

characters and the world of Forster, the author. Forster's double vision is composed, therefore, of "[t]he subtexts and the syllepsis [which] are at the same time a decoration and an element of construction and only when simultaneously perceived do they reveal their full value" (127). Forster's symbolic vision resembles a well-composed painting in a well-matched frame; the two elements constitute a unity and due to that they should be analyzed in unison. Last, but not least, the book by Fordoński can be appreciated by both the established researchers and those who just begin their scientific adventure with the works of Forster. While on the one hand it neatly sums up Forster's approach related to the construction of symbol and the use of symbolic patterns, on the other it offers a genuine springboard and a tool for those who would like to concentrate on pursuing further either certain symbols or patterns of symbolic meanings, looking for intricate connections, for instance, within a particular collection of short stories. Following one thread may lead to new or simply still unveiled symbolic patterns. Only connect.

**Jeffrey M. Heath (ed.), 2008.**  
*'The Creator as Critic' and Other Writings*  
*by E. M. Forster.*  
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The book edited by Jeffrey M. Heath contains E. M. Forster's own talks and writings on a variety of subjects. It is worth reviewing as an original source which compiles Forster's writings and discourses. Besides being a novelist, Forster is also a literary critic and a travel writer. Moreover, his sensitivity to the problems of his age is reflected in his own words, not from the perspective of a critic, in the book. Hence, the present book review aims to reveal these aspects about Forster which could be considered innovative. The book containing four chapters: "Talks and Lectures", "Essays", "Other Memoirs

and Memoranda" and "Broadcasts", mainly elaborates on Forster's humanistic sensitivity to life and people. This sensitivity is reflected with its different aspects in the four main chapters.

The writings in the first section of the book, "Talks and Lectures", focus on Forster in relation to the reflection of his view of life in his approach to literature. In these writings, it is not wrong to argue that Forster's humanistic view of life had a significant impact on his outlook on literary works and their subject matters. Forster finds the individual, social and global circumstances problematic and he reflects his anxieties about them in his different talks contained in the first chapter of the book. Particularly, his discourses in "Three Generations" (1937) epitomize his critical views about his age. In this talk, Forster argues that with the beginning of the twentieth century, people lost their faith in the future due to the adverse effects of ardent nationalism on humanity, i.e. the two world wars. Moreover, despite great hope for scientific progresses, tyrants and dictatorial regimes abused them just to increase their inhumane practices on a global scale. The third situation which is problematic for Forster in this talk is related to the negative effects of individualism on inter-personal interactions. In Forster's opinion, individualism as a major trend in the twentieth century made people rely mainly on their individuality and personal choices rather than take the views of their friends, parents, husbands and wives into consideration. Hence, individualism turned out to lead people to alienate themselves from social values and ideals.

These circumstances about which Forster expressed his anxieties in "Three Generations" somehow led writers of the age to produce literary works that had inevitably pessimistic endings. Particularly, man's alienation from his humane characteristics because of the failure in his quest for the set of values on which to build his view of life can be said to have a major impact on the production of works with unhappy endings. Despite his awareness of the social and global circumstances which he finds problematic, Forster is still hopeful for the future of humanity. As an embodiment of this hope, he argues in "Happy versus Sad Endings" (1905) that literary works written in the twentieth century should not always have an unhappy ending. Contrary to the popular view in modern literature, Forster favours a realistic rather than pessimistic ending for the works. For Forster, a realistic approach enables writers to judge the world and humanity from a more accurate perspective.

