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Dialectics of Place and Space in Forster's *A Passage to India*: A Lacanian Reading

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Abstract: This study provides a reading of Forster's *A Passage to India* in terms of space from the vantage point of Lacanian psychoanalysis in order to show that the novel fictionalises the dialectics of the place and space and its implications for the British and to argue that the attempt of ideological and semantic appropriation of India by the British ultimately fails and results in an ironical entrapment of the British in the places they created in the midst of the Indian space except for Adela who manages to cope with India without turning it into a place from a space. Topography functions as a semantic ground in the novel, and the way that the topographical elements are viewed by the Westerners reveals how they commit epistemic violence by refusing to acknowledge the Symbolic patterns of the non-West. In the context of providing such a Lacanian psychoanalytic analysis of the novel with a particular focus on the topography, the Marabar Caves, intersubjectivity, and the gaze of the other; the paper will borrow such terms as the unconscious, the Symbolic, talking cure/full speech, and object of desire from Lacan.

Keywords:

Space,
Topography,
Intersubjectivity,
Lacan,
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Forster'ın *Hindistan'a Bir Geçit* Romanında Yer ve Mekân Diyalektiği: Lacancı bir Okuma

Öz: Bu çalışmanın amacı, Forster'ın *Hindistan'a Bir Geçit* romanını mekân açısından Lacancı psikanalitik perspektiften ele alarak romanın yer ve mekân diyalektiği üzerine kurgulandığını göz önüne sermektir. Çalışmanın ana tezi, İngilizlerin Hindistan'a semantik ve ideolojik olarak hükmetme çabasının geri teperek İngilizlerin Hindistan'da yarattıkları mekânlarda ironik bir şekilde hapsolmasıyla sonuçlanmasıdır. Bu ironik hapsolmaya romanın baş İngiliz karakterlerinden olan Adela dâhil değildir çünkü o Hindistan'ı olduğu gibi, yani psikanalitik bağlamda bir mekân olarak kabul etmeyi başarır ve daha "anlaşılabilir" bir yere dönüştürmeye çalışmaz. Romanda, topoğrafyanın semantik boyutu vardır. Topografik ögelerin Batılılar tarafından nasıl görüldüğü, Batılıların Batılı olmayanların Simgesel düzenini hiçe sayarak epistemik şiddet uyguladığını gözler önüne sermektedir. Bu bağlamda çalışma, Lacan'dan bilinçdışı, Simgesel, konuşma tedavisi/tam konuşma ve arzu nesnesi gibi kavramları kullanarak romanda yer alan topoğrafya, Marabar Mağaraları, öznelerarasılık ve ötekinin bakışına odaklanacaktır.

Anahtar Sözcükler:

Mekân,
Topoğrafya,
Öznelerarasılık,
Lacan,
E. M. Forster,
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Introduction

Forster's *A Passage to India*, which is based on Forster's own experience in India and takes place against the background of the rule of the British Empire over India, lends itself to different readings and interpretations in postcolonial studies. Whereas Benita Parry analyses Forster's novel in terms of the confrontation of the West and the East (294), Lionel Trilling analyses it in terms of the problems of representation (21). Mohammad Shaheen states that Forster's novel, as a modernist text, questions "the basis of liberal humanism" (75-7), and David W. Elliott, in his psychoanalytic reading of the novel from a Jungian perspective, argues that "the Marabar Caves is the central psychological symbol of the narrative, representing what Jung calls the collective unconscious" (2). Although there are several analyses of the novel from different perspectives, including psychoanalytic, no critic has provided a thorough psychoanalytic reading of the novel in terms of space in Lacanian terms. Accordingly, this paper, from the vantage point of Lacanian ideas, will argue that the semantic and ideological attempts of the British to appropriate the Indian space ultimately fail and give way to their entrapment in the British places they created amidst the Indian space. Their appropriation of space is significant as it becomes an attempt to turn an unmapped space into a mapped place. Ergo, the paper will offer a psychoanalytic reading of Forster's *A Passage to India* with a particular focus on the topography and its effect on intersubjectivity in order to lay bare the working mechanisms of the binary logic dominating the Western discourse and to reveal the tendency of the British to see and to identify themselves as the superior through the gaze of the other. In the novel, topography acts as a semantic ground to reveal the gaze of the Westerners and their perception of the non-West; therefore, this paper puts under scrutiny the topographical elements to decipher the binary logic of Western metaphysics. In such a context, the analysis will focus on the Marabar Caves, the echoes and their significance for Mrs Moore and Adela. To that end, such psychoanalytic terms as the unconscious, the Symbolic, talking cure/full speech, and object of desire be employed as part of its conceptual framework.

