanings this endorses.

The illusive design and language of *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness* confirm Forster's and Conrad's failure to make a coherent statement about human and imperialistic realities through art. For them, the deeper structure of the novel holds open-ended, paradoxical and multivalent meanings as well as the chaos of a permanently disarranged planet and discharging ideas and images which cannot be contained within the confines of the formal pattern. The two texts reveal the fin the siècle crisis and impotence to decode a situation where moderation and compromise are not possible. They both represent inadequacy as an explanation of a universe more extensive than the environment made by human intervention, and the insufficiency of its insights into the potentialities of mind whose experiential range exceeds ratiocination and sensory cognition. Forster's and Conrad's

subsequent silence is significant. This silence could be construed simply as a failure of representation and as recognition of artistic imperatives, which they felt unwilling or unequipped to realise in their own writings.

III. Failure of the Journey

As both *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* are based on a physical travel to foreign countries, the physical notion of a journey serves as a basic line of the story. Regarding the focus on the inner life of the characters and their successive mental change, the actual act of travelling gradually acquires rather mental dimension. In other words, the stress on the human psyche and the endeavour to comprehend it becomes a mental journey towards self-discovery. Therefore, the purpose of this section is to explain the reason why the motif of a journey is in modernist literature, and mainly in both works, employed on both mental and physical level. Charlie Marlow, the main character and simultaneously the omniscient narrator of the story, is Conrad's surrogate on whose story Conrad depicts his own experience and search for the identity and moral values. Also, the omniscient narrator of *A Passage to India* is Forster's surrogate, who represents Forster's own doubts about the human ability to foster good relationships and his quest for the true moral values. Like Marlow's journey, Adela Quested's physical journey to a foreign country becomes her own mental journey towards self-discovery and re-evaluation of her moral values.

Daniel R. Schwarz sees modernism as "*an ongoing tradition of experimentation in literature, dance, architecture, music, painting, sculpture, photography, and film.*" He adds that "*rather than a period which can be demarked by certain years, modernism is a state of mind*" (1). Schwarz's expression 'state of mind' as a primary preoccupation with human mind and consequential attempt to understand the mind fairly expresses the key element in both works on the way their authors apply the motif of a journey as a physical move from one place to another gradually gaining rather deeper mental dimension. Attention here is drawn to the modernist understanding of the inner self and inner identity. In accordance with the interest in human mind, modernist authors were influenced by various scholars some of whom claimed that human identity and personality are not stative. They were emphasising its metaphorical similarity to a river being a continuous flow (Schwarz 20).

Sigmund Freud played an important part in the way many modernist writers wrote and represented the characters in their works. As Peter Childs points out: "*With the publication of*

Freud's work, it became clear to many writers that there was not a unitary normative self to which each of us might conform, and many modernists were sufficiently influenced by advances in psychology to change the way they represented human character" (59). Thus, this inconsistency of human mind that is likened to a continuous flow of a river then enables re-evaluation of one's own moral beliefs. The re-evaluation of moral beliefs is then naturally achieved by a process of a mental journey whose significance is perceptible in both *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India.*

With regard to the focus on the psychology of the characters, both Joseph Conrad and E. M. Forster focus in their novels on the mental state and development of their main characters and reveal their feelings to the reader. These characters gradually go through the process of re-evaluation, and, thus, the process of the mental change. In order to make the process of the change visible, the author employs a method of a deep introspection together with the characters' filtering of thoughts. In connection with the way both authors reveal the mental train of the characters' thoughts, Schwarz draws attention to an important aspect of modernist writing and that is the reflection of the authors into their characters. Hence, the characters' doubting and questioning about their own selves is in fact an interior monologue of their creators, their authors (20). The novelist's self becomes divided and that "*he or she is both creator and seeker, the prophet who would convert others and the agonizing doubter who would convince himself or herself while engaging an introspective self examination*" (Schwarz 21). Thus, via the introspective self-examination, they search for true moral and human values which they reflected on the characters, who undertake a mental journey.

Both of the narrators in *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* provide their subjective points of view that change during the physical journey into Africa and India. In this sense, the physical journey is a necessary prerequisite for the mental journey of self discovery and re-evaluation of moral beliefs. In other words, the physical aspect is gradually accompanied by a mental dimension. The reader then, following the telling, is gradually expected to change his own opinion on the story together with the narrator. Both Conrad and Forster are, then, doubting seekers presenting their feelings and subjective points of view through the narrators and characters they create. Hence, although Charlie Marlow and Adela Quested are not the only characters experiencing a mental change, this section focuses primarily on their journey as an emblem of other characters' journey.

This part of "Tea at the Palaz Hoon", a poem written by Wallace Stevens, fairly expresses the key attribute of literary modernism:

> *I was the world in which I walked, and what I saw*
> *Or heard or felt came not but from myself;*
> *And there I found myself more truly and more strange.* (Stevens 21)

That is to say, the main attribute is the introspection into one's own self and the activity of one's own probing mind trying to reach comprehension of its true principle. Thus, this process of self exploration is depicted by Conrad and Forster on a basis of a physical journey that continually acquires rather wider and deeper dimension when the primary focus of the story becomes the characters' mental journey towards self exploration. Hence, in *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness*, both authors employ both notions of a journey, different, yet interrelated. However, the mental journey gains rather a higher degree of importance and becomes a heart of both stories when focusing on the main characters Adela Quested and Charlie Marlow.

Beside being a study of Modernist culture and the colonial Congo, Schwarz argues that *Heart of Darkness* also raises questions about our identity, possibilities of meaning and claims that like Marlow we also "*make journey from spectator to participant*" (67). Schwarz maintains that Conrad "*has turned a story about a present journey to Africa into a journey through Europe's past as well as into each human being's primitive psyche*" (67-8). Hence, although the story expresses Conrad's view of the exploitative impacts of colonialism, it also depicts the psychological state of the main character, Charlie Marlow, whose gradual mental change based on his experiences during the sail along the Congo River plays a significant role in the story. From the reason that Conrad considered the activity of the Belgian king in Congo as the worst example of exploitation he had seen, he reflected this on Marlow. Thus, encountering with the horrid situation and fearful occurrences while sailing up the Congo River, Marlow gradually comes to realise the real effect of the Empire's presence in Africa, especially Congo. Therefore, Marlow's sail to the heart of Africa, being a basic line of the story, is a predisposition towards the gradual focus on Marlow's mental state and re-evaluation of his moral beliefs.

As Marlow's journey proceeds and the boat sails deeper and deeper inside Africa, Marlow simultaneously penetrates deeper and deeper into his own self and heart desiring to understand the workings of his mind and his own story. The reason of his deep introspection

is then his confusion about the real purpose of his journey into the heart of Africa, the heart of darkness, as he refers to it. During the sail along the Congo River, Marlow ruminates about the journey: "*We penetrated deeper and deeper into the heart of darkness* [. . .] *We were wanderers on prehistoric earth, on an earth that wore the aspect of an unknown planet*" (*HD* 50-1).

And thus sailing farther along the Congo River and deeper into the heart of darkness, Marlow's probing mind is accompanied with more and more questions about the origin of the darkness and wilderness that he can see everywhere around him. Marlow's mind is, then, preoccupied with questions about the possible power that the darkness can have over distance of his journey and, more importantly, after he has seen the reality in Congo, which is rather different from what he believed in the humanity of European civilisation. That is to say, Marlow believes that darkness and wilderness are both hidden inside every human being and that it can be awoken under certain circumstances.

Thus, Marlow's voyage on the Congo River and Adela's passage to India can be said to represent an exploration of one's inner consciousness. But it is in fact the morally darkest reaches of the human heart that are explored, as Marlow progresses up river in his quest for Kurtz and as Adela progresses up the mountain towards the Marabar Caves. To describe the sensation he felt in his quest for Kurtz, Marlow says: "*We live, as we dream; alone*" (*HD* 39). He compares his experience with a dream (or a nightmare rather)—the kind in which a dreamer experiences a sensation of hopeless disorientation, of being separated from reality, in which "*you thought yourself bewitched and cut off for ever from everything you had known once–somewhere–far away–in another existence perhaps?*" (*HD* 48). Insisting on the dream-like quality of his experience, Marlow suggests that life, like a dream, is progress in solitude: that one feels isolated during dreams, but also when one lives in an amoral and hostile world. Viewing the world as a desert and a desolate environment, he makes of his voyage an exploration and discovery of his inner self. Such wading into the unconscious has already been suggested at the outset of *Heart of Darkness* by the Doctor, who measures man's 'crania' to see the difference in size '*when they come back*' from Africa. The doctor remarks: '*I never see them* [. . .] *but the change takes place inside, you know*' (*HD* 17).

The critic Coleen Burke says that Marlow experiences a psychological "*descent to the underworld*" (22). Conrad had a similar experience in the mental breakdown he had and

which preceded the composition of *Heart of Darkness*; he described his experience as 'a taste of hell'. On the other hand, the critic Frederick Karl writes of this period of Conrad's life as a descent *"into his own kind of darkness"* and observes that Conrad's creative imagination carried him *"down not only into memory but into the very chaos and extravagance of the unconscious [. . .] stalled, depressed, ill, he had touched bottom and had, in his own way, found his subject matter"* (20). That Marlow feels in his dream-like voyage separated from reality means that everything surrounding him is mere 'delusion', and that he was kept away 'from the truth of things'; as he declares to his listeners, *"when you have to attend to things of that sort, to the mere incidents of the surface, the reality—the reality I tell you—fades. The inner truth is hidden—luckily, luckily"* (*HD* 49).

Marlow experiences at first the *"high stillness of primeval forest"* (48). His words evoke a setting that is alien and uninviting: it is indeed an 'empty', 'silent', 'impenetrable' , 'joyless', 'deserted', 'gloomy', and 'vengeful' place. He feels of *"travelling back to the earliest beginnings of the world"* (*HD* 48). His hopeless loss of bearings, the impression of being separated from reality, reminds the reader of Marlow's comparison of his journey with a dream. But whether the wilderness and the stillness of the water he crosses act as a threat or a lure, *"as an appeal or as a menace"* (*HD* 38), it remains nevertheless that the focus is placed on the mystery and complexity of Marlow's experience. His audience aboard The Nellie within the *"brooding gloom"* (*HD* 5) of London, is absorbed in his tale and none of the listeners makes comments on what he is listening to and seeing. Marlow's nightmarish journey is explicitly likened to Dante's imaginary journey in *The Inferno*; and the allusions to ancient Rome help to recall *The Aeneid* in which Aeneas, the legendary imperialist, travels through the underworld (Watts 22): *"I felt as though, instead of going to the centre of a continent, I were about to set off for the centre of the earth [. . .] it was like a weary pilgrimage amongst hints of nightmares"* (*HD* 18-21). It is a nightmare, which takes place very often in a chaotic atmosphere and which is a sign of mystery, confusion, but also of guilt.

Like in *Heart of Darkness*, the interrelated physical and mental notion of a journey can be observed in *A Passage to India*. The setting of the story is a foreign country under a colonial rule. However, it is not Africa, but an undefined place in India. Hence, resembling Marlow, who goes through his mental change on the basis of his travel to Africa, in *A Passage to India* it is Adela Quested, who goes to a foreign country and experiences her personal mental change. On the basis of an ambition to discover the real India, Adela Quested

does get the opportunity to explore the place but also her own self and identity. According to Robert Davis, Forster's stories are told by an omniscient narrator, his surrogate, who gradually learns that regardless of race the evil is in every human psyche and re-evaluates his moral beliefs. In this manner, the narrator expresses Forster's quest for values that are continually undergoing change. Hence, writing on the basis of a subjective point of view and via his filtering of thoughts through the characters, Forster's characters in *A Passage to India* are re-evaluating their moral values as well (246). Concerning *A Passage to India*, Davis claims: "*The telling becomes a passage if not to enlightenment, at least to understanding. That the narrator changes his values urges the narratee 'the implied reader whom he addresses' to reconsider his or her attitudes toward India; thus the narrator's change of values becomes part of the novel's rhetoric persuasion*" (247).

If we look at the novel from a wider perspective, Adela's surname, Quested, denotes the narrative's concern with Adela's quest to discover 'the real India'. In other words, Adela's surname symbolises the purpose of her travel to India, and that is her engagement with the city magistrate Ronny Heaslop and her desire to discover the society and place where she would then live. However, what she finds are the Marabar Hills with the inexplicable and unknowable Marabar Caves and "*an accompanying atmosphere of spiritual nullity, sexual fear and human inconsequence in the universe*" (*API* 203).

Adela undertakes a journey to India in order to find certain certitude about her marriage to a man, who, in such distinct world, might be a different person from the one to whom she got engaged. Indeed, the possible change is foreshadowed by a conversation between Ronny Heaslop and his mother Mrs Moore about the Indians to whom he evidently does not have a positive attitude. Mrs Moore claims: "*You never used to judge people like this at home*" (*API* 26). Although it might seem that Adela's search results only in muddle, the mysterious incident in one of the Marabar caves, whose 'victim' she happens to be, triggers Adela's deep introspection. Nevertheless, her enthusiasm gradually leads to a state of personal crisis, which is caused by the inexplicable and mysterious incident in the Marabar caves.

Forster considered human character as "*a continually changing flux of experience rather than fixed and static as in the traditional novel of manners*" (*AN* 135). In other words, based on the exploring of the 'real India', Adela's gradual change and her mental journey towards self-discovery gradually starts coming to light. Despite the fact that Adela is

determined to enjoy the trip and expects it to be a wonderful experience, the narrator, rather paradoxically, depicts the atmosphere differently: "*As she spoke the sky to the left had turned angry orange* [. . .] *The hues in the east decayed, the hills seemed dimmer though in fact better lit, and a profound disappointment entered with the morning breeze* [. . .] *The sun rose without splendour*" (*API* 122). This scene portrayal seems to foreshadow the forthcoming train of events.

Thus, as Marlow's mind is haunted by the darkness, Adela's mind is haunted by the frightening echo in the darkness of the cave. In this sense, the provoking echo only supports the deep introspection of Adela together with the desire to understand the echo and this way divests her mind of its influence. The reader is then led through Adela's inner life full of doubts about what really happened in the cave. There is a certain argument between her intellect and her feeling of being the cause of the frightful experience herself. The time has come to Adela to admit her own personal failure when accusing Aziz of assaulting her. Thus, she answers the question about whether Aziz followed her in the cave pronouncing: "*I'm afraid I've made a mistake* [. . .] *Dr Aziz never followed me into the cave*" (*API* 203). She has undertaken a difficult mental journey towards the awareness of her personal failure.

This change of attitude, whether to one's own personality and moral values or the story as a whole, is a result of Conrad's and Forster's uncertainty, doubt and the personal quest for moral values that are reflected on their characters, especially Marlow and Adela. Thence, due to the difficult situation of the society in India and gloomy situation in Congo, both characters gradually suffer from a state of personal crisis that leads them to the deep introspection. The actual physical travel to the colonial countries in both books is then a primary prerequisite for the mental dimension the journey gradually acquires. In this manner, Marlow's journey to Congo and Adela's passage to India, consequently become their voyage of self-discovery and re-evaluation of their moral beliefs. However, their probing mind does not find a definite answer; they never reach their own personal victory in the sense of having resisted the darkness which haunts Marlow and the echo of the Marabar caves that haunts Adela. In other words, these enigmatic occurrences haunting Marlow and Adela drive them towards the deep insight into their own mind on whose basis they can't find answers to their questions and a mental state of appeasement.

Conrad and Forster were primarily concerned with the colonisers. The purport of their fiction is to show the moral disaster caused to European civilisation by imperialism. It revealed their failings, their empty vanity, and mostly the hypocrisy of the Europeans. In this sense, Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Forster's *A Passage to India* epitomise the strife that was going on at that time. They are a literary transposition of the writers' voyage to Africa and to India from which they returned completely disillusioned and outraged by the human deprivation they had seen. Their response to the crisis of morals was unprecedented. The highly dispiriting picture they provide in their works, represents their view of modern man's situation in the world and his disillusionment with the world's moral order. Both Conrad's and Forster's novels carry with them and through their characters physical and internal journeys all the darkness induced by modern civilisation. To round off, *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* represent a polyvalent world of quest, uncertainty and frustrated communication which indeed still make Forster and Conrad very much our contemporaries.

Conclusion

Conrad and Forster have written about the seediness of Western civilisation, about a world whose values and morals have been atrophied. We see the tremendous inertia and paralysis of will that hasten the collapse of the world. Their use of satiric verve and sceptical boldness; their suggestive density and ambiguity—the layered narrations, ironic meanings, symbolic suggestions; their radical paradoxicality; and their designed opacities—relate *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* to Conrad's and Forster's own prior experience, to various concerns of the fin de siècle. A period witnessed the burgeoning of what became known as cultural Modernism, and the consequent readiness of numerous critics to appreciate and commend the features they recognised as Modernist (Watts 24).