Arguably, as a result of his emphasis on the importance of a realistic viewpoint in the production of literary works, Forster criticises Rudyard

Kipling (1865–1936) in his talk “The Poems of Kipling” (1908). Kipling glorifies his British identity in his various poems. In “The Native-Born” (1895), he argues that the British people acquire their patriotic sense of belonging since the early phases of their lives. Thus, for Kipling, British patriotism is a rooted feeling. As a sign of the idealisation of his patriotism, Kipling reflects his love for Britain in terms of its historical achievements in “The Reeds of Runnymede” (1911) and “The Anvil” (1911) with regard to Magna Carta and the Norman Conquest, respectively. In “Ave Imperatrix!” (1882), Kipling idealises the Queen and expresses his glorifying approach to her manner of ruling not only the United Kingdom, but also the world as a whole. Forster criticises Kipling’s views in that Kipling does not exhibit a realistic point of view in his judgment of the relation between the East and the West. For Forster, his indifferent approach to the Orient and his glorification of the British Empire as well as its practices lead Kipling not to understand and make an objective and tolerant judgement regarding the realities of the social circumstances in other countries in the world. Therefore, as an embodiment of his criticism concerning Kipling, Forster depicts him as a vulgar writer in his talk “The Poems of Kipling”.

Forster expresses his point of view about not only his contemporaries like Kipling, but also his predecessors in English literature. In his talk entitled “The Creator as Critic” (1931), he sets out to define the terms “creation” and “criticism” as a basis for his critical remarks concerning the English writers who lived in the preceding centuries. For Forster, creation is an activity, part of which takes place in sleep, and which may or may not turn out to be literature. Forster depicts criticism as a wakeful activity, and for him, its fundamental trait is alertness. In relation to these definitions, Forster argues that writers mainly create their works when sleeping. To reinforce this viewpoint, he states that Samuel Taylor Coleridge produced “Kubla Khan” during his sleep and under the influence of opium, thus in a state of drowsiness. Similarly to Coleridge, John Dryden is another writer who creates his works of literature in his sleep. The production of literary works during sleep after the real-life observations reflects authors’ creativity, in Forster’s opinion.

While Forster puts emphasis on the creativity of writers in their sleep in “The Creator as Critic”, he also expresses his critical remarks about the authors and their works in the preceding centuries. Although *Biographia Literaria*, one of Coleridge’s non-fictional works that centres upon his life experiences, contributing to his literary career as well as his ideas concerning

religion, society and philosophy, can be judged as an in-depth work, Forster views Coleridge's work as absurd because for him, Coleridge is not good at literary criticism. However, Forster expresses his favour for Coleridge's poetic diction, which can be viewed as one of the factors reinforcing the poetical effect of his verses.

In addition to British writers and poets, in "The Creator as Critic", Forster expresses his ideas about writers in other European countries, as well. At this point, his opinions concerning Leo Tolstoy can be considered as an embodiment of Forster's anxieties with regard to humanity, societies and global circumstances. Forster argues that Tolstoy terms humanity's basic problem as "selfishness", which he views as "disease". For Tolstoy, individual, social and cultural disunities derive from man's egocentrism. From his perspective, man's desire to acquire more riches, power and position leads him to be alienated from his humane essence and thus isolate himself from other people in social life. Forster favours Tolstoy's anxieties regarding humanity arguably owing to his viewpoint attributing significance to the individual identities of human beings.

Considering his discourses compiled in the chapter "Talks and Lectures", it is not wrong to claim that along with his position as a novelist, Forster is also one of the major literary critics in the twentieth-century English literature. His literary criticism is confined to not only British writers, but also authors from different countries in Europe.

In the second section of the book, "Essays", unlike the examples in "Talks and Lectures" in relation to his critical observations about the British poets and other major European writers, Forster's status as a literary critic is reflected in relation to the eighteenth-century English novels. His essay "The Novelists of Eighteenth Century and their Influence on Those of the Nineteenth" (1899) is an epitome of Forster's criticism concerning the English novel. Even if the pioneers of the English novel in the eighteenth century are Daniel Defoe, Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding, Forster does not consider Defoe as a novelist who had an impact on the writers of the following century. Similarly, Forster does not view Tobias Smollett as an influential novelist, either, because for Forster, Smollett writes mainly autobiographical novels and does not employ his creativity to render his fictional works stronger. According to Forster, Samuel Richardson and Henry Fielding contributed largely to the development of the English novel with their works *Joseph Andrews* and *Tom Jones*, respectively. The arousal of great sensation in the British

reading public with the publication of *Tom Jones* as well as *Amelia* proves Forster's argument regarding these novelists.