Before venturing into the analysis of the novel, the Lacanian concepts that the paper will employ in the analysis of the novel should be briefly discussed. For the sake of clarification, the first concept to be discussed is the Symbolic. The Symbolic is part of the

three registers which take part in the formation of the subject. It is preceded by the Imaginary, which is pre-linguistic and includes the Mirror Stage, in which the infant feels as a unified whole because s/he thinks that the image s/he sees on the mirror is "a *totality*, a distinct, stable entity" (Britton 202). The infant looks in a mirror and takes the image appearing in the mirror as a unified whole. Of course, this is a misrecognition, but there is wholeness and stability through this misrecognition. The child's entry into the Symbolic takes place "at the point of coincidence of the child's learning to speak and the father's intervention in the couple formed by child and mother" (202). The Symbolic order is "characteristic of a given cultural milieu" (Lacan, *Écrits* 204). The Symbolic consists of "all forms of social organization" (Britton 202) and is the sphere of language and discourse:

> The enormity of the order into which we have entered—into which we are, as it were, born a second time, in leaving behind the state which is rightly known as the *infans* state, for it is without speech—namely, the symbolic order constituted by language, and the moment of the concrete universal discourse and of all the furrows opened up by it at this time, in which we had to find lodging. (Lacan, *Écrits* 371)

In other words, the Symbolic is where the subject not only internalises the logic of the signifier (that is, language) but also his/her role in the family and in the society into which s/he was born as well as the norms and teachings dictated to him/her (Britton 203): "Man is, prior to his birth and beyond his death, caught up in the symbolic chain, a chain that founded his lineage before his history was embroidered upon it. . . . [M]an is in fact considered to be a whole, but like a pawn, in the play of the signifier, and this is so even before its rules are transmitted to him, insofar as he ends up discovering them" (Lacan, *Écrits* 392).

The unconscious, which is the storage of the repressed materials, emerges at the exact moment when the child enters the Symbolic, when the primary repression—that is, the child's repression of his/her desire to be the object of his/her mother's desire due to the intervention of the father (Britton 208)—occurs. For Lacan, the unconscious is "the Other's discourse" (Lacan, *Écrits* 10). It is a void and an empty space which transcends the subject (364) and is located outside the boundaries of the subject's conscious (214-15). It is not only structured like language, but it 'is' language (736). Furthermore, it is "the sum of the effects of speech on a subject, at the level at which the subject constitutes himself out of the effects of the signifier" (*Four Fundamental* 126). The unconscious proves that men are dominated by the signifier (*Écrits* 25). It is a space where all:

> The fragments of repressed material—desires, memories, etc.—while they may be completely non-verbal, are nevertheless signifiers, linked together, metonymically or metaphorically, in a signifying chain which sends fragmentary and distorted messages to the conscious mind. As that part of ourselves to which we have no access, and which thus remains essentially other to us, the unconscious . . . speaks to us through symptoms . . . through the breaks and flaws in our conscious speech and behaviour. It is the subject's discourse, but he receives it as though it came from somewhere else. (Britton 201)

The Object of desire (*objet a*), for Lacan, is "[s]omething from which the subject, in order to constitute itself; has separated itself off as an organ. This serves as a symbol of the lack, that is to say, of the phallus, not as such, but in so far as it is lacking. It must, therefore, be an object that is, firstly, separable and, secondly, that has some relation to the lack" (Lacan, *Four Fundamental* 103). The Object of desire, in other words, emerges at the same time with the unconscious, when the child is forced to give up his/her desire to be his/her mother's object of desire, which is the subject's original desire. To be more specific, the original desire refers to the child's desire to be "the *phallus* that the mother lacks" (Britton 208). Following the intervention of the father and the internalisation of the language, the child represses this desire and thus gives way to the emergence of the unconscious. This creates a desire to fill the insatiable gap caused by the lack that emerges after the primary repression. The repressed phallus then "becomes the unconscious signifier of this original desire. As such, it comes to stand for all subsequent desires and to reproduce itself in chains of signifiers which metaphorically substitute for it." (208).