The related development of critical procedures of the period were particularly responsive to ambiguity, irony, and symbolic multiplicity within a work. They were responsive to the increase of scepticism concerning religion, history, civilisation, and human nature. They were responsive to some religious nostalgia, some surviving modes of faith, and some humanistic hopes, which led to a general development of antipathy to imperialism: an antipathy that, for many readers, the texts seemed to echo. The two tales seemed to sum up areas of experience that gained new prominence in the light of historical events in the twentieth century. They offer a concise anthology of modern corruption and disorder. John A.

McClure writes that: "*as the twentieth century opened, the artists and intellectuals of the age increasingly came to believe that imperial rule, if inevitable in the short run, was an inglorious enterprise that deformed both those who ruled and those who submitted*" (153). Joseph Conrad and E. M. Forster were among these artists and each expressed their misgivings about the 'inglorious enterprise' and its 'deforming' effects in *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* respectively.

CHAPTER THREE:

THE AMBIVALENT REPRESENTATION OF WOMEN

Introduction

Although biographical studies show contradictions and paradoxes in Forster and Conrad's relationships and attitudes to women, both *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*, Conrad and Forster, reflect a file that can only be completely accepted and parsed when Imperialist Patriarchy is dealt with. One of the intersecting lines of narration traced in colonial writings is the Victorian doctrine of female self-immolation, which demanded from the domestic woman an absolute devotion to her family, and the Indian practice of *sati,* which was the religious obligation of a Hindu widow to burn herself on her husband's funeral pyre. The resemblance between the two forms of female self-immolation suggests that European and Indian women are oppressed alike. Therefore, the exploitation of colonised peoples cannot be derived from the sexual oppression of European women. At the same time, the story of European woman cannot be told in the absence of reading for the signs of colonial exploitation. This is why the woman in my title refers both to the European woman as the sexed subject of colonial discourse and the Indian and/or African woman as her subaltern shadow. By showing how contemporary theories of female agency contain the sediments of this colonial past, I argue that such models are inappropriate, not only for discussions of colonised women, but for European women as well.

While in Forster's fictional writing there are many such moments where women are represented with a textual self-consciousness concerning their symbolic and signifying status as women, Conrad's women are always a bit outerworldly, removed from the grime and violence of Marlow's perception of the world but yet having a very direct and significant affect on that world. Such factors, of course, complicate rather than render obsolete the topic of women and prompt a network of interconnected critical questions, including whether it is possible to represent women at all.

I. Conrad, Forster and the Representation of Women

Forster's and Conrad's fictional writings not only offer a variety of representations of women and the feminine but also open up questions of how women and the feminine are caught up in the literary and cultural processes of representation. Indeed Forster's and Conrad's self-conscious textuality may be read as politically subversive. To recognise this is not to condemn them. For one thing, Forster and Conrad cannot be singled out for exploring or exploiting patriarchal language, for self-consciously re-inscribing woman or the feminine merely as a mark of her absence, an allegorical marker of masculine presence (Goldman 127). Accordingly, from his earliest critical reception, Forster has been considered, somewhat naively, a women's writer, praised by critics for his empathetic and powerfully drawn women characters.

Critics have differed on the question how women are caught in both works. For example, the critic Frances L. Rusticcia, for example warns: "*a feminism that either ignores or flees from the gynesis of* [A Passage to India]*, reading it solely as politically objectionable, runs the risk of reducing a work of genius and (more important to feminism) losing out on the subversive power that it has to offer*" (127). Valerie Sedlak acknowledges that the "*fictive world of Heart of Darkness belongs to men, nineteenth century, imperialistic, European men.*" Sedlak adds that "*Conrad's women do display a separate consciousness*" (443). Brenda Silver also tenders a sympathetic feminist reading of *A Passage to India*, which she finds "*a study of what it means to be rapable, a social position that cuts across biological and racial lines to inscribe culturally constructed definitions of sexuality within a sex/gender/power system*" (88). Rita Bode takes this opinion a step further, postulating that *Heart of Darkness* depicts a "*powerful female network, which frequently takes charge and assumes control of the novella's events*" (20).

However, this would not seem to be the case. Women in both *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* seem to be categorised into a separate group, serving as supplements to men's actions, characters and behavior. All of them seem to live in the realm of their own, built on the idealistic conception of the surrounding world, governed by fair rules and laws. Therefore, to fully understand this view and other sexist innuendos that Conrad and Forster provide in their novels, the cultural framework and societal situation in which Conrad and Forster existed should be considered. In his analysis of *Heart of Darkness,* the critic Andrew

Roberts exposes Conrad's environment. He argues that Marlow's sexism stems from the entirely patriarchal European world of which both author and character were products. Men were the sole occupiers of positions of power in this culture, and thus, Roberts comments, "*a whole matrix of inter-male relationships involving competitiveness, desire, bonding, the sharing and appropriation of power and knowledge* [. . .] *functioned in* [this] *Western society*" (458). To maintain this system, women are used as sexual scapegoats by men and revered as a "*shared desire*" or common goal. As a result, women are prohibited from attaining "*positions of power, knowledge and desire*" (459).

Due to this domineering social construct, the women of both *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* are shown as hopelessly weak, helplessly ignorant, and irreversibly subservient to men. Charlie Marlow, stoically anticipates his departure for the Belgian Congo, relates to his audience his conception of women as trivial and idle in their interaction with reality:

> *It's queer how out of touch with truth women are. They live in a world of their own, and there has never been anything like it, and never can be. It is too beautiful altogether, and if they were to set it up it would go to pieces before the first sunset. Some confounded fact we men have been living contentedly with ever since the day of creation would start up and knock the whole thing over.* (*HD* 18)

Basically, Marlow is telling us about how men can serve the world better than women.

Heart of Darkness and *A Passage to India* are an account of the feminine spirit in the physical world when that spirit is hampered by problems of a sexual nature. Forster, like Conrad, uses the female characters in *A Passage to India* to convey many different messages regarding empire throughout the novel.[1] We most specifically see his efforts in the characters Miss. Quested and Mrs. Moore. Through these two leading ladies, Forster shows that the complications that come from colonisation are not exclusive to those creating the rules, but instead shows that issues are also caused through seemingly benign sources, unwittingly complicating life for the people living within the Empire. However, despite the fact that Forster exploits in his writing a similar analysis of the gender politics of representation and

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[1] 'Empire" is used in respect to the European colonization of other parts of the world, specifically in this case with respect to the British Empire and India.

despite what Rosemary Pitt calls Forster's "*great admiration and liking for* [Conrad] *as a writer*" (141), and Forster's assertion in his essay about Conrad that his "*earliest writings*" have an "*air of telling us something very old and perfectly true, which had lain hidden but is now revealed,*" he nevertheless believed that there is a "*difference between the man's and the woman's view of what constitutes the importance of any subject*" ("The Pride of Mr Conrad" 398). The nature of this difference, as Virginia Blain wrote, "*lies in the fact not that men describe battles and women the birth of children, but that each sex describes itself*" (Blain 118). Thus, *Heart of Darkness*, as Rita Bode suggests, seems primarily designed to describe "*a kind of male ritual, a moral and sexual initiation into 'manhood,' concerned primarily with men*" (20), Forster would undoubtedly have tended to read it in this light.

Although a feminist reading may attempt to take as much pleasure in Conrad's art as does any other reading, this pleasure is aborted by the fact that the women's image, though visually full, is psychically void and nearly inhuman; for it is explicitly allied with that abominable darkness described by Marlow, essentialised in Kurtz's voice; and Conrad's text offers no woman's voice or variant female version of wilderness to the reader. As the novella opens, the narrator depicts the Thames as a masculine sphere "*crowded with memories of men and ships it has borne to the rest of home or to the battles of the sea*" (*HD* 7). It is a place recalling the "*dreams of men, the seed of commonwealths, the germ of empires*" (*HD* 7). Although these ships of history plundered for the glory of the "*Queen's highness,*" when that female figure meets the ship as it docks along the shore, it "*thus pass*[es] *out of the gigantic tale*" (*HD* 7) of masculine adventure and glory and into another sphere—one which presumably permits the presence of women.

Furthermore, Marianna Torgovnick observes that the women in *Heart of Darkness* are constant symbols of death. For example, "*Kurtz's African mistress is made to embody the 'dead' African landscape*" (Torgovnick 55). Upon her entry into the narrative, Marlow states, "*The whole sorrowful land, the immense wilderness, the colossal body of the fecund and mysterious life seemed to look at her, pensive, as though it had been looking at the image of its own tenebrous and passionate soul*" (*HD* 87). She is explicitly mirrored in the landscape that Marlow consistently illustrates as the 'white man's grave,' 'lurking death,' and a 'profound darkness,' and thus she personifies death. The Intended shares in this cruel personification. When meeting with her, Marlow pitifully reflects, "*I saw her and him* [Kurtz] *in the same instant of time—his death and her sorrow—I saw her sorrow in the very moment*

of his death [. . .] *I had blundered into a place of cruel and absurd mysteries not fit for a human being to behold*" (*HD* 107). Furthermore, Marlow perceives that "*she was one of those creatures that are not the playthings of Time*" (*HD* 107). Just as the unfathomable mystery of death surpasses all time, so too does the Intended become the equivalent of this harsh phenomenon.

However, in both Forster's writing and vision, this would not seem to be the case. Most of Forster's novels and many of his short stories include strongly realised women protagonists or characters. George Watson finds Margaret Schlegel of *Howards End*, for example, "*the most fully realised Englishwoman in the fiction of her century*," (626) while Rose Macaulay finds all Forster's women characters, old and young, "*alive with* [. . .] *imaginative actuality*," and there is a rich and continuing seam of criticism exploring Forster's typology of women (197). In other words, while this vision of the woman as a symbol of death is current nearly in all the feminist critiques that dealt with Conrad's text, we find the matter rather more diverse when it comes to Forster's text. Forster would find little to applaud, then, in the actions of either Marlow's aunt or Kurtz's Intended, for they serve merely to illustrate the kind of 'prostitution' to which he believed financial dependence damned women in the early twentieth century (Goldman 127).

Elaine Showalter thinks "*we must accept the fact that Forster saw women as part of the enemy camp. While not precisely antagonistic to them, he believed them to be allied with the forces and institutions of repression*" ("*A Passage to India* as 'Marriage Fiction,'" 7). Yet, she disagrees with those critics who have found his fiction contemptuous of women like Rae H. Stoll, who finds Forster's fiction 'misogynous' (46). Elizabeth Langland, on the other hand, attempts to see beyond the complexities of Forster's misogynist life to a radical sexual politics in his texts. In her helpful exploration, she acknowledges "*Forster's homosexuality and outspoken misogyny*", but argues that Forster's tortured confusion over his sexuality while composing his novels "*also fuelled a desire for something other than the classical opposition between male and female, masculine and feminine*"; and she identifies "*a radical sexual politics that has been obscured by psychobiographies*" ("Gesturing Towards an Open Space" 253). Bonnie Finkelstein, in *Forster's Women: Eternal Differences* (1975), argues: "*Forster's greatest characters are women; and his novels closely examine the problems of women in society; but his overall theme is a larger one in which women function as representatives of all humanity*" (vii). Specifically, Mrs Moore is used throughout the novel as

a sympathetic character, not just towards the British but towards the Indians as well. We also get to see her reflections on the British characters, which in turn gives the reader much insight into the workings of the empire.

Nevertheless, this by no means excludes any intersecting lines of narration between Conrad and Forster's writings. One of these intersecting lines is the Victorian doctrine of female self-immolation, which demanded from the domestic woman an absolute devotion to her family, and the Indian practice of sati. The resemblance between the two forms of female self-immolation suggests to both nineteenth-century and contemporary Western feminists the shared oppression of Victorian and Indian women. However, the stories of European and Indian women must be maintained as discontinuous (Sharpe 27).

Demonstrating ignorance similar to that of Marlow's aunt, the Intended and Adela Quested, or the Victorian ladies in the two novels are hopelessly unaware of the unsound methods that their fiancés Kurtz and Ronny enforce in Africa and India. Conrad and Forster align all the women in the narrative with unreality to evolve the importance of separate male and female realms. By holding ignorant ideas, such as Marlow's aunt, or exotic appearances, such as Kurtz's mistress, by presenting Mrs Moore as intuitional, and visionary and Adela as hallucinated, the women are discounted as impractical, or if they hold some merit, they are viewed as eerie. Either way, they are made of none of the material found in the world of men, and so, disaster befalls the men that dare breach the boundary between the worlds. Kurtz ends mad and Aziz ends jailed and humiliated. The first women that Conrad's main character, Marlow, recounts are the two knitters at the Company office in Brussels. The younger woman like Adela Quested, still unwise in the ways of the world, relays the carefree attitude of men before they enter the Congo, but the old woman like Mrs Moore, not subject to the animal desires of a man, sees all too clearly what happens to men in the 'darkness' (Hinkle 4). However, she sits 'unconcerned' in her own, objective world and allows the men to discover if they have the inner strength to survive in the uncivilised jungle.

Another crucial utilisation of women in *Heart of Darkness* is seen in the symbolic function the Intended owns, a function that Adela Quested shares as well. In an analysis of this key character, the essayist Jeremy Hawthorn claims that the Intended serves as a symbol of a corrupted idealism, the same idealism that European powers constructed to justify their encroachment into Africa. To illustrate this example, Hawthorn employs the description of the Intended by Marlow, who states, "*This fair hair, this pale visage, this pure brow, seemed*

surrounded by an ashy halo from which the dark eyes looked out at me" (*HD* 106). In Hawthorn's opinion, this association of words connotative of idealism, such as 'pure' and 'halo,' with a vision of weakness is Conrad's way of depicting idealism as being equally weak. Hawthorn concludes that neither woman is allowed the *"full humanity that requires possession of both chaste spirit and sexual flesh"* (409). Along with being labeled as weak by Conrad, Forster's women are made one-dimensional in the novel. Through a juxtaposition of the Intended and Adela Quested, we observe the former as being a *"devoted and chaste spirit,"* exemplified by her extreme attachment to Kurtz, while the latter is *"sensual and sexual flesh,"* demonstrated in her sexual hallucinations (Hawthorn 409).

Another line of intersection is that *Heart of Darkness* does not establish a common identity between the colonieer and the colonised so much as it identifies the racial superiority of the European. This same structure is visible in *A Passage to India.* Although Adela expresses sympathy for Indian women, she does not identify herself as one but positions herself as a missionary woman, who will save them. And her speech is framed in a manner that positions the civiliser as the agent of change and the native woman as an object to be saved. Rather than establishing a shared identity between the English and Hindu woman, the novel ranks Hindu women low on the feminist scale of emancipation. This distancing of the English woman from her Eastern sisters enables the problem of female emancipation in marriage to be resolved in what constitutes the final stage of Adela's development. And therefore comes her decision not to marry Ronny and to withdraw from the world of the Anglo-Indians.

For Conrad and Forster, the world of women may be separate from the realm of Marlow and other males, but these two worlds are certainly dependent on each other. Just as Marlow depended on his aunt's social skills for employment, Conrad and Forster have the women characters depend on men to uphold their notions of what happens in spheres outside their own. Marlow cannot break his aunt's belief that the Congo mission is largely about *"weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways"* (*HD* 18), as Ronny cannot explain his mission to his mother because explaining the male experience of the Congo and India would break the wall separating women from the truth of whose ways are really changed by the mission. This hypocrisy of male rhetoric was something about which Forster himself was both conscious and critical, especially as it pertained to war and violence. Forster as a man apparently found little consolation in the sort of fictional 'moral purpose[s]' (*HD* 44), which

painted English and European greed and imperialism in missionary terms and which euphemistically transformed the subjects of imperial conquests into 'pilgrims'. Like Marlow, Forster recognised that no spiritual purpose underlay the violence perpetrated by his native country and its European neighbors, a point which we see evidenced in Marlow's description of the French warship he sees during his journey to the Congo:

> *It appears the French had one of their wars going on thereabouts [. . .] In the empty immensity of earth, sky, and water, there she was, incomprehensible, firing into a continent [. . .] There was a touch of insanity in the proceeding, a sense of lugubrious drollery in the sight; and it was not dissipated by somebody on board assuring me earnestly there was a camp of natives–he called them enemies!–hidden out of sight somewhere.* (*HD* 20)

Forster, in his depiction of women characters, is in agreement with Conrad that an imperialistic society denies sexual fulfillment and ascribe to women inferior qualities and strip them of the humanity they deserve.