While Forster makes his critical remarks about major English novelists in the eighteenth century, he focuses mainly on Charles Dickens among the nineteenth-century writers in the literary canon. Forster puts emphasis on Dickens's sensitivity to human nature and his optimistic approach to life and humanity despite his awareness of the social problems prevalent in England. Thus, his discussion of major novelists in the eighteenth and nineteenth-century English literature reinforces Forster as a major literary critic in relation to not only poetry but also the novel genre.

Besides his position as a literary critic, Forster is also a traveller. This is understood from his essays contained in the book. As a matter of fact, it is not wrong to argue that Forster combines his authorship with his interest in travelling. He writes his observations about the cities he visited in an artistic language. In his travel to Syracuse in Italy, he depicts the city as full of sentiment that is enervating and pernicious to the visitors. Despite the gradually tiring characteristics of the city, Forster claims that Syracuse influences tourists with its great history. For Forster, the city owes its greatness to the efforts of its inhabitants for existence. These statements indicate that Forster writes about not only his observations concerning the cities he visited but also their historical background. Accordingly, similar to Syracuse, Forster both expresses his joy in observing the natural beauties of Cnidus (known as Datca today. It is situated in the Mugla province of Turkey) and writes about its significance in Greek history.

In the third section, entitled "Other Memoirs and Memoranda", Forster's sensitivity to the circumstances of the modern period and his anxieties regarding the future of humanity are reflected elaborately. In "Incidents of War" (1915–1917), Forster deals with the destructive effects of the First World War on the soldiers. Bombs, hospitals filled with wounded civilians and corpses around the battlefield are the images that reinforce Forster's critical outlook on the negative impacts of war on humankind. In relation to the use of technological weapons in the wars, Forster expresses his anxious viewpoint about the future of mankind in "Notes on the Future of Civilization" (1950). Here, Forster suggests his worried approach, employing a paradoxical language. His fear about the breakup of civilization in the past and his current fear about the continuation of civilization can be considered an explanation for the adverse effects of contemporary lifestyle on humanity. For Forster,

people lead a practical and hence civilized way of life as a result of the wide use of technology. Although this can be a positive case, Forster's anxiety is that technology will cause man to grow alienated from the world and different lifestyles developing on the global scale. Thus, Forster's sensitivity to the negative impacts of modernity on humanity at present and in the future is indicated as the major subject matter of his memoirs.

The fourth and the last section, "Broadcasts", centres upon Forster's emphasis on the significance of liberty and his criticism concerning its restriction by political tyrannies. Although Forster does not glorify liberty in "Efficiency and Liberty" (1938), he argues that when they have freedom, people can express their viewpoints. Discovery of different approaches contributes to the broadening of humankind's horizon. In relation to this overview of the term "liberty", he claims in "The Freedom of the Artist" (1940) that writers should be able to express their opinions, whether it is favoured by political authorities or not. To reinforce this assertion, Forster employs the Nazis as an example. In Forster's opinion, the Nazis' permission of literature that only idealises German superiority is the best example for their restriction of the artists' freedom for the expression of their ideas. While Forster criticises the restrictive approach of tyrannical regimes to the freedom of opinions, he suggests a solution to render liberty continuous in "Books and the Writer: Dos Passos, Steinbeck, and Others" (1942). Forster claims that democracy is the best regime that establishes a free and peaceful society and world. Thanks to this system, it is possible to maintain the importance of liberty among not only individuals but also the societies in the world.

In conclusion, edited by Jeffrey M. Heath, *'The Creator as Critic' and Other Writings by E. M. Forster* helps readers to explore Forster's characteristics which are not widely known. Although Forster is renowned for his novels, short stories and memoirs about India, his talks, essays, memoranda and broadcasts in this book indicate that he is not only a writer, but also a literary critic and traveller. Besides, the primary sources compiled in the book reveal his political views in relation to his emphasis on the significance of democracy. The book thus invites the readers to understand and appreciate these issues, with the explanatory notes and appendices as well.