Full speech is the aim of the analyst in the process of psychoanalysis (Lacan, *Écrits* 535). If the full speech is achieved, then it leads "to the removal of the symptom." (211). It seldom occurs and refers to the correspondence of the signifier and the signified (318). To be more specific, full speech "is to reorder past contingencies by conferring on them the sense of necessities to come, such as they are constituted by the scant freedom through which the subject makes them present" (213).

Topography

The first thing to be discussed in the analysis of Forster's *A Passage to India* is the topographical elements in the novel. The narrative details about the topography are dominated by a spatial logic—that is, the binary logic which categorises the places located in the East as the inferior constituent of the opposition, whereas categorising the places located in the West as the superior—which organises the other details accordingly. Chandrapore represents the whole landscape of India and India itself in the eyes of the British. At the very beginning of the novel, the description of the landscape in Chandrapore offers some insight into how the British view India. How they see certain segments of the city is indicative of how they see the inhabitants. A case in point is the narrator's depiction of the underprivileged segments of the city:

> Except for the Marabar Caves—and they are twenty miles off—the city of Chandrapore presents nothing extraordinary. Edged rather than washed by the river Ganges, it trails for a couple of miles along the bank, scarcely distinguishable from the rubbish it deposits so freely. . . . The streets are mean, the temples ineffective . . . whose filth deters all. . . . The very wood seems made of mud, the inhabitants of mud moving. So abased, so monotonous is everything that meets the eye. . . . Houses do fall, people are drowned and left rotting. . . . (Forster 31)

The above-mentioned quotation offers the view of the place where the Indians live. It is identified with filth, muddle, and drowning. When the perspective shifts and the city

is viewed from the Civil Station, which is a place created by the British so that they can live according to their own norms and values, the landscape and the view change dramatically. This time topography is associated with hygiene and beauty: "Houses belonging to Eurasians stand on the high ground by the railway station. . . . [From there] Chandrapore appears to be a totally different place. . . . It is a tropical pleasance, washed by a noble river. . . . [T]he Civil Station . . . has nothing hideous in it, and . . . the view is beautiful" (31-2). These two different descriptions of the same landscape in Chandrapore show two things: the Indians, whose home is India and who belong to India, live in the worse parts of the city as the inferior party in the hierarchy constructed by the Western ideology, and the British live in the better parts of the city as the stronger in the hierarchy. What makes India exotic or beautiful is not its natural beauties, but the presence of the British and of the places they created, both of which are associated with what is good and beautiful, in it. If one reads the text closely, s/he can say that the places where the Indians live are beyond the comprehension of the "orderly" Westerners. They cannot have a semantically stable view of these places in their mind. To be more specific, because the topographical elements in India are not familiar to the British, they cannot comprehend them or verbalise them. Thus, these places are elusive, irrational, unknown, and chaotic for the Westerners. Where the Westerners live occupies the polar opposite position in this binary. Another comparison is made through the eyes of Fielding between Italy and India, which is based on the binary logic of the Western metaphysics in which Italy, representing the West, is superior to India, which represents the East: "The buildings of Venice . . . stood in the right place, whereas in poor India everything was placed wrong. He had forgotten the beauty of form among idol temples and lumpy hills . . . the harmony between the works of man and the earth . . . the civilization that has escaped muddle" (277-78). As the comparison clearly displays, while Italy stands for beauty and civilisation as a Western country, India stands for muddle, which symbolises what is ugly and uncivilised.