II. Masculine and Feminine Quest for Self-Knowledge

Based on Forster's descriptions of the respective purposes of male and female authored fiction, we may also assume that he intended his readers to see his own novel, *A Passage to India*, as an exploration of womanhood, even if his professed purpose, as he described it in a letter, was "*to give the feeling of a vast tumult of life, as various and disorderly as possible, which should be cut short for a moment by the death, and go on again*" (*PT* 146). This is not to say, however, that Forster's novel does not grapple with many of the same issues, which we find in *Heart of Darkness*. In fact, as Frances Rusticcia remarks, "*The dominant theme of the novel is Adella's self-discovery [. . .] In E. M. Forster's novel, the areas of discovery include the knowledge of the self as something unique and apart, and knowledge of others*" (119).

And it is this exploration of the self, which is the strongest link between *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness*. Many of the lessons, which Adela learns in *A Passage to India* parallel those learned by Marlow in *Heart of Darkness*. Perhaps most importantly, the jungle teaches both Adela and Marlow that the world and the individuals, who inhabit it, are ultimately unknowable, and it shows them that language can neither fully represent nor

comprehend truth or reality. When taken together, Rose Macaulay's suggestion here can be applied to both novels:

> *The hostile, elemental forces in nature which* [both] *writer*[s] *evoke are thus partly used to support a theory of the futility of human endeavour and hope, particularly in A Passage to India, where Adela is largely a victim of death and these hostile forces, which lend support to the theory of life as one which made chaos triumphant, things happening for no reason at all, and everyone groping about in illusion and ignorance.* (197)

The last chapters of *A Passage to India* chart the growth of Adela's awareness of the ultimate incomprehensibility and uncontrollability of the world and of the words which try to control and comprehend its reality. The great darkness of the jungle has the usual effect of taking away all desire for communication by making Adela's and Ronny's words sound thin and small, "*The two young people conversed feebly and felt unimportant. When the darkness began, it seemed to well out of the meager vegetation, entirely covering the fields each side of them before it brimmed over the road*" (*API* 75). It also defies their attempts at description, and thus possession as when they tried to identify a bird: "*The bird in question dived into the dome of the tree. It was of no importance, yet they would have liked to identify it, it would somehow have solaced their hearts. But nothing in India is identifiable, the mere asking of a question causes it to disappear or to merge in something else*" (*API* 73). Similarly, and despite his assertion that he has "*a voice too, and for good or evil* [. . . his] *is the speech that cannot be silenced*" (*HD* 52), Marlow says that: "[t]*he idleness of a passenger, my isolation amongst all these men with whom I had no point of contact, the oily and languid sea, the uniform sombreness of the coast, seemed to keep me away from the truth of things, within the toil of a mournful and senseless delusion*" (*HD* 19).

Like Adela and Mrs Moore, Marlow senses the greatness and ultimate inexplicability of the landscape, which surrounds him: "*I had turned to the wilderness really, not to Mr. Kurtz, who, I was ready to admit, was as good as buried. And for a moment it seemed to me as if I also were buried in a vast grave full of unspeakable secrets*" (*HD* 89). As Eric Trethewey notes, Conrad "*illustrate*[s] *the final inability of language to capture the presence, the inwardness, the contextual fullness of lived experience*" when he has Marlow declare, "'*It seems to me I am trying to tell you a dream–making a vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can convey the dream sensation, that commingling of absurdity, surprise . . . .*'" (104).

Adela, too, wonders if her engagement to Ronny, or perhaps the mere fact of her love, is only a dream:

> *Instead of weighing Ronny and herself and coming to a reasoned conclusion about marriage, she had incidentally, in the course of a talk about mangoes, remarked to mixed company that she didn't mean to stop in India. Which meant that she wouldn't marry Ronny; but what a way to announce it, what a way for a civilized girl to behave! She owed him an explanation, but unfortunately there was nothing to explain.* (*API* 70)

She tells Ronny, "*I've finally decided we are not going to be married, my dear boy*" (71). Although Ronny immediately replies, "*You never said we should marry, my dear girl; you never bound either yourself or me don't let this upset you*" (*API* 71), his words are mere consolations, just as Marlow's words to the Intended will be. For her, the fact that she will not marry Ronny seemed slipping away like a dream. But both couldn't have the power to discuss it. She said: "*But let us discuss things; it's all so frightfully important, we mustn't make false steps. I want next to hear your point of view about me—it might help us both*" (71). Ronny replies "*I haven't got any questions*" (72). Adela agrees, "*I suppose then there is nothing else*" [. . .] "*Yes, nothing else,*" she repeated, feeling that a profound and passionate speech ought to have been delivered by one or both of them (*API* 72).

The following event, when "*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*" (75), and the touch of his hand upon hers brought back the overpowering sense of unity between her and Ronny though it is spurious:

> *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. It would vanish in a moment, perhaps to reappear, but the darkness is alone durable. And the night that encircled them, absolute as it seemed, was itself only a spurious unity, being modified by the gleams of day that leaked up round the edges of the earth, and by the stars.* (75)

As a matter of fact, Adela experiences a moment of doubt about her decisions. Far from being convinced of the truth of her apparent communion with Ronny, she seems to ask: what's happened? Why did I ask you not to marry me? How did it happen? But neither of the young lovers can explain or comprehend it; neither of them could remember what had been said. When they reached the bungalow "*They looked at each other* [. . .] *It was for Miss Quested to*

speak and she said nervously, 'Ronny, I should like to take back what I said on the Maidan.'
He assented and they became engaged to be married in consequence" (*API* 80-1). Ronny was
pleased instead of distressed; he was surprised, but he had really nothing to say: "*What indeed*
is there to say? To be or not to be married, that was the question, and they had decided it in
the affirmative" (*API* 81).

The passage framing Adela and Ronny's reengagement parallels Marlow's
conversation with Kurtz's Intended, in which his own words fail to comprehend the truth as
much as the words of the young lovers had. In this case, however, as Rita Bode notes, it is not
the female voice which is silenced, but the male: "*The interaction* [of Marlow and the
Intended] *suggests* [. . .] *the submission of his will to hers. Marlow seems to lose the ability to*
initiate his own thoughts, to create his own words. He becomes a mere mimic, making her
words, his" (28), such claim is thoroughly illustrated in the following:

> "*His words, at least, have not died.*"
> "*His words will remain,*" I said.
> "*And his example,*" she whispered to herself. "*Men looked up to him–*
> *his goodness shone in every act. His example–*"
> "*True,*" I said; "*his example too. Yes, his example. I forgot that.*"
> [. . .]
> *She said suddenly very low,* "*He died as he lived.*"
> "*His end,*" said I, with dull anger stirring in me, "*was in every way*
> *worthy of his life.*" (*HD* 109-10)

Unlike Ronny's words to Adela and Adela's words to Ronny, which attempt to
comprehend the truth even as they fall short of it, Marlow's intentional lie has the effect of
sparing the Intended from comprehending what Kurtz recognised as "*The horror! The*
horror!" (*HD* 100) of man's depravity. Instead of reacting as Adela had done, the Intended
gives out a "*light sigh,*" followed by "*an exulting and terrible cry, by the cry of inconceivable*
triumph and of unspeakable pain. 'I knew it–I was sure!'" (*HD* 111). Like Marlow's aunt,
who has been spared knowledge of the imperialists' true motivations, so too has the Intended
been saved from the truth by Marlow. Thus, although Marlow seems to have learned the
lessons of the jungle, in the end he still believes that women cannot endure the glimpse of
truth which those lessons apprehend. He is like Forster's Fielding, who on the other hand,
quickly forgets what he has learned altogether. Once he has returned to his society, Fielding
reassumes his old belief that truth can be circumscribed and stated factually. Fielding
professes his greatest admiration for the Mediterranean harmony:

> *The Mediterranean is the human norm. When men leave that exquisite lake, whether through the Bosphorus or the Pillars of Hercules, they approach the monstrous and extraordinary; and the southern exit leads to the strangest experience of all. Turning his back on it yet again, he took the train northward, and tender romantic fancies that he thought were dead for ever, flowered when he saw the buttercups and daisies of June.* (*API* 250)

Fielding's pronouncement of the separate worlds North and South recalls Marlow's description of the separate female world, where women are not only 'out of touch with truth' but threatened by the potential encroachment of fact as well.

For Fielding, truth can be boiled down, summarised and communicated in words, to the contrary of Adela, who has learned from her experience in the jungle that the world has become less solid, less coherent, and the words they use to describe it have become thin and small. Adela has learned—having being granted an opportunity, which Marlow denies both his aunt and Kurtz's Intended—that the truth of human experience is too complex to be reduced to some passionless, reasoned male rhetoric. Unlike Kurtz' intended, Adela is bothered by the fact that words not only often fail to encompass truth but that they often hide or obscure it as well. Although Frances L. Rusticcia points out that "*A Passage to India is not a disguised first-person novel*" (122), the author would undoubtedly have felt very much as Adela does. As Valerie Sedlak suggests: "*women did not live in two worlds, they did not posture and pretend and make things up: they experienced reality simply and as it was*" (448). In one sense, they lacked the self-confidence to make things up, but this gave all the more authenticity to their rendering of experience. Adela has come to understand one of the lessons, which Eric Trethewey identifies in *Heart of Darkness*, that "*there can be no substantial identity between words and things*," and that "*any self that shapes itself according to prescriptions enshrined in language will be, in the absence of something more than language, as insubstantial as words themselves*" (106). This is obvious when Marlow declares, "'*it seems to me I am trying to tell you a dream–making a vain attempt, because no relation of a dream can convey the dream sensation, that commingling of absurdity, surprise . . . .*'" (*HD* 39).

Throughout their journey towards the Marabar Caves, it seems as if Adela and Aziz talk around one another, rather than to one another, and Forster would seem to suggest—where Conrad does not—that the inability of the two to communicate has as much to do with the differences in their genders as it does with the limitations of language in

general. "*He* [. . .] *had little to say to her, less than ever now* [. . .] *Nor had Adela much to say to him*" (*API* 134). Relegated to separate worlds, Aziz and Adela simply do not speak the same language. Just as Marlow mistook the jottings of the Russian "*harlequin*" in the margins of Towson's book for ciphers, "*a man lugging with him a book of that description into this nowhere and studying it – and making notes – in cipher at that! It was an extravagant mystery*" (*HD* 54). So too does Aziz seem to see in Adela's words some sort of impenetrable code, when in fact the difference is merely cultural.

This acknowledgment of her limitations does not, however, quell Adela's desires. In her quest for self-knowledge, she has learned that she cannot simply accept what the civilised, conventional world offers her—marriage. Now that Adela has agreed to marry Ronny, she is shaken as she finds herself once more confronted with the realities of the conventional world in which she lives. Although for Ronny their marriage will mean little change in his life, for Adela it represents, significantly, a loss of the very selfhood, which she has worked so hard to attain throughout most of the novel:

> *She and Ronny no, they did not love each other* [. . .] *The discovery had come so suddenly that she felt like a mountaineer whose rope had broken. Not to love the man one's going to marry! Not to find it out till this moment! Not even to have asked oneself the question until now! Something else to think out. Vexed rather than appalled, she stood still, her eyes on the sparkling rock. There was esteem and animal contact at dusk, but the emotion that links them was absent.* (*API* (134-5)

For Adela, marriage at best meant subsuming her own thoughts and desires to her husband's while she worked her charm upon him in order to gain some limited measure of what she truly desired. Her fate would then seem little better than that of Marlow's aunt, who finds herself positively triumphant at having secured her nephew a position with the Company through the exercise of her influence with "*the wife of*" some "*high dignitary*" (*HD* 17), who, in turn, undoubtedly exercised her own feminine charm upon her husband.

As a number of critics note, there is a sexual element inherent in Adela's fear of marriage as well. As George Watson suggests:

> *In Adela, the fear becomes fatally internalized. Ronny* [. . .] *remains quite insensitive to her anxiety at being exhibited as an object at the* [. . .] *club after their engagement. The point is, of course, that there is no conceivable way for Adela to object to any of this treatment, in*

> *terms a conventional male like Ronny could understand, except by*
> *rejecting him outright. And rejecting a man one has attracted and to*
> *whom one has promised sexual fulfillment is in traditional male*
> *mythology tantamount to castrating him.* (629-30)

Forster also provides a number of overt suggestions of Adela's sexual anxiety, perhaps nowhere more vividly than in the girl's daydreams or hallucinations, in which she says about Aziz "*What a handsome little Oriental he was, and no doubt his wife and children were beautiful too, for people usually get what they already possess*" (*API* 135). Nicholas Royle notes that: "*For Adela, the discovery and acknowledgment of feelings are complicated by her fear of sex, which seems to be based on a dislike of man's animal nature and possible brutality and on the fear of a loss of self through the merging of one's identity with another*" (142). This fear appears clearly in the courtroom scene when:

> *Adela had stopped crying. An extraordinary expression was on her*
> *face, half relief, half horror. She repeated, "Aziz, Aziz."*
>
> *They all avoided mentioning that name. It had become synonymous*
> *with the power of evil. He was "the prisoner," "the person in*
> *question," "the defense," and the sound of it now rang out like the first*
> *note of a new symphony.* (*API* 179)

This horror, as in the cry of Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness*, is associated with images of darkness and death, as well as the depravity of man's nature (Pitt 142-3). Adela's hallucinations do seem to recall the final madness of Kurtz, who was driven insane by his insights into man's violent, corrupt nature and into his own inability to control this violence within himself. Marlow directly connects Kurtz's knowledge of the chaotic, incomprehensibility of the world with his insanity when he cloaks his description in terms of language and dreams: "*I've been telling you what we said—repeating the phrases we pronounced—but what's the good?* [. . .] *They had behind them, to my mind, the terrific suggestiveness of words heard in dreams, of phrases spoken in nightmares* [. . .] *But his soul was mad*" (*HD* 95).

Adela's final, personal horror is somewhat different from Kurtz's, but she nevertheless comes to recognise the nightmare, which it represents as a result of the knowledge she has gained within the reaches of the untamed jungle. For Adela, men's final—and perhaps worst—act of violence is their suppression of women, a suppression effectuated by economic and sexual dominance. In the end, the only way for Adela and relatively Mrs Moore to escape the loss of selfhood, which this dominance represents, is to remove themselves utterly from

the society in which they live. Thus, Mrs Moore's death, however accidental, ultimately provides her with the only possible means of escape.

Despite these many parallels, Forster works to re-write Conrad in a sense by bringing the women of *A Passage to India* into the jungle and thus into a traditionally masculine sphere, i.e., to bring Kurtz' intended through the character of Adela (Ronny's Intended) into the jungle. In doing so, he draws women out of the "*beautiful world of their own*" (*HD* 69) to which Conrad's Marlow wishes to consign them, enabling her to trace, in the character of Adella Quested, the struggle for female empowerment and self-determination. Adela's journey is unfortunately a journey which Forster suggests may only lead her down the same, hopeless path, which Marlow followed. But in the end, Forster seems to say better that women should make the journey, as Charlie Marlow has done, than allow themselves to continue living the lie of the "*beautiful world of their own*", which men have created for them, and which men, like Marlow, work so carefully to preserve.

III. Secret Sharing and the Exclusion of Women

No matter how the meaning of *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* is defined— as a quest within, as a journey to a mythic underworld, as apocalypse, as a critique of imperialism or of Western civilisation—the standard commentary centers in a feminist contest upon the secret sharings of male characters whose isolation from female language or experience evokes (if not sanctions) the dream of a homocentric universe. In the early 1900s, however, females were still cast in inferior roles to men, and despite the extension of domestic virtues to the civilising mission, English women are excluded from participating in its noble work. Conrad and Forster through the creation of two separate, engendered spheres reflected that traditional treatment of women in *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*. Their women characters were kept unnamed and their speech limited, highlighting the belittlement of women in the male-dominated society.

Conrad's women remain otherworldly through the eyes of Marlow, removed from 'the horror' although they both influence it and are influenced by it. Throughout the book, the only female name ever mentioned is the name of the ship. Women are silent, and frequently disdained by the paternalistic narrator, who admits not to really understand the world that women live in. For Ross Murfin, the scene of Marlow's famous lie is but the most memorable of many that affect male and female readers differently, reminding the latter that this is a tale "*concerned with a kind of mainstream male experience*" that has been "*deliberately hidden*"

from the women inside the text. Although not denying that "*the sexism of Marlow and Kurtz*" may be "*part of the horror that Conrad intends to disclose,*" Murfin maintains that "*the feminist' readers access*" to Conrad's most famous work is "*especially problematic*", a fact he uses to explain "*decades of nearly exclusive male commentary surrounding Heart of Darkness*" (67).

