

**Krzysztof Fordoński and Anna Kwiatkowska (eds.), 2021.
The World of E.M. Forster – E.M. Forster and the World.
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The book, which commemorates the fiftieth anniversary of E.M. Forster's death and marks the tenth anniversary of the foundation of the International E.M. Forster Society, presents a collection of essays that serve as a significant contribution to the academic discussion concerning Forster and his place in the contemporary artistic world. The duality suggested by the title is reflected in the structure of the volume which is neatly and logically divided into two parts. Part one offers a handful of insightful novel scholarly readings of Forster's narratives, whereas part two engages in examinations of Forsterian influences traced in other literary and non-literary texts.

The collection opens with the essay by Francesca Pierini entitled "Such is the working of the southern mind'. A Postcolonial Reading of E.M. Forster's Italian Narratives." It focuses on the reconstruction of the connection between Britain and the South of Europe in the so-called "Italian novels." Pierini convincingly argues that this relation should be perceived as an important aspect of a process of identity building of the British nation.

The second chapter, "Opposed but Inevitable: E.M. Forster's Reaction Against and Acceptance of 'Cultural Selection' in *A Passage to India*," by Tarik Ziyad Gulcu discusses the most acclaimed of Forster's novels from the perspective of a 'cultural selection' which is to echo Darwin's natural selection. Yet, in his investigation, apart from the titular

narrative, Gulcu additionally presents the idea of selection against a broader spectrum of voices of Forster's contemporaries, like Virginia Woolf, Bertrand Russell or Angus Wilson.

Next, Sławomir Koziół, the author of the third chapter entitled "‘You Mustn't Say Anything against the Machine’. Power and Resistance in E.M. Forster's Short Story ‘The Machine Stops’,” offers a well-informed and convincing reading of the writer's only science-fiction story. He presents his analysis in the context of theoretical deliberations of Michael Foucault and Giorgio Agamben, with reference to biopolitics.

Part two begins with Mihaela Cel-Mare's chapter "(Re)visiting E.M. Forster's Adaptations. A Transmedial Perspective on *Where Angels Fear to Tread*." The analysis sets to compare the 1963 stage reworking of the novel by Elizabeth Hart and the 1991 screen adaptation by Charles Sturridge. She draws our attention to the fact that the two adaptations differ in their scene focalizations, i.e. while the stage version's main concern is the motif of disagreements between the characters, the film centers around Lilia's identity shift induced by her leaving England.

The essay that follows, entitled "What's Behind Their Umbrellas? Symbolic Consideration of Umbrella in E.M. Forster's *Howards End* and Katherine Mansfield's Selected Short Stories" by Anna Kwiatkowska, engagingly explains the intricacies of symbolic meanings of an umbrella, otherwise quite an ordinary object, and their impact on the narrative structures of the respective writers' works. The author argues convincingly that while in Mansfield's stories an umbrella emphasizes certain features of the characters, in Forster's novel it becomes an indispensable part of the character's life.

The next chapter by Paweł Wojtas, "Crippling Commitments: Charting the Ethics of Disability in Forster and Coetzee," follows suit and compares the works by Forster with the oeuvre of another writer. Wojtas offers an extremely interesting reading of Forster's and Coetzee's writings and the fictionalization of disability in particular through the prism of Kierkegaard's philosophical approach to self.

The volume closes with the chapter by Barbara Puschmann-Nalenz titled "E.M. Forster's *The Longest Journey* and Alan Hollinghurst's *The Stranger's Child*: Continuation or Opposition?" The essay is a most noteworthy comparative study of two intertextually linked novels. The author's line of argumentation, which is logically composed, well-informed and clear in its execution, shows how Hollinghurst's narration, with its postmodern features, draws on Forster's modernist fiction.

In short, this compact volume surveys a surprisingly broad spectrum of ideas related to E.M. Forster's writings and their echoes in literary works of both his contemporaries

and those of the contemporary artistic world. The different perspectives employed by the contributors as well as various contexts of their deliberations offer the reader a truly multidisciplinary experience. The essays prove that there is still room for engaging, academic discussions devoted to this Edwardian author, his work, and its intertextual echoes. The book definitely uncovers new grounds, stimulates, and invites a further exchange of ideas related to Forster's oeuvre and its place in the world of literature and literary studies. The collection reads very well and, accordingly, while studying each respective chapter, one has an irresistible feeling that the Forsterian "only connect" spirit permeates the whole volume. It is a must-read for his academic fans.