India is described by the Westerners and sometimes by the narrator himself as a muddle, as a jungle and as something dark and mysterious. Indeed, India is an extralinguistic space, a place of "massive incomprehensibility" (Said 202). The narrator's descriptions of India provide an image of India which displays India as a place that is "timeless," "disorderly," and "hollow," which imply that India is an extra-symbolic space and cannot be properly verbalised within the logic of the signifier. In other words, India, for the Westerners, is an extralinguistic space because it is coded in their Symbolic—that is, the British culture, discourse, norms etc.—as the uncanny other, as something that eludes signification, as the inferior party in the hierarchy within the logic of the binary thinking, as the "otherness which is at once an object of desire and derision, an articulation of difference contained within the fantasy of origin and identity" (Bhabha 96). This binary thinking is the ideological ground upon which the whole of Western metaphysics, which is the epistemological framework that has shaped the West discursively since the time of Plato (Derrida 76), is established. Thus, the British attempt to describe India with words that have negative connotations within the semantic system

which is logocentric—that is, within the logic of the signifiers. The employment of such words to describe, or rather fail to describe, India lays bare the working mechanisms of the binary logic of the Western metaphysics and the underlying psychodynamics of the Westerners, whose purpose is to exalt the West and the British by discriminating India and the Indian people as the inferior other. They are not bothered to find out whether the Indians have their own Symbolic patterns or not. That is, they take their view/gaze as the norm and do not grant acknowledgement to the Indian way of things.

Because India cannot be located within the Symbolic of the British nor can it be verbalised within the Western logic of the signifiers, the British attempt to create places with which they are familiar and try to stick together as the British so that they can maintain their sense of wholeness. Eventually, their attempts result in failure. This failure is rather significant as "we all have a need for wholeness, a longing for the state of unity, but the achievement of plenitude is a logical impossibility" (Sarup 14). To be more specific, the British attempt to create a place for themselves in India to construct their Symbolic in it so that they can maintain their sense of narcissistic grandeur and wholeness. This artificially created place has ontological resonances in it as it empowers them and grants them a sense of shared norms, a place where they can be surrounded by things that symbolise the notion of Britishness. One of the best examples of this attempt is the Civil Station, in which only the British live. From the Civil Station, "Chandrapore appears to be a totally different place. It is a city of gardens. . . . It is a tropical pleasance" (Forster 31). Indeed, gardens are one of the most famous symbols of British culture and the notion of Englishness. From the Civil Station, the city appears like an exotic uncanny other: beautiful but incomprehensible. Problems arise when the British have contact with the city and its dwellers. The Civil Station, accordingly, is a place created by the British so that they can exist and live in this extralinguistic and indefinable place in accordance with their own norms and rules—that is, within their own Symbolic as the realm of language and culture. This creation or construction of a British place is crucial in turning Chandrapore into a colonial space which is familiar to the mind of the British. This is also an attempt to create a rupture within the Indian Symbolic:

> [T]o decipher unfamiliar spaces . . . travellers and colonizers relied on and scattered about them the stock descriptions and authoritative symbols that lay to hand. They transferred familiar metaphors, which are themselves already bridging devices, which carry meaning across, to unfamiliar and unlikely contexts. Strangeness was made comprehensible by using everyday names, dependable textual conventions, both rhetorical and syntactic. (Boehmer 15)

This is exactly what the British do in the Civil Station. They try to turn the "strange" India into something comprehensible. Namely, the Indian space is appropriated by the British and made their own by "rhetorical and syntactic" strategies. That is, by naming and organising the Indian space in their own way, they cast their textual and cultural conventions on it. This is another way of transforming the space into a place, which is frozen, stable, and comprehensible. As Elleke Boehmer points out, by attempting to turn

parts of Chandrapore into British places, the British aim to translate the Symbolic of the Indians into the Symbolic of the British so that colonisation can be achieved successfully. In other words, the British, by transforming the Indian aspects of Chandrapore into British, not only attempt to create a physical space or to change the environment physically but also aim to create a mental space by injecting the Indians with the ideology of Western metaphysics, in which the constructed superiority of the West to the East is put forward. This is one of the finest examples of epistemic violence on a big scale. An example for the execution of this epistemic violence can be recognised in the dialogue between Adela, Mrs Moore, Mr Fielding, and Aziz about India being a mystery and a muddle:

> "I do so hate mysteries," Adela announced.
>
> "We English do."
>
> . . .
>
> "I like mysteries but I rather dislike muddles," said Mrs Moore.
>
> "A mystery is a muddle."
>
> . . .
>
> ". . . Aziz and I know well that India's a muddle." (Forster 86)