Even if the sexism of Marlow and Kurtz is part of the 'horror' that Conrad intends to disclose, we cannot but consider that the text is structured so that this horror—though obviously revealed to male and female reader alike—is deliberately hidden from Kurtz's Intended. According to Nina Pelikan Straus "*Marlow presents a world distinctly split into male and female realms—the first harboring the possibility of truth and the second dedicated to the maintenance of delusion*" (199). Truth, then, is directed at and intended for men only. As Edward Said suggests:

> *The Conradian encounter is not simply between a man and his destiny* [. . .] *but* [. . .] *it is the encounter between speaker and hearer. Marlow is Conrad's chief invention for this encounter, Marlow with his haunting knowledge that a man such as Kurtz or Jim 'existed for me, and after all it is only through me that he exists for you.' The chain of humanity—'we exist only in so far as we hang together'—is the transmission of actual speech.* ("The Text, the World, the Critic" 176)

Marlow speaks in *Heart of Darkness* to other men, and although he speaks about women, there is no indication that women might be included among his hearers, nor that his existence depends upon "*his hanging together with a humanity that includes the second sex*" (Straus 199). The contextuality of Conrad's tale, the deliberate use of a frame to include readers as hearers, suggests the secret nature of what is being told, a secrecy in which Conrad seems to join Marlow. Therefore, the peculiar density and inaccessibility of *Heart of Darkness* may be the result of its extremely masculine historical referentiality, its insistence on a male circle of readers (Straus 201).

As do Conrad's European male characters, Forster's remain faithful to the belief that the delicacy of women and civilisation must be protected from 'darkness,' and the 'savagery' that anything not British might imply. Therefore, *A Passage to India* addresses a discourse of power capable of coding anticolonial struggle as the violation of white women. Adela serves the narrative function of undermining the racial assumptions of this understanding of anticolonial rebellion, but then, having served her narrative function, she is no longer of

interest to the novel. The *"girl's sacrifice"* (*API* 217) remains just that, a sacrifice for advancing a plot centered on the impossibility of a friendship between men across the colonial divide. Adela's fellow Anglo-Indians invest the image of *"her abundant figure and masses of corn-gold hair"* (*API* 160) with the full value of colonialism; for them, *"she symbolized all that is worth fighting and dying for"* (*API* 160). Her fellow expatriates react to the news of the sexual assault from within a code of chivalry; they treat Adela as a mere cipher for a battle between men: *"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; he was bearing the sahib's cross"* (*API* 164). The term 'sahib's cross' is a parody of the idea of the white man's burden that represents colonialism as an act of martyrdom. It is also an indictment of the masculinist perception that the sexual humiliation of English women is an indirect attack on men. The objectification of Adela into a passive victim denies her an entry into the great narrative of the white man's burden even as it confirms the self-sacrifice of the men, who serve that mission. For the critic Jenny Sharpe,

> *She cannot save the natives from their depravity, but neither can she save herself. Adela, the memsahib, the Anglo-Indian woman, has strayed far from the borders of feminist England. She may have entered the caves with some semblance of her former identity, but she leaves it as a violated body bearing the visible signs of the native's ingratitude.* (135-6)

At the start of his meeting with Kurtz's Intended, Marlow is certainly portrayed as weak-hearted. He doubts himself before the Intended even opens the door. He instantly recognises the overwhelming differences in her, separating her from the rest of humanity. *"How completely, she was out of it"* (*HD* 69), he says Just like Marlow's aunt, the Intended lives in a separate world where her *"mature capacity for fidelity, for suffering"* has left her untouched by the outside (*HD* 106). The Intended's grief signals her dedication to her image of Kurtz and in this, Marlow finds his motivation utter a lie. Marlow, at the last moment, rescues the maiden of 'fair hair', 'pale visage', and 'pure brow' instead of revealing the truth of Kurtz's final words. *"It would have been too dark"* (*HD* 111) for even someone, who hates a lie as much as Marlow to extinguish her *"light of belief and love"* (*HD* 107).

However, by failing his test of dedication to the truth, Marlow also succeeds in excluding the Intended from the reality of his world (Simmons 102). She will never know the change that befell Kurtz in the jungle and always cling to an untrue ghost of the man. As Mrs

Moore will never know the fate of Dr Aziz after he is accused by Adela, she is sent by Ronny to Europe to her world where she belongs. Only the men of the story know the whole likeness of Kurtz. Thus, Marlow's lie is not as heroic as it appears at first read but is really designed to maintain the brotherhood of males—the bond that links Marlow to Kurtz even in death.

Ultimately, Marlow's lie keeps women in a world where they are ignorant of the truth and in need of falsehood supplied by males (Watts 30). They live in a world that is dependent and inferior. Women are unnatural parts of men's world because unlike men, they have no voice and/or agency. They are simply different, and disaster befalls any man that brings the alien being into his world. Thus, Marlow only sees men and women as co-existing as long as women "*stay in that beautiful world of their own, lest ours gets worse*" (*HD* 69). The reader likes to think that Marlow only feels this way because he fears that strong females would threaten to devour his masculine identity (Watts 28). After all, women cannot help if men tend to lose their self-control around them.

The critic Ian Watt treats the problem of Kurtz's Intended by referring to Conrad's critique of society as though society were a neutral phenomenon in which sexism and patriarchal self-empowering were non-existent:

> *It therefore follows that, merely by allotting women a leisure role, society has in effect excluded them from discovering reality; so it is by no choice or fault of hers that the Intended inhabits an unreal world.*
>
> *Marlow's opinion of leisured women makes them negative examples of the idea that work is the basis of the individual's sense of reality; but it also makes them positive examples of the complementary idea of the danger of relying on words. [The Intended] is armoured by the invincible credulity produced by the unreality of the public rhetoric.* (244-5)

However, we see a difference in the use of Adela Quested as a European woman venturing in the wilderness rather than the Intended, who lives far in Europe and protected from the atrocities experienced by men in the jungle. While Kurtz's Intended and African mistress are kept afar, each in her world, Adela is in touch with the Other land, with the Other man, and mainly with the Other woman. Adela may be the cause of racial tensions when she cries rape, but she is also the one member of the colonising race, who recognises the oppressiveness of colonial hierarchies. Like the Hindu women, who are "*hurried away in a suttee*" (*API* 45), Adela cannot exercise her free will and voice-agency. In this regard, it is not simply a case of

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the 'native female' being excluded from a discourse of feminist individualism, as Spivak suggests ("Three Women's Texts" 271). Rather, Adela's appeal to the moral mission of colonialism for asserting her own autonomy indicates a triangular relationship whereby English women's bid for domestic power passes through the racial hierarchy of colonialism. In short, the silent passivity of the Hindu woman is the grounds for the speaking subject of European woman.

In this realm, Brenda Silver understands colonial structures of power as a doubling of a sexual oppression that Adela, as an English woman, has the power to speak while the Intended doesn't. By subsuming different oppressions within the experience of the European, she allows "*a discourse on the native assault of white women*" to serve as a model for theorising Indian subjugation and resistance to colonial rule (88). By the end of her essay "Periphrasis, Power, and Rape in *A Passage to India*," we see that Adela's cry of rape also voices the oppression of Indian women:

> *Being English, she* [Adela] *has the power to speak the position of otherness denied to the Indians in general and doubly denied to the invisible and silent Indian woman, whose resistance resides in absence and negativity, and she uses this power to unsettle the dominant discourse. For Adela, then, to speak rape becomes an act of resistance. Her double discourse brings into representation woman's experience, the unspoken, or unspeakable, that is left out of naming and ideologies even as it refuses the rhetoric of power that denies individuality and speech.* (104-5)

According to Jenny Sharpe, if feminism has anything to teach us, it is that an official history has produced a category of woman that keeps women hidden from history (85). By deploying rape as a master trope for the objectification of English women and natives alike, Silver produces a category of Other that keeps the colonised hidden from history (98). A reading of Adela's speech as an agency that is denied to Indians highlights the problematical appearance of Indian women in Forster's novel. Akin to Kurtz's mistress, the invisible and silent women on whose behalf others speak would lead us to believe that Indian women, having lived for generations under unchanging conditions of oppression, are passively waiting for Indian men to liberate them. The signs of these battles do not appear in *Heart of Darkness,* neither in *A Passage to India,* except in the one reference to Muslim women, who are on hunger strike in protest of Aziz's arrest: "*And a number of Mohammedan ladies had sworn to take no food until the prisoner was acquitted; their death would make little difference, indeed, being*

invisible, they seemed dead already, nevertheless it was disquieting" (*API* 190). Despite the criticism of the Anglo-Indian mentality that these words hold, they also work to contain Indian women's noisy resistance within the figure of the silent and hidden purdah woman. If colonised women do not speak in *A Passage to India* and in *Heart of Darkness*, it is not because they do not have a historical voice as such but because the novels cannot deliver their agency.

Failing to inhabit the mind of a character that can perhaps reveal to us the 'real India' or 'real Africa,' Forster and Conrad do not speak in the place of a subaltern, who cannot speak for himself. Upon doing so, they risk representing the colonised woman as nothing but the object of Western desire. Yet, in her desire to represent the other side, Adela ends up silencing the Indians on whose behalf she claims to speak as Marlow does with the Intended. Forster's and Conrad's literary depiction of a subaltern woman is not only inadequate but visibly so. The subaltern woman is a figure of truth to the precise degree that she is the object of a Western (homoerotic) gaze, for the aloofness that provokes Adela into reversing the rape charge is also the sign of an absent consciousness. This is the "*blind spot in* [Forster's and Conrad's] *texts, the not-seen that opens and limits visibility*" (Derida qtd. in Sharpe 158).

Conrad's and Forster's texts suggest that men's society would be threatened if women were allowed access to the male-dominated realm of work where horrifying secrets are discovered. However, it seems dubious to argue that Conrad and Forster knew well what they wrote in *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*, and that women are excluded from the circle of readers not by them, but by the speaker they seek to expose. Ruth Nadelhaft argues that in *Almayer's Folly* and *An Outcast of the Island* "*women, frequently half-breeds, represent the clearest means of challenging and revealing Western male insularity and domination*" (242-3). Certainly, Winnie Verloc in *The Secret Agent* and Miss Haldin of *Under Western Eyes* or the Schlegel sisters in *Howards End* are evoked with a complexity quite different from the treatment of the Intended or the African woman in *Heart of Darkness* or Adela or The Indian Women in *A Passage to India*. But these texts are not about an African and Indian wilderness in which "*the stillness of an implacable force brood*[s] *over an inscrutable intention*" (*HD* 48); they do not insist that the 'savage' woman is "*like the wilderness itself, with an air of brooding over an inscrutable purpose*" (*HD* 87). They do not close in their last pages with the teller of the tale confronting one woman while thinking about the other, placing the dark figure over the light figure like a transparency as though this layering replicated the mysterious obscurity of the 'truth' itself: "*I shall see this eloquent*

phantom as long as I live, and I shall see her too, a tragic and familiar Shade, resembling in this gesture another one, tragic also, and bedecked with powerless charms, stretching bare brown arms over the glitter of the infernal stream, the stream of darkness" (*HD* 110).

The women in both texts, either belonging to the coloniser or to the colonised, are reserved for the role of white lady in the tower, just as men, either belonging to the coloniser or to the colonised, among the other roles they play, are reserved for the role of heroic deliverers of those ladies. The form Marlow's heroism takes is that of rescuing the Intended from 'inner truth.' As Adela's Anglo-Indian fellows try chivalrically to protect her from the Others evil:

> *Although Miss Quested had not made herself popular with the English, she brought out all that was fine in their character. For a few hours an exalted emotion gushed forth, which the women felt even more keenly than the men, if not for so long. "What can we do for our sister?" was the only thought of Mesdames Callendar and Lesley, as they drove through the pelting heat to enquire.* (*API* 159)

The lie Marlow offers the Intended is understood to be a form of chivalric, albeit ironic, sacrifice, cryptically underscoring an ideology that defines a protective lie as a moral act. However, Marlow brings truth to men by virtue of his bringing falsehood to women. Heroic maleness is defined precisely in adverse relation to delusional femininity.

Marlow's mental state is contingent upon the decision he makes to lie to the Intended, to decide that the truth about Kurtz is 'too dark' to reveal to her, and to harbor within himself a mystery he will reveal much later only to those 'man' enough to take it. It is clear that Marlow prefers Kurtz's cry of 'the horror' to the Intended's cry of 'I loved him.' For 'horror' is the secret password in the brotherhood of men who 'know.' And Marlow's power to incorporate both the 'truth' of 'darkness' and the necessary illusions of 'light' is exactly what separates him from those deluded others incapable of grasping his psychic plenitude. Psychotherapeutic plenitude is thus reserved for those, who can identify with Marlow, and through Marlow, with Kurtz. For a woman to do so is to court self-degradation, and this is not a problem specific only to *Heart of Darkness* but also to *A Passage to India*. Adela decides by the end that she would find her psychic plenitude only when returning home:

> *"I speak only of India. I am not astray in England. I fit in there— no, don't think I shall do harm in England. When I am forced back there, I shall settle down to some career. I have sufficient money left to start*

> *myself and heaps of friends of my own type. I shall be quite all right."*
> *Then sighing: "But oh, the trouble I've brought on everyone here. . . .*
> *I can never get over it." (API* 232)

At the end of Conrad's tale, Seymour Gross reminds us, *"The transformation has been complete: 'the benign immensity of unstained light' has become 'the heart of an immense darkness.' Now* [the narrator]*, like Marlow, will be set apart from all those who do not know the truth"* (202).

The erasure of women represents a final stage in the development of the brutally sexist conventions of high art. Conrad's Intended is no more than a *"pale head, floating towards me in the dusk"* (*HD* 106). What this figure achieves, as perhaps few other female characters in fiction do, is what could nicely be called negative capability but which is psychologically symbolic of the male's need for an infinite receptivity and passivity. Male heroism and plenitude depend on female cowardice and emptiness. The guarding of secret knowledge is, thus, the undisclosed theme of *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*. Man's protectiveness is no longer seen in the service of woman's deluded desires, but serves the therapeutic end of keeping the woman mute. The male hearers of Marlow's tale never hear the Intended's name, as it is the case for Aziz's wife. They remain in the stereotypically convenient world of 'she.' They lack that one distinguishing feature of the beloved, which is that they are absolutely individual to the one who love them. The Intended and the native woman are, thus, thrice voided or erased: their names are never spoken by Kurtz, by Marlow, or by Conrad, by Fielding, by Aziz, or by Forster; and it is determined that it will never be spoken by Conrad's and Forster's commentators.

Conclusion

To ignore the role of women would affect an injustice upon a fully developed interpretation of *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*, as women play an essential part in the comprehension of these dominant issues, particularly in the unveiling of Marlow's greatest curiosity: the veiled 'truth' within the enigmatic character of Kurtz. In fact, women serve as clandestine vehicles in uncovering the impetus behind Kurtz's penchant for the untamed Congolese wilderness, facilitating Marlow's discovery of Kurtz's multifarious nature, and, ultimately, illuminating Marlow's perception of the 'civilised' world.

While women and feminine imagery outwardly appear to enact major roles in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* and Forster's *A Passage to India*, they compose an illuminating undercurrent which proves to be just as indispensable to the novels as any major character, symbol, or image. Whether aiding the reader on his journey to a reconsideration of European social norms, providing him with insight into Kurtz's complex character, or elucidating elements of the jungle, which captivated Kurtz and hallucinated Adela, feminine roles consistently bring to light the often shady 'truths' within these novels. However, their effect is not limited to broadening Marlow's and Adela's understanding of the world around them, but extends to the audience a more complete comprehension of the novels in their entirety.

Conrad and Forster understand the European woman to be positioned by, but not reducible to, the racial hierarchy of colonialism. Rather than treating race as a unified field of otherness, they use it as a category of difference for designating the relation between coloniser and colonised. The colonised women that appear only as an absence of the coloniser women are central to resolving the contradictions of Western women's sexual subordination. European women's bid for gender power passes forcibly through a colonial hierarchy of race.

CHAPTER FOUR:
SEXUAL UNEASE AND INVERSION

Introduction

Through the discourse about empire, sex plays a significant role and *"it is at the very heart of racism"* (Hyam 203). However, the prospect for white men of freer, more satisfying heterosexual relations with nonwhite women was often simultaneously expressed and repressed in Victorian literature. Given its taboos on homosexuality, on interracial sexual relations, and on the idea of empire itself as rape, Victorian literature largely fails to represent what was actually occurring in the 'dark places' of the world. Orientalist literature as a whole, however, symbolises what Ali Bedad calls *"the desire for the Orient"* (15). The *"association between the Orient and sex"* was more explicit in works by French and British authors like Gustave Flaubert's Egyptian mistress or in Kipling's *Kim* (Bedad 188). Madeleine Dobie maintains that: *"Like the word 'Orient' itself,"* the image of the Oriental woman *"triggered a series of associations involving harems and veils, polygamy, eunuchs and political despotism, and perhaps above all, desire intensified by the obstacles placed in its way"* (1).

