

AN ANALYSIS OF THE WATER SYMBOLISM IN E.M. FORSTER'S  
A ROOM WITH A VIEW

by 1264

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A MASTER'S REPORT

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requirements for the degree

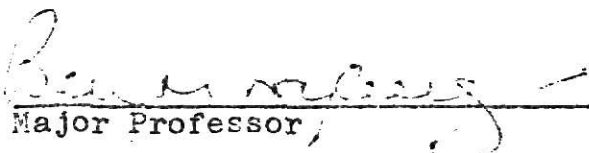
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# AN ANALYSIS OF THE WATER SYMBOLISM IN E.M. FORSTER'S

## A ROOM WITH A VIEW

### Introduction

A Room with a View is essentially the account of the way Lucy Honeychurch chooses a husband. In making this choice, she must choose more than a man: "Fruition and celibacy, the classical view and the medieval view, light and darkness, reality and hypocrisy--the first half of each of the four pairs opposes the latter half in contesting for the soul of Lucy Honeychurch." 1 And in the view of Frederick Crews, Lucy is further hampered in making these choices by "English Christianity--or, more precisely, watered-down English Puritanism." 2

There are numerous references to water in A Room with a View. These are used in this novel to help clarify for the reader Lucy's progress to the correct choice of one of two world views. But not all the water references are so used; Forster himself has something to say about this:

Rhythm is sometimes quite easy. Beethoven's Fifth Symphony, for instance, starts with the rhythm "diddidy dum," which we can all hear and tap to. But the symphony as a whole has also a rhythm--due mainly to the relation between its movements--which some people can hear but no one can tap to. This second sort of rhythm is difficult, and whether it is substantially the same as the first sort only a musician could tell us. What a literary man wants to say though is that the first kind of rhythm, the diddidy dum, can be found in certain novels and may give them beauty. And the other rhythm, the difficult one--the rhythm of the Fifth Symphony as a whole--I cannot quote you any parallels for that in fiction, yet it may be present. 3

After giving an extensive treatment of his example, a musical phrase which runs through the whole of Proust's Remembrance of Things Past, Forster briefly defines the first kind of rhythm: "That must suffice on the subject of easy rhythm in fiction: Which may be defined as repetition plus variation, and which can be illustrated by examples." 4 And in setting forth his example, he points out how the first kind of rhythm works: "There are times when the little phrase--from its gloomy inception, through the sonata, into the sextet--means everything to the reader. There are times when it means nothing and is forgotten, and this seems to me the function of rhythm in fiction; not to be there all the time like a pattern, but by its lovely waxing and waning to fill us with surprise and freshness and hope." 5 The water imagery in A Room with a View is just this kind of rhythm. At times water is just H<sub>2</sub>O: the fountain in the Piazza Signoria; at other times it provides the reader with important information about and within the characters: the rainstorms in which Charlotte always goes to town.

Thus A Room with a View has a simple line of main action in which a young lady chooses a husband. But in making this choice, the heroine must choose between two world-views: she can live solely in the world of social conventions, or she can live by the realities which lie beyond the conventions while she respects such of the conventions as help her to live by the realities. When she marries George Emerson, Lucy Honeychurch chooses to use a social convention, marriage, to live

by one of the greater realities: a man and a woman who love each other belong together in a united life. The water imagery in the novel is used to dramatize various phases of Lucy's struggle to choose a natural life. Though the water imagery is subordinate to the imagery of light and darkness which parallels Lucy's struggle, water imagery always works with and reinforces the superior image pattern. When the right values are dominant, light and beneficent water abound; when the wrong values are dominant, darkness is everywhere and water is either absent or raging, as in a thunderstorm.

### Analysis

A Room with a View opens in the first decade of the twentieth century with the heroine, twenty-two-year-old Miss Lucy Honeychurch, and her chaperon and cousin, Miss Charlotte Bartlett, a woman in her sixties, sitting at supper in the Pension Bertolini in Florence. Discontented as she sits in the dining room, Lucy looks about: "She looked at the two rows of English people who were sitting at the table; at the row of white bottles of water and red bottles of wine that ran between the English people; at the portraits of the late Queen and the late Poet Laureate that hung behind the English people, heavily framed; at the notice of the English church (Rev. Cuthbert Eager, M.A. Oxon.), that was the only other decoration of the wall." 6 Forster seems to do nothing with the bottled water, but it echoes in the reader's mind at a significant point later in the novel. Chief among Lucy's

reasons for disliking the pension is the Signora Bertolini's failure to keep her promise to give them south rooms with a view of the Arno, a major Italian river which flows through Florence; she had instead given them north rooms which overlooked a closed, dark courtyard: "I want so to see the Arno. The rooms the Signora promised us in her letter would have looked over the Arno." (13-14)

But when Mr. Emerson, an elderly tourist, offers to trade his room and that of his son George for the ladies's rooms, Charlotte refuses despite her being unable to give a reason. Lest the reader take the argument at face value, Forster calls attention to the metaphorical possibilities by giving Lucy's reaction: "Lucy, too, was perplexed; but she saw that they were in for what is known as 'quite a scene,' and she had an odd feeling that whenever these ill-bred tourists spoke the contest widened and deepened till it dealt, not with rooms and views, but with--well, with something quite different, whose existence she had not realized before." (16)

Later, after Charlotte has finally accepted the offer, Lucy and Mr. Beebe watch Charlotte make a fool of herself as she tries to insult George Emerson under pretense of expressing her personal thanks to his father through him. Mr. Beebe says that Mr. Emerson is engaged, but George says that his father is "in his bath, so you cannot thank him personally." (26) "Miss Bartlett was unequal to the bath. All her barbed civilities came forth wrong end first." (27) Once again

Forster has hinted that water and water images may refer to more than H<sub>2</sub>O.