Failing to verbalise India and its landscape within the logic of the signifiers or to locate it within the Symbolic of the British causes them to use such words as "mystery" and "muddle" to define—or fail to define—India. Signs of the epistemic violence in this abovementioned dialogue is revealed in how Mr Fielding speaks on behalf of Aziz as if he knows exactly what Aziz would think and say about India being a muddle, as if Aziz, as an Indian in the presence of the British, is not allowed to speak his mind freely. He, like all of the other British people, disregards the opinions and perspectives of the Indian people and speaks as if his opinion as a British is all that matters. One cannot help but notice that even Fielding, who claims to be a friend of Aziz, monopolises Aziz in linguistic, and thus in epistemic terms by speaking for him.

Another example of the British creating a place for themselves in India occurs when the ironic Bridge Party takes place. The Bridge Party is one of the most ironic events in the novel because the party, contrary to what its name suggests, is not about bridging the gap between the British and the "friendly Indians" (Forster 62). Rather, it is about the British attempting to create yet another place for themselves to assert their superiority to the Indians and to impose their Symbolic on the Indians as Mrs Turton implies: "'You're superior to them, anyway. Don't forget that. You're superior to everyone in India'" (61). Indeed, throughout the novel, the British experience displays "an inherent tension, a feeling of threat, because one's identity depends on recognition by the other" (Sarup 13). This tension caused by the attempt of the British to assert their identity as the superior is best displayed in the Bridge Party where Mrs Turton feels threatened when the Indian women talk to her in fluent English as if they are not Indians but native British like Mrs

Turton: "Her manner had grown more distant since she had discovered that some of the group was westernized, and might apply her own standards to her" (Forster 62). Indeed, Mrs Turton feels threatened by the gaze of the other because the other might no longer be inferior to the British as far as being a westerner is concerned—that is to say, the other might no longer be the other.

The Caves

Perhaps the most important aspect of the novel to discuss is the Marabar Caves. The initial description of the caves implies that the caves represent India and the Indian people in the sense that they are all extralinguistic and cannot be verbalised or located within the logic of the signifiers—that is, language—of the logocentric Western discourse: "Having seen one such cave . . . the visitor returns to Chandrapore uncertain whether he has had an interesting experience or a dull one or any experience at all. He finds it difficult to discuss the caves" (138). They do not have the right norms to "discuss the caves." Very much like the Indians, the caves, in accordance with the binary logic of Western metaphysics, represent that which is dark and thus unknown and inexplicable for the British. Accordingly, the caves are extralinguistic spaces: "They are dark caves. . . . [T]here is little to see, and no eye to see it. . . . Before man . . . had been born, the planet must have looked thus. . . . Before birds" (138-158). Indeed, the caves are, for the British, so inexplicable and extralinguistic a temporal space which go beyond the linearity of the West that they are associated with the primordial elements:

> The caves are associated with the vast and unknowable expanse of geological time. They derive from the most remote ages of the Pre-Cambrian era, a period covering the first two or three billion years of the earth's history and a period of which geologists have merely the slightest knowledge, since only the lowest and most easily obliterated forms of life existed. The caves antedate even the most primitive fossils. (Clubb 186)

The caves were there before the humans and they will be there eternally. They cannot be contained by human history as they spill over its restrictions, predictions, and predomination. They signify the other, before or future of human history. On the one hand, the caves, as a space, are associated with that which is dark, deep, unknown, inexplicable, and extralinguistic, all of which are the features of the unconscious in psychoanalytical terms. On the other hand, again in psychoanalytical terms, the caves can also be associated with the mother's womb, which is also associated with such adjectives as dark, deep, mysterious, and extralinguistic: "[T]he caves should be understood as symbolic of the womb. Such a meaning reinforces the concept that the caves represent the mystery of the origin of life" (188). Accordingly, Adela's yearning for seeing the caves can be interpreted in psychoanalytical terms as her desire for origin, and also for relief as she feels paralysed in the Western Symbolic. That is, her invented attempt to go beyond what the West represents and to satiate her desire to see "the real India."