The British believed they were chastely rescuing the Hindu widows from *sati*, and 'la femme orientale' of the French writers was a figure of erotic desire to be unveiled and either figuratively or actually possessed. For British writers, the 'desire for the Orient' was tempered or repressed by several factors: evangelicalism; the belief in the general criminality of Indian culture, fueled by the campaigns against *sati* and *thagi* (A well-organized confederacy of professional assassins who traveled in gangs throughout India for several hundred years), the Rebellion of 1857-8, and the repression of sexuality within Victorian culture—a repression that, however, as Foucault argued in his *History of Sexuality*, was widely acknowledged and debated (55). Sexual conquest is, thus, firmly linked with the colonial enterprise, which is based essentially on the imposition of one's values on the other. Therefore, it is of paramount importance to see to what extent our studied novels could deal with this taboo-considered topic. In the pages that follow, I hope to delineate the key sexual relationships in *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* and the range of desires manifested in these relationships. Before dealing with images of sexuality in both novels, intricate overlaps between   colonial

and sexual dominations are of paramount importance to be highlighted.

I. Sexuality and Colonialism: Desire versus Anxiety

Looking at heterosexual aspects of imperial and colonial history, and at imperial and colonial aspects of the history of heterosexuality suggests that sexual ambivalence and the desire of certain European men for emotional and physical union with 'foreign' female partners produced a direct and identifiable influence on their public lives, whether in political actions, philosophical beliefs or artistic and literary creations. It also illustrates the variety of heterosexual relationships in colonial contexts, from lofty and ostensibly innocent evocations of female beauty in speeches or memoirs to outright pornography, from stories of love to cases of rape, from long-lasting and heart-felt romances to promiscuity and prostitution. The interaction between western men's and native women's sexuality makes the human body central to the articulation of colonial/imperial ideologies. While commerce dominates accounts of the colonial empires, the constitutive role of women/the colonised and their bodily interaction with the English males/colonisers added larger socio-political discourses. At first, British abhorrence of Oriental practices was informed by specific moral virtues and a conviction of social superiority. A practical sense of cultural contact, imagined in the form of domestic sexual arrangements, was conveyed through visual and narrative mediums. The interracial sexual liaisons that actually took place, however, are a part of the past that has been selectively forgotten. Durba Ghosh, in *Sex and the Family in Colonial India: The Making of Empire*, examined this past to "*reveal how men approached intimate relationships when they had an undercurrent of racial and class anxiety*" (15). Those Englishmen, who engaged in such relationships, were particularly concerned about the future of their mixed-race children, and this led them—and colonial society at large—to confront complicated and delusive questions, such as who should be classed as a British subject and what rights these indigenous companions and their offspring should enjoy.

Companionship with native women held an anomalous position in the scheme of the colonial establishment—an establishment in which men sought to be powerful. For some, it could be politically rewarding. Thus, in pursuit of a respectable Empire, these traders, merchants, civil servants and soldiers were mindful of social/moral and racial distinctions. In Ghosh's words "*the dynamics of colonial inequities within interracial families reflect how gender and race hierarchies paralleled social order in the colonial settlements of the East India Company*" (Ghosh 35). In short, a sexual and social regulation pertaining to English

morality was enforced by asserting a man's absolute control over his companion. For its own moral and political imperatives, while the colonial state in different ways was securing men's sexual access to the bodies of native women, its courts, to all intents and purposes, also legitimated the presence of these women around military cantonments and colonial settlements. They were to be ready domestic and sexual partners (35).

The expansion and colonialism of the English posed a formidable challenge to their identity, which emerged particularly troubled when its male sexuality produced racial anxieties in the colonial landscape. The colonial archives might have deliberately avoided recording racial conjugality, but the number of wills left by colonial companions does suggest that these relationships existed; and this seems to have caused much anxiety. The sexual economy of the colonial period became liable to government intervention, and the debate around mixed-race intimacy became centred on issues of race, gender and class. A degree of ambivalence existed in the governance of various institutions and in the policies that were developed, as the native women were readily available sexual partners on whose bodies the paternal authority of their partners could be established—which aligned with legitimising and ensuring colonial control. Madeleine Dobie conveyed that "*racial transgression and the negotiations for women worked in tandem with global understanding of a woman's body as a site where those in power tended to inscribe their authority*" (38). The analysis of some aspects of the English colonialism addresses the sexualised gendered context of the Empire and vouches for relations between bodies/sexuality and empires/colonialism.

Today most historians acknowledge that the colonies provided many possibilities of heterosexuality and even homosexuality. According to Ronald Hyam, in *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience*, colonial frontiers offered Europeans the possibility of transgressing their rigid sexual mores:

> *Foreign lands and peoples certainly spelt the possibility of new sexual experiences, which is why they became both exciting and monstrous for the European imagination. Sexual relations in non-European cultures were certainly different and sometimes less repressive than in Christian Europe. For most European travellers and colonialists, however, the promise of sexual pleasure rested on the assumption that the darker races or non-Europeans were immoral, [. . .] libidinous and always desired white people.* (78)

While cross-cultural sexual contact was certainly transgressive (and is celebrated as such in contemporary commentary on European sexual practices), we should not forget that colonial

sexual encounters, both heterosexual and homosexual, often exploited inequities of class, age, gender, race and power. In colonial fictions and travelogues, however, they are often embedded within a myth of reciprocity. A reciprocal desire for an 'Other', the white men desiring 'black' women and vice versa and the 'black' men desiring white women and vice versa.

The 'veiled' colonised woman becomes a recurrent colonial fantasy, which initiated a long tradition of stories in which the desire of the native woman for the European man coded for the submission of the colonised people and the desire of the European woman for the colonised man coded for a revenge. The 'Oriental' male was depicted as a lusty villain from whom the virile but courteous European could rescue both the native and the European woman (Kabbani 36). For the white man and woman, the black man is marked by his colour and his supposedly limitless sexuality. 'Negrophobia' turns on the fear and desire of rampant black sexuality. For the white subject, the black other is everything that lies outside the self. For the black subject, however, the white other serves to define everything that is desirable, everything that the self desires (Loomba 144). For Frantz Fanon, instead of the Oedipal scenario where the male child desires its mother, the fantasy of possession of white women by black men is offered by him as the primal scene of colonialism: "*When my restless hands caress those white breasts, they grasp white civilization and dignity and make them mine*" (180). Thus, colonialism is described as an Oedipal scene of forbidden desire. While the black man's desire for white women is contextualised and historicised, the white woman's fantasy of being raped by a black man is "*in some way the fulfillment of a private dream, of an inner wish*" (180).

In colonialist as well as nationalist writings, racial and sexual violence are yoked together by images of rape, which, in different forms, becomes an abiding and recurrent metaphor for colonial relations. If colonial power is repeatedly expressed as a white man's possession of black women and men, colonial fears centre around the rape of white women by black men. Not surprisingly, the romance is less sustainable in the case of white women, who couple with black men. The fear is that such contact will "*people the isle with Calibans*."[1] (Loomba 178). The spectre of miscegenation most graphically brings together anxieties about female sexuality and racial purity, and, as colonial contacts widen and deepen, it increasingly

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[1] To use the famous words of Shakespeare's Caliban when he is charged with attempting to rape Prospero's daughter Miranda in *The Tempest*.

haunts the Europeans. The eighteenth-century historian Edward Long, on the question of letting blacks into England, says:

> *The lower class of women in England are remarkably fond of the blacks, for reasons too brutal to mention; they would connect themselves with horses and asses if the laws permitted them. By these ladies they generally have numerous brood. Thus, in the course of a few generations more, the English blood will become so contaminated with this mixture* [. . .] *as even to reach the middle, and then the higher orders of people.* (qtd. in E. Lawrence 57)

However, 'the desire for the Orient' was not necessarily heterosexual. Antoinette Burton also hypothesised the existence of a 'Sotadic Zone'—basically the tropics—in which homosexuality was far more prevalent than in Europe (55). Many writers and historians recount the homosexual experiences of various Europeans in colonial contexts. The trials of Oscar Wilde at the end of nineteenth century demonstrate, however, that it was virtually impossible for any Victorian author to broach the subject of homosexuality except in veiled terms. Many literary works dealing with the Orient or more generally the Empire are both misogynistic and emphasise the homosocial bonding among male characters, but do not go farther than that. Ashis Nandy identifies an "*unconscious homo-eroticized bonding*" linking British colonial men and their Indian male subjects, and hypothesises about ways in which this facilitated Indian strategies of resistance to British rule (10). Nandy, also, points out that homosexuality (especially when the Oscar Wilde affair burst in Britain) came up against the sexual norm, "*a basic postulate of the colonial attitude in Britain*", which mandated heterosexuality, marriage, monogamy, child-rearing and family life as essential values of civilised society. A figure such as Wilde was "*an unselfaware, but more or less complete, critic of the political culture which sired colonialism*" (Nandy 44-5). In short, homosexuals—and homosexuality—played a far more significant and diverse role in colonialism than many would allow. Better to enjoy the pleasures of homoerotic sex than the dangers of heterosexual miscegenation, thought the colonialists. Robert J. C. Young adds that "*feminisation of indigenous peoples encouraged illicit attractions*" (26). Ann Laura Stoler, by contrast, suggests that "*concubinage between European men and native women was considered an alternative, albeit an unattractive one, to homosexuality among the ranks*" (*Race and the Education* 129).

Indeed, colonial lands provided a haven for Europeans whose sexual inclinations did not fit into the constraints of European society. Bonds between men in the colonial world ranged across a wide spectrum—from friendship with other Europeans to relationships with native men or boys. Robert Aldrich argues that "*homosexual inclination exercised a profound influence on the political attitudes and artistic works of many Europeans in the colonial world*" (*Colonialism and Homosexuality* iii). For some Europeans abroad, homosexual encounters were circumstantial because of lack of female partners, the result of chance meetings or pent-up frustrations, or part of the violence perpetrated throughout the colonial world. Others first realised or accepted their homosexual inclinations while overseas, different cultures and climates stimulating desires and liberating libidos. Still others went overseas intentionally to seek out homosexual encounters, heading for countries where traditions tolerated or fostered such relationships. The colonies provided many possibilities of homosexuality—a variety of perspectives and experiences by which men expressed attraction to other men. Some European men found sexual partners, whether for casual encounters or longer-term relationships, among fellow Europeans or indigenous men. The manly gendered nature of expansion, in which men monopolised many imperial activities, and where manly virtues were championed, created situations congenial to intimate male bonding. The imbalance in the sex ratio between European men and women, and the limited range of sexual partners in some outposts, encouraged 'situational' homosexuality. As Aldrich puts it:

> *The gendered nature of expansion, in which men monopolized* [. . .] *imperial activities* [. . .] *created situations congenial to intimate male bonding. The imbalance in the sex ratio between European men and women, and the limited range of sexual partners in some outposts, encouraged 'situational' homosexuality.* (*The Seduction of the Mediterranean* 3)

Certain colonies gained fame as sites of homosexual licence. Indeed, in French slang, '*faire passer son brevet colonial*' (literally, to give someone an examination for a colonial diploma) meant to initiate him to sodomy (Caradec 132). However, having homosexual proclivities does not necessarily imply sexual relations with someone else. Obstacles inhibiting physical expression of sexual desire include psychological repression, religious vows or beliefs, fear of disease, lack of reciprocated affections or opportunities, and punishments for contravening accepted mores. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, when many Europeans considered sexual continence a virtue, the lack of physical relations should not be surprising. This does not mean that sexual needs and desires were not

present. Furthermore, boundaries between homosexuality, intimate friendship, male bonding and paternalistic or avuncular sentiments were extremely porous, and mateship could and did veer off into sexual intimacy. To Michel Foucault, for example, sexual identity is not a transcendent nature; rather, it is a discursive construct invented through 'juridico-medical' discourses in the nineteenth century: "*Homosexuality appeared as one of the forms of sexuality when it was transposed from the practice of sodomy onto a kind of interior androgyny, a hermaphrodism of the soul. The sodomite had been a temporary aberration; the homosexual was now a species*" (43). Foucault argues that homosexuals, as sodomites, were defined simply as practitioners of sodomitic activities. By the time of the historical frame of Forster's writing of *A Passage to India* (1913-1924), sexual practices had become all but irrelevant to the essential definition of the homosexual or minority.

A new kind of masculinity emerges, where the neglected sites of repression and fear become a generating site for what John Kucich has called "*libidinal acts, forms of luxuriously self-disruptive and autoerotic experience*" (3). Colonial masculinity is now defined, valued, and understood not through its brazen gestures of conquest, nor through its mastery over the native landscape, but, instead, through an uncovering of its own dark secrets. Shuddering under the force of loneliness, these young men cling to each other for different forms of solace and companionship and, in doing so, discover their own ability to take on roles hitherto repressed in themselves and reserved for women. There is an acute pained poignancy in the bonds that form between men, bonds that not only swing along the continuum between homosociality and homoeroticism but that also deeply emphasise the complex dependency between them. Men become mothers, wives, doctors, patients on their way to surviving the 'hostile setting'.

In *Orientalism,* Edward W. Said argues that Western Europe did not merely interpret, but constructed, the Near East "*politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively* [as a] *surrogate and even underground self*" (3). The Orient became an imaginative stage on which Westerners could, on the one hand, define themselves by contrast, while also enacting a transient and only quasi illicit release from that identity, a safe distance from home. Among other things, this meant the opportunity to reinvent oneself sexually: "*The Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe*" (*Orientalism* 190). More recently, Joseph A. Boone has called attention to the heterosexual slant of Said's work, noting that "*the possibility of sexual contact with and between men underwrites and at times even explains the historical appeal of orientalism as an*

occidental mode of male perception, appropriation, and control" (90). The ostensibly tamed foreignness of colonial space, and the governing power relations between imperial and colonised subjects, allowed such forbidden affinities to be cultivated under, in Eve Kosofsky Sedgwick's terms, "*a fantasy prone distinction between the domestic and the exotic*" (*Between Men* 182).

The colonisers, upholding the Gospel and fighting for the Crown, have trouble resisting temptation as they penetrate further into the jungle. Finally, they crack, and sexual desire leads to guilt and anxiety as an outcome of the fear of social disapproval and concern at the loss of the principles for which they have set out to the colonies. They can only react with cruelty directed at others and at themselves. The Europeans are revealed as duplicitous, hypocritical, incapable of love, embarrassed and guilty about sex. The brutality of their colonialist attitudes—the missionary establishing a theocracy, the officer killing natives and imposing an exploitative foreign order—is linked with the unresolved, barely repressed sexual desires that ultimately destroy them and their partners.

The world outside Europe, as well, provided ample material for portrayal of exotic men in literature and art. A number of famous men associated with European imperialism had sexual and emotional proclivities oriented towards intimacy with other men. Cecil Rhodes kept company with a series of young assistants, as did Henry Morton Stanley whose one novel, *Kalulu*, is a love story between two African men. Lawrence of Arabia dedicated *The Seven Pillars of Wisdom* to a young Bedouin, who had captured his heart (Aldrich, *The Seduction of the Mediterranean* 2). Those writers, like some other leading men of letters inspired by the colonial experience, transposed homoerotic overseas experiences into literary classics, Forster and Conrad are not an exception.

II. Homosexuals in the Closet

Critics have found several ways to explain Marlow's desire to reach Kurtz. Those who read *Heart of Darkness* as a dark journey into the soul see Kurtz as the end point of Marlow's quest for himself. The most straightforward explanation, on the other hand, might be that in Kurtz Marlow hopes to find a model for his own career in Africa—a success within the trading company—who also manages to maintain his ideals and humanity. Motivations in modern literature are always mixed, and the homoerotic subtext of the novella provides one other plausible explanation for Marlow's obsessive search for Kurtz. The importance of male interaction in Conrad's and Forster's works is, indeed, suggested by the plot itself: more often

than not, the stories take place in male-dominated environments, from which women are sometimes totally absent. Among the critical preoccupations generated by this new approach is the interest in masculine identity, and in inter-male relationships, as they appear in their novels. The unfolding of male psychology in most of their novels goes along with moral dilemmas and failures which serve as a basis to men's interest in each other: Conrad's and Forster's fiction teems with examples of men betraying, judging, sympathising, understanding, or trying to account for the conduct of other men. Although Conrad's biographers agree on the fact that Conrad was not a declared homosexual, many critics defend nowadays the thesis of Conrad's close interest in the issue of homosexuality, and argue that the male interaction which informs his fiction can safely be termed 'closet', or latently homosexual.

E.M. Forster, an iconic personality in the history of twentieth-century homosexuality, is an excellent example of the seduction of overseas places, and the way homoerotic experiences enjoyed with foreigners transformed into literature and influenced political attitudes. This is apparent in Forster's almost life-long friendship with Syed Ross Masood, his experiences in India in the 1920s and his encounter with Mohammed el-Adl in Alexandria during the First World War. Indeed, in the very fact of *Maurice*'s posthumous publication, we can perhaps begin to see the extent to which the displaced colonial tensions of the imperial period forced Forster to an examination of a sexuality that was beyond the mores of his era. So powerful, in other words, were the impulses generated by the colonial encounter—and Forster's own colonial sexual encounter—that Forster was able to write, but not publish, an openly homosexual text. Conrad's novels too contain many representations of homosexual desire. Through Conrad's working life, same-sex desire was an increasingly contested issue within popular, legal, and medical discourses. Conrad's fiction traces this interest, though also most often in subterranean ways. Reading of Forster's work reveals that the homosexual impulse is frequently opposed to the dominant tendencies, and there is certainly a long history of homoerotic writing from which *A Passage to India* draws some of its grace (Boone 90). *Heart of Darkness* illustrates how the adventure genre isolates men in opposition to women, who are represented very nearly as members of a separate species. In this economy, women may initiate the action; they may be goals to be won; they may be subtle opponents who don't play by the rules; they may even be objects of sentimental attachment, but in tales of adventure the real passions of love and hatred that men feel are most often reserved for other men.

A focus on Forster's and Conrad's life details can give us a clear idea on how important was the homosexual innuendos in forging their talent as writers first and second in forming a major part in their two novels. In a chapter entitled 'Secret Sharers', Bernard Meyer contrasts the obviously marginal influence of Jessie Conrad in the life of the writer to the psychically stimulating effect of the intelligence and talent of Conrad's young male friends, such as Edward Garnett, R. B. Cunninghame Graham, Stephen Crane, and Ford Madox Hueffer, whom Conrad regularly met throughout his life, and with whom he exchanged a prolific correspondence. Indeed, Conrad's letters display "*a depressed mood whenever he is alone with his family, and explicitly express his frustration at being bereft of the source of comfort and plenitude the company of his young acquaintances represents*" (Meyer 35). The importance in Conrad's life of this circle was also at the origin of literary collaborations in which Meyer rightly sees a further symptom of Conrad's need of this (suspect) masculine contact. The attraction and vulnerability to the image of other men is paradoxically associated in Conrad's comments with a strong desire to be oneself. Meyer points for instance to Conrad's particular interest in famous Western explorers which, in *Notes on Life and Letters* (1921), is the occasion of the following confession: "*I had elected to be one of them very deliberately, very completely, without looking back or looking elsewhere. The circumstances were such as to give me the feeling of complete identification, a very vivid comprehension that if I wasn't of them I was nothing at all*" (67). Conrad's confession suggests above all his 'vivid comprehension' that in order to be himself, he had to be like those men. In other words, they were his models. Therefore, Meyer concludes to the artist's unconscious desire to merge his personality with that of other men, because of an "*apparent need to shore up his dubious virility and potency*" on the one hand, and an idiosyncratic compulsion to "*search for a distinct image of his very identity*" (97) on the other.

Another striking occurrence is the incident which, according to Conrad himself, hardened his adolescent desire to become a sailor. While still a teenager, Conrad's uncle, Tadeuz Bobrowski, sends him to Switzerland with instructions to his tutor, Mr. Pulman, that he convinces the boy to abandon his foolish desire to go to sea. In the course of a conversation where young Conrad is almost ready to surrender, an apparition upsets the whole situation: While resting by the roadside on the Furca Pass, Conrad caught sight of an Englishman:

> *My unforgettable Englishman* [. . .] *He was wearing a knickerbocker suit, short socks and laced boots and his calves exposed to the public gaze* [. . .] *dazzled the beholder by the splendor of their marble-like*

> *condition and their rich tone of young ivory* [. . .] *The light of a*
> *headlong, exalted satisfaction with the world of men* [. . .] *illumined*
> *his face* [. . .] *and triumphant eyes. In passing he cast a glance of*
> *kindly curiosity and a friendly gleam of big, sound, shiny teeth* [. . .]
> *his white calves twinkled sturdily. Suddenly, the boy who had been*
> *feeling that ghostly unrealized and desired sea of my dreams escaped*
> *from the unnerved grip of my will, was fired by a strange and*
> *powerful emotion. The Englishman's glance, his smile* [. . .] *his*
> *striving-forward appearance helped me to pull myself together* [. . .]
> *The argument with Mr. Pulman went on, but I felt no longer crushed.*
> *Realizing the futility of continuing the battle the tutor muttered, 'You*
> *are an incorrigible, hopeless Don Quixote.'* (Conrad, *A Personal*
> *Record* 29-30)

This occurrence displays, in Meyer's view, Conrad's "*pronounced susceptibility, as a child and as a man, to the magnetic influence exerted by images epitomizing strength and masculinity*" (30). This fascination would be at the basis of Conrad's creation in his fiction of particularly virile heroes, generally modeled either upon real and impressive men whom Conrad personally met, or upon prominent historical and public figures whose exploits were the object of Conrad's explicit admiration. Furthermore, Conrad could, by 'gazing' upon the Englishman, take "*within himself the seeds of his manly qualities* [so that] *a hesitant and sickly Polish orphan was transformed into an impressive, vigorous, and substantial figure—Captain Korzeniowski, British Master Mariner*" (Meyer 30). Conrad's relation of the impact of his encounter with his 'unforgettable Englishman', as well as the description of his relationship to the masculine cultural icons, expose above all the fact that his desire to become a sailor was precisely not spontaneous. The desire for a sailor's life was the outcome of a fascination with other men.

Furthermore, Robert J. G. Lange, noting the striking absence in Conrad's correspondence of any reference to Oscar Wilde's works, and trial, concludes that "*Conrad's unacknowledged, and ultimately uncharacterized, but well demonstrated sympathies towards men should be seen as fitting a pattern that would presently be labeled at least as 'closet' or latently homosexual*" (67). Lange is not the only critic to suspect the potentially sexual nature of Conrad's relationship to his young friends. To the credit of this hypothesis, many advocate the enthusiastic, playful, and even flirtatious tone of Conrad's letters to his friends. This is clearly stated in these two excerpts from his letters, the first to Edward Garnett, on 7th June 1895 and the second to Stephen Crane, on 5th March 1898:

What else may I expect from life? What else that is new? Don't you think, dear Garnett, I had better die? True—there is love. That is always new—or rather startling being generally unexpected and violent—and fleeting. Still one must have some object to hang his affections upon—and I haven't. Oh! The world—since this morning—is one big grey shadow and I am one immense yawn. Do come to the rescue early next week and put some heart into me with your dear, precious brazen flattery. Will you? If so—please say so. Say when, and I shall try to go to sleep till then. (Conrad, *Letters From Joseph Conrad* 105)

Then to Crane he says: "*I miss you horribly* [. . .] *Some day—perhaps next year—we must take a house together—say in Brittany for 3 months or so*" (Conrad, *Letters From Joseph Conrad* 105). Richard Ruppel, points out that Brittany is where Conrad spent his honeymoon with Jessie. He argues that the tone of Conrad's missives to his male friends is still more striking when compared to the tone of his letters to his feminine correspondents (162). Indeed, Conrad's letters to women are generally highly respectful, reserved, and thoroughly cold.

On the other part, Forster ultimately had one of the most significant homoerotic relationships in his life—second only to his friendship with Masood—with an Egyptian. Forster has been taken to task by many present-day commentators for the 'closeted' discomfort with his homosexuality that led him to censure his writings and often only guiltily to seek sexual satisfaction. Forster's 'exotic' liaisons, in a post-gay liberation era, may seem a pathetic commentary on the difficulty of accepting a contrary sexual orientation and effecting sexual connections. He yearned in vain for the unobtainable young Masood. His letters to Masood may now seem obsessive and maudlin, cloying in language and agonising in sentiment.

Forster's accounts of his decades-long friendship with Masood and the shorter-lived but crucial affair with Mohammed nevertheless remain moving revelations about early twentieth-century emotional and sexual attitudes, as well as illustrations of the sexual paradoxes of imperialism. Forster met Masood barely a decade after Wilde's imprisonment. The British government only decriminalised homosexual acts in the last years of Forster's very long life.[2] The milieu in which he lived, especially in his early years, despite the

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[2] The rights of homosexuals in the United Kingdom have evolved over time until the decriminalisation of same-sex sexual activity between the middle to late 20th century.

homosexual inclinations of many Bloomsbury and 'Oxbridge' friends, placed limits on public expression of 'unnatural' sexuality. Going abroad provided sexual emancipation. At the age of almost eighty-five, he wrote to William Plomer that "*Mohammed was the 'greatest thing in my life' except for one other*" (Forster, *PT* 29). That one other was surely Masood. Forster confessed that, whenever they parted, he missed Masood and looked forward to their next meetings. "*Why cannot life be like this for ever?,*" he wrote after one visit in 1910 (Forster, *Only Connect* 25). Masood's messages were sometimes even more exuberant as he recounted his activities and spoke of his friendship for Forster. A letter from November 1910 is a case in point: "*What a dear fellow you are, and your letter shows me that you love me as much as I love you.*" Speaking of a planned trip together to Constantinople, Masood added, "*if you knew how much I loved you and how I long to be alone with you in that romantic part of the world* [. . .] *Let us get far away from the conventional crowd, and let us wander aimless if we can, like two pieces of wood on the ocean.* [. . .] *I love you more than any other man friend of mine and so kiss you au revoir*" (Forster, *Only Connect* 58). These words echo clearly Conrad's words to Edward Garnett and Stephen Crane.

It is then possible in the light of this discussion to hypothesise that Conrad's and Forster's personal experience of fascination with other men, could have provided a theme to be explored in their fiction. Indeed, this would constitute a key to understand the 'enigma' of some aspects of their behaviour as men. This insight could as well be the key to understand the male interaction in their fiction, and thus to the enigma of some aspects of their art.

Parminder Kaur Bakshi's *Distant Desire* argues that homoerotic love rather than a political critique forms the major theme of *A Passage to India*. The attraction between the English bachelor Fielding and the Indian widower Aziz is complemented by "*references from Indian religion and mythology to convey intimacy between men*" (209). Though ultimately thwarted by social and political circumstances, and psychological reticence, Fielding and Aziz manage moments of intimacy and essay a fraternal bonding that makes their friendship the failed model of an ideal homoerotic love. Robert K. Martin and George Piggford, contributors to a volume on *Queer Forster* emphasise how Forster's homosexual desire was generally conjugated in the form of liaisons with men of other classes or races, and how his experiences in India shaped his writing, combining a utopian vision of male love and friendship with fetishisation of the 'other' (11). Sara Suleri, decoding Forster's 'imperial erotic', suggests that *A Passage to India* "*explores mythologies of colonial friendship*", but also is "*resolutely critical of an 'only connect' rhetoric that would allow for the fiction of any transcultural male*

bonding" (132-3), while Joseph Bristow focuses on the "*painful tension between homoerotic experience and imperial domination*" in Forster's work ("Passage to E. M. Forster" 140). Arthur Martland shows how Forster nevertheless "*explored the reality of those 'rare' individuals who had surmounted the barriers between the races*" (194). Philip Holden and Richard J. Ruppel follows the same way in analysing Conrad's text as engaging in ironic commentary upon the genre of which it is an example. *Heart of Darkness,* they note, "*follows conventional imperial adventure stories in its relentless excision of women characters and its production of an all-male, homosocial world.*" Homoerotic filiations between Marlow, the harlequin, and Kurtz, and Marlow's homoerotic identification with African characters register a certain uneasiness with normative heterosexuality (Holden and Ruppel xxiv).

Like *Heart of Darkness*, *A Passage to India* pursues suspicions concerning the degradation of character that results from colonial mastery. For writers such as E. M. Forster and Joseph Conrad, closeted queer sexualities become a metaphor for the incommensurability of the coloniser/colonised divide in a morally bankrupt system: it is the simultaneous desire and inability of Fielding and Aziz in the first part, and Marlow and Kurtz in the second part to be together at the end of *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness* that gives the novels their tantalisingly modernist indeterminacy. While homosexual inclinations are reflected only or mainly through the relation between Aziz and Fielding in *A Passage to India*, potential and actual homosexual desire finds expression in several different ways in *Heart of Darkness*: in the intensely homosocial bonding among Marlow and his audience aboard the *Nellie*, in Marlow's admiration for African men, in his obsessive desire to reach Kurtz, and in the Harlequin's role as a sexual rival to Kurtz's African mistress. However, it would be ahistorical, even absurd, to describe any of these male characters—Fielding, Aziz, Marlow, Kurtz, or the Harlequin—as 'gay.' At the same time, to argue that Fielding and Aziz don't share reciprocal desire and Marlow could have manifested no sexual interest in his friends aboard the *Nellie,* in the African paddlers and cannibals, in the Harlequin, or in Kurtz is just as ahistorical as it would be to argue that anyone else in the novels is 'gay' (Ruppel 165).

Marlow's sexual orientation appears to be represented, once again, at least as ambivalent if not homosexual. From their first meeting, the relationship between Marlow and Kurtz, like that between Fielding and Aziz, is described in terms that edge dangerously toward the sexual. By the time Marlow finally finds him, Kurtz is too ill for the two men to develop the kind of intimacy Fielding had experienced with Aziz. But there are hints that their relationship might have been 'intimate,' intense, and 'profound.' On first seeing Marlow,

Kurtz "*rustle*[s] *one of the letters*" someone had written to him about Marlow and "*looking straight into* [Marlow's] *face* [says,] *'I am glad.'* [. . .] *A voice! A voice! It was grave, profound, vibrating*" (*HD* 86). When he intercepts Kurtz to prevent him from rejoining his followers, Marlow suggests that "*the foundations of* [their] *intimacy were being laid*" during this encounter (*HD* 94). When Marlow returns the letters to the Intended, that 'intimacy' stands between Marlow and the woman; the vision of a man prevents Marlow from attempting or, seemingly, desiring any intimacy with a woman: "*I rang the bell before a mahogany door on the first floor, and while I waited he seemed to stare at me out of the glassy panel—stare with that wide and immense stare embracing, condemning, loathing all the universe*" (106).

Echoing Conrad's characters, Forster's, then, are also the locus of the narrative desires the text sets out to gratify in grounding a new line of masculine subjects that will relegitimate manly love. When the two men discuss the rumored affair with Adela, Fielding is so shocked that Aziz believed the rumor that he calls Aziz a 'little rotter' (*API* 242) and immediately regrets it. Fielding and Aziz's friendship augurs a new amative alliance that Forster hopes to inaugurate for himself and for the experts and intellectuals of his class—a male subjective and cultural economy that is at once affectional, poetic, and manly. To these ends, more recognisable at the beginning of this century but no less problematic, *A Passage to India* beckons in 1920's. Rather than seeing the homoeroticism of the text as in any way contesting imperialism, Elaine Freedgood views Forster's novel as promoting India as "*a potential site for an eroticized and Orientalized all-male utopia,*" a utopia only made possible by the privileges imperialism grants to the author. For Freedgood, *A Passage to India* is a text explicitly encoded for a homosexual community, a fact shown in its title's references to Walt Whitman's unifying poem 'Passage to India', the description of India as a 'queer nation' and the scene in which Aziz places a phallic collar-pin onto Fielding's collar (Freedgood 123). This scene is precisely the kind of homosocial scenario that, in this period, could be read as containing traces of homosexual desire. Fielding is an affront to the period standards of manliness: he looks masculine but, he acts in ways that for the period would be seen as unmanly if not downright feminine. For Freedgood, the 'secret subject' (125) of the text, the closeted homosexual, always remains on the colonising side of the Manichean oppositions that structure colonialism. He further extends:

> *Accordingly, Forster directs his attention away from empire: Aziz and Fielding cannot finally be lovers, according to the narrative logic of A*

> *Passage, not because of the institutions and practices of the British Raj, but because of the self-involvement and cruelty of British women, because of the resistant and devouring landscape of India, and finally, because of the heterosexuality required by Indian Nationalism and the self-rule movement.* (Freedgood 124)

Like Forster and Masood, to Forster's disappointment, Fielding and Aziz never had sexual relations. At the end of the novel, Fielding has a stronger sense of self within a colonial world but expresses this only in a belated plea for friendship with Aziz. This appears to be another key moment in the novella, when its colonialism and homosocialism come together and help to explain each other. In a world without women, the possibility of intense and intensely satisfying relationships between men is obviously increased, even the possibility of intense fellowship with non-Europeans. In Marlow's almost homoerotic appreciation of the African paddlers—"*they had bone, muscle, a wild vitality, an intense energy of movement that was as natural and true as the surf along their coast* [. . .] *They were a great comfort to look at*" (*HD* 20)—in his companionable gratitude to his cannibal crew, a gratitude that includes Marlow's admission that he hoped he did not appear as "*unappetizing*" to them as the other white men appeared to him (*HD* 59), and in his admission to feeling a subtle but unforgettable bond with his helmsman, Marlow is suggesting that relationships between men can diminish racial divides. In texts of colonial adventure fiction, these interracial, potentially homoerotic relationships can only exist away from England and apart from women.