The echoes in the caves shatter the ego boundaries of Mrs Moore and Adela and destabilise them. They no longer feel assimilated in the illusion of "reality" imposed by their Symbolic. The echo that both Adela and Mrs Moore keep hearing after they visit the caves is the voice of the uncanny and the symptom as the return of the repressed in psychoanalytical terms, and it brings back what is repressed: "All the fragments of repressed material—desires, memories, etc. . . . are . . . linked together . . . in a signifying chain which sends fragmentary and distorted messages to the conscious mind. . . . [T]he unconscious speaks to us through symptoms" (Selden 201). After Mrs Moore leaves the cave, she goes through a nervous breakdown as "she didn't want to write to her children, didn't want to communicate with anyone, not even with God. She sat motionless with horror" (Forster 161). She cannot keep her connexion to the Symbolic intact and her alienation from what used to be familiar and her own is quite significant in its implication that the "reality" or the illusory status imposed upon her by the Western Symbolic is unveiled. Her resistance to communicate with God is indicative of her feeling as a misfit in the mainstream discourse. To be more specific, God as the paternal metaphor, as the regulating metaphor that makes signification possible (Lacan, *Écrits* 463), can no more organise her reality.

As for Adela, throughout the novel, she talks about her desire to see "the real India." On the one hand, her yearning to see "the real India" can be interpreted as a yearning to affirm her superiority as the British through the gaze of the inferior other: a "desire for recognition by . . . the gaze of the other" (Selden 205-06). On the other hand, it can be argued that she objectifies and idealises the idea of "the real India," and Aziz, for her, represents "the real India" or the uncanny. She sexualises Aziz and he becomes her object of desire in Lacanian terms:

> Consciously she rejects Ronny, and subconsciously she desires Aziz. . . . [T]he subconscious desire for Aziz is there. . . . Why otherwise does she dwell on his physical beauty and why the question about his wives? Conflict is set up between the conscious and the subconscious minds, and Adela resolves the subconscious desire into a supposed sexual attack on the part of Aziz. In rushing from the cave she is repudiating a part of herself, the cave symbolizing at this point the womb or sexual consummation. (Clubb 192)

When she enters the cave, the echo, being the voice of the uncanny, the once intimate but repressed psychodynamics, and the symptom of the repressed, brings her repressed sexual feelings towards Aziz back: "Adela goes . . . to the [cave] . . . and this experience arouses her repressed sexuality that she conveniently projects onto the racially Other, Aziz, who was 'the object of her fantasy' before she went into the [cave]" (Chandler 369). It is for this reason that Adela mistakenly accuses Aziz of raping her, because she, very much like Mrs Moore, goes through a complete nervous breakdown due to the return of the repressed—that is, after visiting the caves and unlocking the voice of her repressed desires—she experiences a dream-like vision in which her repressed sexual desires for Aziz resurface. It would not be wrong to argue that Aziz represents something bigger than her fantasy. He represents her corporeality which was denied to her by the

Western symbolic. He becomes an amalgam of what is denied to Adela in many different terms: her object of desire, her corporeal awareness, or her agency longed for an agency—that is, an opportunity for her to transgress the boundaries of the phallogocentric Western discourse. Later on, Mrs Moore and Adela talk about the caves and the echo. Both fail to verbalise the caves and the echo because they belong to an extralinguistic realm. Adela, for example, "could not identify or describe the particular cave, indeed almost refused to have her mind cleared up about it" (Forster 205). Moreover, Mrs Moore suddenly becomes interested in talking and paying attention to her when she hears Adela is talking about the echo and desperately wants her to verbalise it:

> ". . . but there is this echo that I keep on hearing."
>
> "Oh, what of the echo?" asked Mrs Moore, paying attention to her for the first time.
>
> "I can't get rid of it."
>
> "I don't suppose you ever will."
>
> . . .
>
> "Mrs. Moore, what is this echo?"
>
> "Don't you know?"
>
> "No—what is it? Oh, do say! I felt you would be able to explain it. . . . [T]his will comfort me so. . . ." (205)