Indeed, with Fielding and Marlow's words of extravagant regret and their compatriot's disgusted response, we have reached a revealing intersection of the colonialist and homoerotic undercurrents of *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness*. Earlier in the story, as his steamer churned up the Congo River, Marlow had acknowledged a kinship with the Africans, "*hands clapping* [. . .] *feet stamping* [. . .] *bodies swaying* [. . .] *eyes rolling*" (*HD* 51). Clearly, Fielding and Marlow's claim of a relationship with the Africans and the Indians puts them at odds with their compatriots. Marlow's conservative audience will also not allow him to express his passionate sorrow at being thwarted in his attempt to reach Kurtz. Marlow's powerful desire to find Kurtz, to listen to his words, and to save him makes his listeners equally uncomfortable. Marlow and Fielding's fellows balk at the association they make between themselves and the Africans and the Indians. They balk at the extravagance of Marlow's sorrow over his belief that he will never consummate his journey to Kurtz, as they balk at Fielding's sorrow over the fate of his friendship with Aziz. As Eve Sedgwick has argued, these anxieties circulating around gender identity and national mission inform the

emergence of a discourse of heterosexual panic about homosexuality's capacity to destabilise dominant models of masculinity: "*Because the paths of male entitlement* [. . .] *required certain intense male bonds that were not readily distinguishable from the most reprobated bonds, an endemic and ineradicable state of what I am calling male homosexual panic became the normal condition of male heterosexual entitlement*" (*Epistemology of the Closet* 185).

Fielding and Marlow's compatriots' reaction might be described as a classic example of 'homosexual panic,' a probability the narrative frame would certainly suggest (Sedgwick, *Between Men* 83). As noted above, the male Europeans overseas are held together by very strong homosocial bonds that must make them susceptible to homosexual panic. When Marlow expresses excessive grief over what he believed was the death of Kurtz, at least one member of his audience feels that he has overstepped normal homosocial bonds. His criticism towards the harlequin's feelings towards Kurtz is perhaps motivated by a need to deny his own. Like his irony at the expense of the pilgrims which suggests his later belied immunity to envy, his comment on the Russian sailor may be an attempt to convince his audience that his own feelings for Kurtz are of a radically different nature. We know this, also, because Marlow immediately responds to the panic and placates his audience by introducing 'the girl,' Kurtz's Intended. His amusing and incongruous ejaculation, "*Girl! What? Did I mention a girl?*" (*HD* 69), is otherwise inexplicable. Marlow introduces conventional heterosexuality—Kurtz was affianced, after all, so Marlow's desire to meet him can be categorised as a 'normal,' heterosexual desire— to calm his frightened audience. The same thing happens when Fielding stands for what he thinks the just cause of Aziz, his English fellows suspect his sexual orientation. He is associated with a female characteristic, weakness. The collector tells him: "*You have sunk to the level of your associates; you are weak, weak, that is what is wrong with you*" (168). However, Fielding, unlike Marlow, feigns ignorance of his compatriots' doubts.

The two novels may seem proof of the impossibility of homosexual romances, particularly with those who come from different horizons, and the writers' vision in the works is particularly bleak. They are a warning about the hazard of seeking sex rather than friendship, of connecting carnally rather than emotionally and spiritually. Forster's personal experiences were gentler, and he did find companionship, pleasure and friendship with an Indian and an Egyptian. In Forster's life and writings, many obstacles stood in the way of happy long term relationships with foreign men, especially partnerships where satisfaction of physical desires and of emotional and intellectual needs could combine. The beloved Masood

could not physically respond in the way Forster hoped, and he returned to India. Mohammed el-Adl gave Forster sexual comfort and companionship, but he too married, Forster went home and Mohammed died at a young age. In *A Passage to India*, circumstances thwart Aziz and Fielding's friendship, and the expression of any other sentiments. *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness* are, thus, nightmares contrasting with the writers' dreamlike memories. But the pieces, showing their most erotic and most anti-colonialist sides, also represent indictments of ideologies that dominated Europe during their lives, both social constraints on the expression of homosexual desires and an imperialist imperative to rule the world. In an oblique way, they form their strongest statements of support for personal sexual emancipation and their strongest denunciation of imperialism.

Like Forster and Conrad, Fielding and Marlow went overseas for sexual awakening, and their adventures left them with haunting dreams. These experiences, crossing the boundary of race (just as Forster crossed the class divide), left indelible traces. They brought them to a full realisation of their sexual orientation, teaching them about both romance and coition, and provided the '*éducation sentimentale*' that they had not received from compatriots (Aldrich, *Colonialism and Homosexuality* 2). The paradox, for Forster as for Conrad, was that the imperial enterprise, complete with the idea of bringing civilisation to the wider world, provided opportunities for a sexual emancipation that countermanded the moral order at home. Conrad and Forster's insights, thus, demonstrate the extent to which the colonial landscape has always been a contested territory in terms of sexuality in colonial texts (Suleri 132). Via this clever piece of intertextuality, Forster like Conrad alerts the reader to men interest in men and to the ways in which this fascination underscores the potential for inversion within imperialism's construction of masculinity. The interest in "*beings who exist beyond the pale*" indicates a fascination with Otherness that escapes the narrators' capacity to explain (Middleton 142).

III. Female Inversion: Men in Drag

Marlow and Kurtz, Fielding and Aziz flee women—or they are driven out by women—to pursue homosocial bonds in the wilderness. In the two novels, women have only the most problematised sexual presence, which provides, yet, another illustration of how 'the women are out of it.' This represents yet another paradox, because the main female characters that make up the poles of the continuum along which male characters move in the two novels are both identified exclusively through their potentially sexual relationship to men. Jane

Goldman says that when he consulted an academic colleague, who knew Forster in his latter years at Cambridge, he offered him the following proposition: "*No woman under the age of fifty-five in Forster's work is a woman at all; over the age of fifty-five, some of them are*" (133). It may be that Forster's fictional world is in truth entirely populated by gay men, so it is productive to read Forster's heterosexual couples as allegories of homosexuals. In other words, it is possible to read the female characters in both novels as incarnations of homosexual men desiring other men.

Richard von Krafft-Ebing describes female inversion, which he terms 'Uranism,' in his *Psychopathia Sexualis* (first published in 1886): "*Uranism may nearly always be suspected in females wearing their hair short, or who dress in the fashion of men, or pursue the sports and pastimes of their male acquaintances*" (qtd. in Smith-Rosenberg 269). The trope of inversion created a conception of homosexual identity, which posited "*a woman's soul in a man's body and vice versa*" (Sedgwick, *Epistemology of the Closet* 87). This conception is outlined in Havelock Ellis' and John Addington Symonds' *Sexual Inversion*, which defines inversion as "*sexual instinct turned by inborn constitutional abnormality towards persons of the same sex*" (1). "*Desire,*" Sedgwick explains, "*in this view, subsists in the current that runs between one male self and one female self, in whatever sex of bodies these selves may be manifested*" (*Epistemology of the Closet* 87). How can one be, essentially, a woman, and simultaneously identify with, exclusively, men? This contradiction does seem to explain how homosexual men have traditionally been constructed as effeminate and misogynistic. An inverted woman must necessarily be constructed discursively as masculine, man-like, and vice-versa for male inverts.

From Forster's perspective, a homosexual is a man who desires men. His texts are all homosexual texts, and his characters are all in a sense homosexual men. However, it might be argued that an author inscribes more of himself and his desires in some characters than in others. One such example of this self-inscription of desire in *A Passage to India* is Forster's heroine Adela Quested. Judith Herz, for example, asserts that Forster "*identifies with Adela to some degree*" (132), and Elaine Showalter claims that "*there is much of Forster in Adela's struggle not to be pinned down by the codes of the compound*" ("A Passage to India" 7). Adela's expressions of sexual desire for Ronny Heaslop and in a more complicated way for Dr Aziz are really inscriptions of homosexual desire, since Adela is Forster.

Moreover, at the heart of *A Passage to India* is the desire of Adela Quested "to see the *real* India" (*API* 18; original italics). Her story "*dramatizes the transition from* [. . .] *'objectifying gaze' that refuses mutual gazing to a 'looking relation' that acknowledges equivalent subjectivity*" (Brinker 13). In the Courtroom Adela, questioned by McBride, is about to reconstruct the events that led to her alleged assault in the Marabar Caves. Suddenly, she has radical doubts about the legitimacy of the judicial process through which India stands accused by Anglo-India: "*In virtue of what had she collected this roomful of people together? Her particular brand of opinions, and the suburban Jehovah who sanctified them—by what right did they claim so much importance in the world, and assume the title of civilisation?*" (*API* 193). At the crucial moment, Adela cannot bring together the procedures of the court with the fate of Aziz: "*The court, the place of question, awaited her reply. But she could not give it until Aziz entered the place of answer*" (*API* 202).

Adela's attractions to Ronny, though tepid, can and should from this perspective be read as Forster's desire for Ronny. So, in a tender moment when Adela's hand touches Ronny's, and "*one of the thrills so frequent in the animal kingdom passed between them, and announced that all their difficulties were only a lover's quarrel*" (*API* 75), we should read Adela as a medium of gay desire between Forster and the eroticised male body inscribed into *A Passage to India*. Sedgwick has termed this structure an 'erotic triangle' based on 'gender asymmetry' (*Between Men* 21) within homosocial "*including* [specifically] *homosexual contexts*" (*Between Men* 25). Likewise, the sexual panic that Adela experiences towards Aziz in the Marabar Caves might be read as an expression of Forster's panic about his erotic relationship with Muslim men like Syed Ross Masood, to whom *A Passage to India* is dedicated, or Mohammed el Adl, his first lover, who died the year before *A Passage to India* was finished (Beauman 299). Understood this way, Forster's female characters like Lilia Theobald of *Where Angels Fear to Thread*, Lucy Honeychurch of *A Room With A View*, and Adela Quested function as mediums of gay male desire, stand-ins for Forster, or they are Forster in drag. From Forster's *Aspects of the Novel*: "*The novelist* [. . .] *makes up a number of word-masses roughly describing himself* [. . .] *gives them names and sex, assigns them plausible gestures, and causes them to speak by the use of inverted commas, and perhaps behave consistently. These word-masses are his characters*" (44). According to this formulation, the only subjectivity present in a novel is the author's: all its prejudices, hopes, fears, flaws, desires are also the novelist's.

Before the abortive attack on the steamer that kills the helmsman, Marlow and the pilgrims are hung up in a fog just below Kurtz's station. Marlow remarks, "*The approach to this Kurtz grubbing for ivory in the wretched bush was beset by as many dangers as though he had been an enchanted princess sleeping in a fabulous castle*" (*HD* 61). Yet, this is not the only passage where Kurtz is represented as an object of sexual desire, here equated with the archetypal object of male desire, an 'enchanted princess.' The most physically intimate scenes, however, are not those that take place between Kurtz and other male characters, but those in which he is alone at the jungle. The most physically 'sexual' encounters in *Heart of Darkness* occur between Kurtz and the foreign setting. In the most famous passage describing Kurtz's corruption and degeneration in the jungle, Kurtz is given the passive role: "*The wilderness had patted him on the head, and—lo!—he had withered; it had taken him, loved him, embraced him, got into his veins, consumed his flesh, and sealed his soul to its own by the inconceivable ceremonies of some devilish initiation*" (*HD* 69). The language used here is to a certain extent the language of rape—or, at the very least, the language of a forceful sexual encounter.

The sexual implication of these lines is obvious, but 'the wilderness' is the active agent and seducer in the equation. The wilderness is the female agent that has 'caressed,' 'loved,' 'embraced,' and 'consumed' Kurtz. His role as the passive recipient of desire is emphasised when Marlow claims Kurtz was the "*spoiled and pampered favourite*" of the jungle (*HD* 69). In short, Kurtz is represented as the object of the wilderness's desire, an object that is ultimately penetrated and destroyed. From the beginning of the colonial period till its end (and beyond), female bodies symbolise the conquered land. This metaphoric use of the female body varies in accordance with the exigencies and histories of particular colonial situations. Conversely, native women and their bodies are described in terms of the promise and the fear of the colonial land, as in the much later description of Kurtz's mistress:

> She walked with measured steps, draped in striped and fringed cloths, treading the earth proudly, with a slight jingle and flash of barbarous ornaments. She carried her head high; her hair was done in the shape of a helmet; she had brass leggings to her knees, brass wire gauntlets to the elbow, a crimson spot on her tawny neck; bizarre things, charms, gifts of witch-men, that hung about her, glittered and trembled at every step. She must have had the value of several elephant tusks upon her. She was savage and superb, wild-eyed and magnificent; there was something ominous and stately in her

deliberate progress. And in the hush that had fallen suddenly upon the whole sorrowful land, the immense wilderness, the colossal body of the fecund and mysterious life seemed to look at her, pensive, as though it had been looking at the image of its own tenebrous and passionate soul. (*HD* 87)

Kurtz's mistress is associated with wilderness itself; she is also the incarnation of the soul of the African wilderness. So, she is the one who 'caressed,' 'loved,' 'embraced,' and 'consumed' him. The wilderness, made flesh in Kurtz's mistress, has such a great effect on Kurtz that he succumbs to its mysterious fascination; he surrenders to the wiles of the wilds like a hypnotized subject. In *A Passage to India* Again, all the Anglo-Indians are portrayed in a way that they are 'absorbed' also by the thick and mud nature of India.

What kills a potential homosexual relationship between male characters in the two novels is the appearance of a woman, a woman as a rival. As a result to this shared homosexual traits in both female and male characters and that shared desire of males, we see a kind of rivalry between men and women over male bodies in the two novels. Another scene of this rivalry in the two novels appears between Marlow and Kurtz's African mistress and Adela and Aziz. As Marlow and Kurtz leave the Inner Station in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, a 'barbarous and superb' African woman appears on shore. When Marlow blows the steamer's whistle, the other Africans run away. Only the woman "*did not so much as flinch and stretched tragically her bare arms after us over the sombre and glittering river*" (*HD* 97). Commenting on the vagueness of Marlow's account, Marianna Torgovnick infers that Kurtz

> *has apparently mated with the magnificent black woman and thus violated the British code against miscegenation. Marlow clearly conceives of her as a substitute for, an inversion of, Kurtz's high-minded, white 'Intended.' Like the Belgian woman, she is an impressive figure, but unlike the Intended, she is not 'high-minded': she is presented as all body and inchoate emotion* [. . .] *one woman an affianced bride, one woman, all body, surely an actual bride.* (46-7)

In the last image, Marlow gives us of the African woman, he perhaps 'tragically' implies her sorrow at losing Kurtz, but that—like much else in Marlow's dark narrative—is obscure. Another kind of rivalry in *Heart of Darkness*, similar to that between Adela and Fielding over Aziz, is between Kurtz mistress and the Harlequin. Unlike the Intended, whose devotion would probably not have survived the realisation of Kurtz's true activities in Africa, the harlequin knows Kurtz thoroughly, and despite this, his love is far more tangible and

significant than hers. He nurses Kurtz, goes without sleep, and even risks death to be near him. His love makes him self-effacing "*I have no abilities*" (*HD* 84) and even self-sacrificing in his willingness to face death and save Kurtz. The harlequin believes that Kurtz's African mistress would harm Kurtz, so, he attempts to keep her away during his illness: "*I had been risking my life every day for the last fortnight to keep her out of the house*" (*HD* 88). Commenting on this Richard J. Ruppel says:

> *We are faced, once again, with the symbolic power of women. What possible risk could the woman pose to Kurtz? Are we to imagine that she would harm him in some way? Overexcite him? Force him out of bed to steal more ivory? On a literal level, that seems absurd. On a symbolic level, however, it is not. Every woman in the novella poses a symbolic threat to a man or to men.* (Ruppel 170)

Marlow may be said to have felt some of the pull of the harlequin's attraction. After all, he is the one who provides an admiring, feminised description of him, and he admits to having been 'seduced' by him, by "*the absolutely pure, uncalculating, unpractical spirit of adventure* [that] *ruled this be-patched youth*" (*HD* 79). He helps him as much as he can, giving him an old pair of shoes and some cartridges at their parting, but Marlow expresses no real regrets when the harlequin flees the manager and paddles off with "*three black fellows*" (*HD* 91). Instead, Marlow's fascination, like the harlequin's, is with Kurtz himself.

By the end of *A Passage to India*, Aziz feelings towards Fielding, though aggressive, are a blatant evidence of him desiring Fielding and anticipating any potential heterosexual relationship he may have with a woman. When Hamidullah passes on a rumor he has heard that Fielding was having an affair with Adela during her stay at the college. Aziz becomes explosive, yelling that everyone has betrayed him. Aziz muses on the rumor of Adela and Fielding for several days, eventually believing it to be fact. When Fielding returns from a conference, Aziz picks him up and tries to address the rumor indirectly, mentioning that McBryde and Miss Derek were caught having an affair (*API* 241). Fielding is uninterested in this gossip, however. Finally, Aziz overtly mentions the rumor about Adela and Fielding, expressing fear that the affair will hurt Fielding's reputation. Aziz clearly is fishing for a straightforward denial, but Fielding does not provide one. Instead, Fielding chides Aziz for worrying too much about reputation and propriety. Aziz finally takes it for granted that Fielding and Adela were having an affair, and he states this directly. Fielding, startled, blows up at Aziz. Aziz is immediately pained at his own mistake and Fielding's harsh words. Aziz agrees, reluctantly, to have dinner with Fielding that night. Aziz asks if Fielding will visit

Adela in England. Fielding indifferently says that he probably will. At this, Aziz rises to leave. Fielding asks forgiveness for his harshness that morning, but Aziz rides away feeling depressed. He suspects that Fielding is going to England to marry Adela. A clear proof he envies her (*API* 247).

Just as the Oriental woman represents 'the desire for the Orient,' both Forster's Adela and Conrad's 'barbarous and superb' African woman represent a potential release from civilised sexual repression and prudery. They are incarnations of the female desire for men. In this sense, Adela Quested appears to be a sexual invert, by virtue of the fact that she is a mannish woman. Adela is definitely inscribed in *A Passage to India* as female: she is termed a 'girl' (*API* 18), and, after her enigmatic experience in the Marabar Caves, her naked body—perforated by cactus needles—is closely examined by Miss Derek and Mrs McBryde. Adela possesses, though, many man-like traits: her body is 'angular' (*API* 57), "*she has practically no breasts*" (*API* 103). In fact, Aziz wonders "*how God could have been so unkind to any female form,*" (57) and, meeting her in the unconventional atmosphere of Fielding's garden-house, he decides to treat her like a man (*API* 61). Further, Adela speaks and acts like a man. According to the narrator of *A Passage to India*, she "*always said exactly what was in her mind*" (*API* 19), and she smokes cigarette with Dr Aziz and Professor Godbole (*API* 63). And when Ronny and she are involved in an auto accident, Ronny asks her if she is frightened. "*Not a bit,*" (*API* 80) replies the manly Adela. As the critic Krafft-Ebing explains, "*The masculine soul, heaving in the female bosom, finds pleasure in the pursuit of manly sports, and in manifestations of courage and bravado*" (qtd. in Smith-Rosenberg 270). Judging by outward appearances, 'plucky' (*API* 186), 'adventurous' (*API* 81), Adela seems to be an invert.

But since Adela is a fictional character, we are privileged to know her inner thoughts as inscribed into the narrative of *A Passage to India* through Forster's use of free indirect discourse, which allows the narrator to join "*his voice with his character's while preserving the idiom, tone, and sensibility of the character's speech*" (Herz 75). The sympathetic narrator of Forster's text affirms Adela's desire for Ronny by describing her 'tenderness' (*API* 72) for him, the 'unity and happiness' that Adela and Ronny share when they are within physical proximity, and by asserting the animalistic desire which the two young lovers feel for one another—"*the animal thrill*" (*API* 75) and feelings of "*licentiousness*" (*API* 80) which pass between them (*API* 75). Indeed, once Adela and Ronny decide finally to enter into an engagement, the narrator notes that Adela's "*main interest would henceforward be Ronny*"

(*API* 118). However, this physical and emotional bond is ultimately broken by Adela's confession that nothing happened between Dr Aziz and her in the Marabar Caves, which, the narrator asserts, "*killed* [Ronny's] *love*" (*API* 246) for her. By the end of the text, Adela returns to England to a lifestyle that will focus on her 'profession' (*API* 235) rather than on heterosexual relationships, and, presumably, Adela returns also to the "*advanced academic circles*" (*API* 65) within which she existed prior to her Indian adventure. That is, she returns to the milieu of the implicitly lesbian 'New Woman' (Smith-Rosenberg 271).

In any case, Adela is, or seems to be according to the narrative commentary included in *A Passage to India*, an invert who desires men. Unlike the inverted Forster, who admitted to have "*no feeling for women*" (Forster, *The Hill* 315), Adela—a female invert who should desire women, judging from appearances—expresses desire for men. She might be understood, therefore, as an inverted invert. In this sense, Adela's gender performance explodes at least one of the tropes upon which the self-conscious essentialism of the text is constructed. The critic Yonatan Touval, in an essay on the queerness of *A Passage to India*, "Queer Nation: E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*" argues that the term 'queer' "*derives its semiotic intensity precisely from its semiotic unspecificity, from its refusal to surrender* [. . .] *its hidden meanings, its intentional designs*" (4). Touval associates queerness in *A Passage to India* with "*the very essence of Indianicity*" (4): "'*the real India*'" that Adela seeks at the beginning of the novel is, according to Touval, a 'queer nation' (4). As the past participle that her last name suggests, Adela is already queer when she arrives in India. She is introduced in the text as "*Adela Quested, the queer, cautious girl whom Ronny had commissioned* [his mother] *to bring from England*" (*API* 18). This sentence places Adela in apposition to her queerness. That is to say, she and her queerness are the same.

Judith Butler's conception of gender performance allows for what Adela's and Kurtz' mistress' 'queer subjectivity' to emerge within the texts of *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness*. Adela's and the mistress' queer identification becomes possible since, for Butler, sexuality is constructed through gender performance within a matrix of compulsory heterosexuality: "*the 'reality' of heterosexual identities is performatively constituted through an imitation that sets itself up as the origin and ground of all imitations*" ("Imitation" 21). Queerness, conversely, can be performed by making obvious the unoriginality of heterosexual gender constructions like minority and inversion, the fact that "*if it were not for the notion of homosexual as copy, there would be no construct of heterosexuality as origin. Heterosexuality here presupposes homosexuality*" and vice-versa ("Imitation" 22). Adela's

and the mistress' queer subjectivity, in this sense, is a species of gender inversion, which undermines the self-reflexivity of supposedly fixed sexual orientations.

Their particular queer gender performance is similar to what is commonly referred to as 'drag.' Butler claims:

> *As much as drag creates a unified picture of a 'woman' (what its critics often oppose), it also reveals the distinctness of those aspects of gendered experience which are falsely naturalised as a unity through the regulatory fiction of heterosexual coherence. In imitating gender, drag reveals the imitative structure of gender itself--as well as its contingency.* (*Gender Trouble* 137)

Adela Quested's and Kurtz' mistress's drag performances—their appearance in the texts as a gay man in women's clothing—destabilises and calls into question what might be called the heterosexist assumptions as inscribed into the discourses of *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness*. Finally, this queer gender performance calls attention to the undetermined gender identities inherent in all of the characters in the two novels.

Conclusion

In fact, the European attempted intimacy with the other produces a breakdown that is the inevitable consequence of contagion by the unfamiliar, foreign, uncontrollable voice. In Bette London's terms, it is "*a case of cultural transgression with its attendant disease*" (186). It is possible to read this as an ironic admission of the Modernist novel's structural and ideological inability to deal with the lives of 'others.' The narrator cannot move his gaze beyond the Home Counties, and this inability is the result of the limits proscribed by the imperial discourse of the period. Both Conrad's and Forster's stories end grimly with colonial secrets intact, and the site of narrative bliss bequeathed to a new line of male narrators. Men and women left Europe in part to escape a sexuality that was increasingly restricted, policed, controlled, and categorised: legally, medically, and socially. *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India* provide another imaginative case history of how that 'escape' might play itself out in Africa and in India. Marlow seeks and finds Kurtz, already in a homoerotic relationship with another man. He himself almost achieves an intense, potentially erotic relationship with Kurtz. Along the way, he very nearly confesses to the erotic attractiveness of African men. Fielding experiences a very close homosexual intimacy with Aziz, Adela's experience and sexual hallucinations are rather more intense. But the two stories are a Conrad

story; so, both the potentially heterosexual and homosexual relationships end in failure. Fielding and Aziz are separated; Marlow does not return to marry the girl; the relationship between Kurtz and the harlequin is already over; Adela leaves the scene; Kurtz's last passionate act is the attempted murder of Marlow and the other whites, and Marlow's audience aboard the boat react in scorn when they acknowledge the attraction of African men as Fielding's fellows do.

Sexuality continues to remain a significant and constant barrier to the connection between characters. In *A Passage to India* and *Heart of Darkness*, it is never a connecting force between characters, but rather a divisive one that sends the characters back into their shells. This presupposes the failure to build a bridge between North and South and suggests the impossibility of any sort of fruitful contact between the two poles. Sexual conquest is, thus, firmly linked with the colonial enterprise, which is based essentially on the imposition of one's values, on the other. In the end, the two works suggest that we remain in a world of conventional thinking and morality that tolerates no queer lapses into racial or sexual eccentricity.

GENERAL CONCLUSION

The complexity of *Heart of Darkness* is one of the factors that constitutes its richness and that drives many postcolonial writers to 'answer back' the novella's theme. Reflecting Conrad's story, *A Passage to India* condemns and rejects colonial power by suggesting its own antithetical analysis and hinting at the vision of a more liberated and positive future. Thus, both writers explore a kind of 'moral gap' in their society and express a rejection of Imperial values, which comes out as a logical answer to colonial violence aggravated by racialism. They deal with the psychological crisis undergone by a coloniser encountering the colonised and his environment. Both writers examine sexuality, that big taboo, with almost the same manner. Indeed, the two works depict the drastic effects of colonialism on the colonisers and the colonised alike. It also perverts the West's image of itself as the seat of light and civilisation and stresses the blatant disparities that appear between the colonial 'philanthropic' discourse and the reality of colonisation.

Forster's India is a Conradian darkness. The writers' rebellion against the European ethos is a challenge to the concept of dominance and is therefore very close to Third World postcolonialist rejection of the colonial, hegemonic discourse. The coloniser-colonised relationship, which has, for a long time, been characterised by cultural denigration, is expressed in the two works in close connection with power. Thus, Forster, as an 'avatar' of Conrad, dismantles the Western hierarchical order by rejecting the 'inferior' position in which the colonised was typically placed in colonial literature. Furthermore, Ford Madox Ford, Conrad's friend and collaborator, explains that one of Conrad's tactics is, indeed, the deliberate omission of the central event. Forster does the same when he omits the assault scene in the caves. The omission of the central events in the two novels indicates that we should look elsewhere for the novels' real centre. Forster, like Conrad, wants his reader to be involved in the process of reading.

A Passage to India appears as virtually a re-writing of *Heart of Darkness*. The wide range of similarities between the novels foreground an explicit intertextuality, a response to *Heart of Darkness*. However, although Forster uses Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* as main reference text, he moves beyond the Conradian text by having his protagonist's sensibilities reawakened. Unlike Conrad's mute natives in *Heart of Darkness*, Forster's are given a voice to shout their rage. Aziz speaks loud and clear and acts without any constraint. He voices the

claims of the colonised, long considered an illiterate savage, sometimes a subhuman, transcends these limitations, proves that he is above the coloniser himself by mastering his knowledge and re-appropriating it to overcome him. Like their predecessors, Dickens, Dostoevsky, and others, Conrad and Forster responded to the problems of their age. Writing at times of political crisis was the only weapon to maintain some sort of human values against the forces of evil. The writers reasserted the primacy of literature as a guide to the moral confusion their age entailed.

Forster, indeed, moved from assimilation to rejection and back again. It is this progression from identification to repudiation that can be seen in the novels studied. In this sense, Conrad and Forster have remained 'secret sharers.' The debt that Forster's fiction displays with regard to the novel of Joseph Conrad, suggests that Forster went through a period of identification with the Conradian text. Forster confronted his giant precursor, staring back at him, causing a profound anxiety that cannot be totally eluded. The younger writer needed the older as a model but also to make space for himself and create a text that was not Conrad's, thereby develops a clear sense of his identity. Certainly, both writers belong to that category of 'strong poets,' who perform 'strong misreadings' of their precursors; both are 'western canonical writers'. E.M. Forster's 'wicked' comment on Conrad's entire work can now be justified, perhaps, by his attempt to achieve his 'own poetic' differently from his father:

> *He is misty in the middle as well as at the edges, that the secret casket of his genius contains a vapour rather than a jewel; and that we need not try to write him down philosophically, because there is, in this particular direction, nothing to write. No creed, in fact. Only opinions, and the right to throw them overboard when facts make them look absurd. Opinions held under the semblance of eternity, girt with the sea, crowned with the stars, and therefore easily mistaken for a creed.* (Forster, "The Pride of Mr Conrad" 397)

In making Conrad his parent, the ephebe, Forster, started a swerve away from the father.

Perhaps the most outstanding reason for Forster's attraction for Conrad lays in the sense of isolation shared by both men; in their feeling of immense boredom, which they tried to escape through their globe-trotting. Isolation in Forster's fiction, as in Conrad's, is more than a striking image. It is the condition of the test, which each of their main characters must undergo. It is the main cause of their failure. Like Conrad, Forster was intensely dissatisfied with the decaying spirit of England and the distressing decline of European civilisation. Both

writers condemn modern civilisation with its deceptive gloss. This is most evident in *Heart of Darkness* and *A Passage to India*. There are perhaps many differences between Conrad's and Forster's approach to the superficial details of life but they have in common their belief in man's absolute right to freedom.

The extent of Forster's achievement as a writer, however, can be estimated by approaching him not merely as a writer influenced by Conrad and others but in his wholeness and 'innovativeness.' No writer is born a writer. All writers are readers first. Writers read and borrow from their readings when they write. Another way to enlighten this 'anxiety of influence' is to realise that all writing is influenced by previous texts and that Joseph Conrad himself had been influenced by many a writer. And if Conrad can borrow from Dickens and Dostoevsky, there is no reason why Forster should not borrow from Conrad. Borrowing has not undermined his writing; it has enriched it. Paradoxically, this sort of ensnarement alone makes possible Forster's fulfillment. Through his inclusion of Conrad and other sources in his work, Forster was trying to become an author who would be valued for classical stature as well as for popular appeal, an achievement which is undeniable today.

Woolf, Joyce, Lawrence, James, Conrad, and Forster all reached great heights, in part because they were steadfast in the struggle to define themselves as modern artists. Even when audiences were unappreciative, they held on to their vision; their innovations proved costly, but in the end earned them each a prominent place in the roll-call of literature. By clarifying their responses to their predecessors, we enrich our understanding of their divergent artistic quests. Perhaps strong writers must always refract light from competing sources. In the act of forging a unique creative voice, other voices, other visions, must not be given dominance. As strong as it has been, Forster's response to the force of Conrad's style and vision has enabled him to share in the esteem accorded to writers of renown. Forster's belatedness must be seen as strength rather than affliction; belatedness is the predicament of all good writers. Nowadays Forster, like his mentor, has become one of the greatest exponents of the twentieth century English novel.

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مُلخّص

تهدف هذه المذكرة إلى مناقشة العلاقة بين رواية "رحلة إلى الهند" *A Passage to India* و رواية "في غياهب الظلام" *Heart of Darkness*، بالتركيز على مفهوم إعادة الكتابة في الرواية، كما ان الدراسة ستعكف على تسليط الضوء على أوجه الشبه والاختلاف بين العملين من منطلق نظريات نقدية متعددة.

وبغية الوصول لهذا الغرض سأقوم بمناقشة نص فورستر Edward Morgan Forster على أنه رد وإعادة لنص كونراد Joseph Conrad ، والغرض هنا ليس تبيين كيف أن رواية فورستر هي رجع صدى لرواية كونراد، بل ان الهدف هو إظهار الكيفية التي من خلالها يتفاعل كلا النصان مع بعض القضايا المطروحة في عصرهما، وعلى هذا الأساس سأحاول التركيز على الكيفية التي استعمل بها فورستر روايته ليس فقط لرفض القيم المتداولة آنذاك في الحياة العامة أو في الفن- ولكن أيضا لإثبات اختلافه. كلتا الروايتان ستناقشان من خلال مفهومي حوارية النص وتناصه، بعبارة أخرى، كلا النصان يتحاوران مع بعضهما البعض من خلال تبني خطاب بعضهما البعض في عدد من الحالات ورفضه في عدد من الحالات الأخرى، حاملين بين ثناياهما نظرة الكاتبين للعالم والوقائع الاجتماعية.

من خلال استعمال النقد الماركسي والنسوي والنفساني سأحاول إيجاد الطريقة التي من خلالها استعمل فورستر نصه كوسيلة لمعارضة الافتراضات الكولونيالية كما فعل كونراد في نصه؛ أي كيف أن الكاتبين عرضا النظام الكولونيالي كمجموعة من المعتقدات الإيديولوجية.