Adela's desperate yearning for the symbolisation of the echo can be interpreted as the talking cure in psychoanalytic terms. In other words, her longing to decipher the meaning of the echo can be taken as an attempt to achieve full speech, which leads to matching the signifier to the signified and thus to "a coherent discourse" (Lacan, *Écrits* 535), in Lacanian terms. If they can carry it over to the linguistic space, their ego will be freed from it. That is, if they can symbolise the thing that causes a rupture in their Symbolic and put it into words, the echo will disappear and they will be cured. In other words, if they can "recollect portions of [what was] repressed. . . . [This] will interpret and make sense of the disturbances from which [they suffer]" (Eagleton 139). Mrs Moore fails to symbolise whatever causes the rupture in her Symbolic. Thus, the echo remains and she dies. She thinks by going back to England, to the linguistic space and the Symbolic she is familiar with and belongs to, she can cure herself and move on with her life. This is her attempt to re-establish the previous symmetries in her life or to re-achieve her lost psychodynamics. However, since she cannot symbolise the thing that causes her to experience a nervous breakdown and cannot make the echo disappear, she dies before she can get back to England. Adela, on the other hand, manages to symbolise what was resurfaced in the caves in the form of echo when she realises that what she went through in the caves had nothing to do with rape and confesses that Aziz is innocent. Uttering Aziz's innocence in the court is not the symbolisation of the thing that causes the rupture in her Symbolic. Rather, it is her realisation that what resurfaced out of her unconscious in the caves was her repressed desire for Aziz, for "the real India"—that is, her repressed

corporal awareness. Because she goes through a nervous breakdown during and after visiting the caves and her failure to symbolise what she experienced, she projects her repressed psychic material onto Aziz in the form of rape. In her confession, she indicates that she can confront her desire and is cured. The indication of this can be found when she tells Fielding "I have no longer any secrets. My echo has gone" (Forster 239). Echo, other than being the voice of the unconscious, is the symptom of the repressed, so when she acknowledges this, her symptom, the echo, disappears and she is cured. In such a context it is safe to say that Adela, despite her shallowness, is one step further than Mrs Moore as she takes what India offers her. In the end, she does see the real India as she bridges the gap between her mind and the repressed psychic material. She appears as the victorious of the two because she can cope with India without turning it into a place from a space. However, the members of the British community remain trapped in the "British place" created amidst "Indian space." Thus, it can be argued that the novel fictionalises the dialectics of the place and space and its implications for the British.

Conclusion

Throughout the novel, the British—and sometimes the narrator himself—attempt to appropriate the Indian space and to impose their Symbolic on the Indians on a semantic and ideological ground in order to be able to identify themselves as the superior party within the binary logic of the Western metaphysics. The British create such places as the Civil Station to familiarise/symbolise the incomprehensible and strange Indian territory and to turn it into a place from a space. The narrator, too, fails to describe India within a coherent semantic system as he ambivalently uses such words as "mud," "monotonous," and "rubbish" to describe it. The Civil Station, as a British place, allows the British to assert their existence on an ontological ground, whereas such ideological attempts as Fielding's monopolising of Aziz in linguistic terms allow them to assert their superiority on an epistemological ground.

The caves are extralinguistic Indian spaces. They are associated with that which is unknown and dark as well as with the primordial elements because their existence dates back to "the Pre-Cambrian era, a period covering the first two or three billion years of the earth's history and a period of which geologists have merely the slightest knowledge" (Clubb 186). They cannot be contained within the logic of the signifiers. In psychoanalytical terms, the caves represent an encounter with the unconscious. Accordingly, the echo that both Mrs Moore and Adela keep hearing after their brief exploration of the caves is the voice of their unconscious and the symptom of the repressed. So long as they fail to symbolise the thing that ruptures their Symbolic they suffer from the echo as the symptom of the return of their repressed psychic material. Adela, unlike Mrs Moore who fails to symbolise the thing that ruptures her Symbolic, achieves to symbolise it and frees her ego from it.

To sum up, with the exception of Adela who eventually manages to cope with India, the British find themselves trapped in the British places they created as their attempt to establish a Symbolic of their own by disregarding the Indian Symbolic altogether and to appropriate the Indian space results in failure. Indeed, the British fail to turn India into a place from a space in order to make it stable, frozen, and comprehensible. In other words, their ideological aim (in colonising India) to see themselves in the superior position through the gaze of the other gives way to failure as they end up alienated and trapped in "chaotic" and "incomprehensible" India. That is, they cannot turn India into a comprehensible place.

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