When the two ladies retire for the night in their new rooms, Charlotte embraces Lucy as a good-night gesture. "It gave Lucy the sensation of a fog, and when she reached her own room she opened the window and breathed the clean night air, thinking of the kind old man who had enabled her to see the lights dancing in the Arno and the cypresses of San Miniato, and the foot-hills of the Appenines, black against the rising moon." (29) The scene is a confirmation of her reaction when Charlotte had tried to explain why Lucy should have Mr. Emerson's room rather than George's: she "again had the sense of larger and unsuspected issues." (28)

The second chapter, "In Santa Croce with No Baedeker," opens in a blaze of light and life: Lucy watches men working on the river bank, a boat on the river, a marching column of soldiers, small boys dashing here and there, "and close below, the Arno, gurgling against the embankment of the road." (30)

Confirming the association between Charlotte and fog that was hinted above, Charlotte, in the third chapter, goes out into a dark, rainy afternoon; Forster comments that such behavior was characteristic of her. Charlotte and her values are always associated either with water's absence or its presence in some unruly or unpleasant form.

After the sun comes out, Lucy goes for a short walk. As she enters the Piazza Signoria, two Italians quarrel. One



kills the other with a knife, and the victim seems to look straight at Lucy as he coughs blood. She faints into the arms of George Emerson. As they walk from the piazza, George throws her photographs of art objects, which he had retrieved for her, into the Arno, and tells her that they were covered with blood.

George perceives that "something tremendous has happened; I must face it without getting muddled. It isn't exactly that a man had died." (74) George's response centers on a possible relationship between himself and Lucy, but her response is directed, on the conscious level, toward preventing such a relationship: "It was not exactly that a man had died; something had happened to the living: they had come to a situation where character tells, and where Childhood enters upon the branching paths of Youth." (75) The parallel language of the two quotations above helps to set forth the contrast between the respective responses of George and Lucy. He is determined to get at the meaning of what has happened, while she returns to the world of social conventions. But as they stand by the Arno, Lucy is being subtly altered within: "Leaning her elbows on the parapet, she contemplated the River Arno, whose roar was suggesting some unexpected melody to her ears." (76) The Arno is suggesting to her that there is more to life than adherence to social dogma, but she is not yet able to understand the message.

The next day, as Lucy and Charlotte go walking, Charlotte stops and leans over the parapet to watch the Arno at the

exact spot that Lucy and George had stopped. But in contrast to Lucy, for whom the river had seemed to be musical, Charlotte reacts with a cliché. Lucy and Charlotte go through the Piazza Signoria, and Forster supplies some description that applies directly to Lucy's situation. "By an odd chance ... the statues that relieve its severity suggest ... the conscious achievements of maturity. Perseus and Judith, Hercules and Thusnelda, they have done or suffered something, and though they are immortal, immortality has come to them after experience, not before. Here, not only in the solitude of Nature, might a hero meet a goddess, or a heroine a god." (93-94) Lucy has met George Emerson, but she must experience more before she can respond fully to the Arno's melody. After all, the water is not omnipotent: Charlotte is completely unaware of its power and significance.

Lucy does her best to avoid George since their last meeting

not because she disliked him, but because she did not know what had happened, and suspected that he did know. And this frightened her.

For the real event--whatever it was--had taken place, not in the Loggia, but by the river. To behave wildly at the sight of death is pardonable. But to discuss it afterwards, to pass from discussion into silence, and through silence into sympathy, that is an error, not of a startled emotion, but of the whole fabric. There was really something blameworthy (she thought) in their joint contemplation of the shadowy stream, in the common impulse which had turned them to the house without the passing of a look or word. (97)

But a few days later, Lucy and George are both in a group that goes up to Fiesole on a bright and sunny day to see the Arno's valley and Florence in the distance. Here

they experience more than a breath-taking view:

From her feet the ground sloped sharply into view, and violets ran down in rivulets and streams and cataracts, irrigating the hillside with blue, eddying round the tree stems, collecting into pools in the hollows, covering the grass with spots of azure foam. But never again were they in such profusion; this terrace was the well-head, the primal source whence beauty gushed out to water the earth.

Standing at its brink, like a swimmer who prepares, was the good man. But he was not the good man that she had expected, and he was alone.

George had turned at the sound of her arrival. For a moment he contemplated her, as one who had fallen out of heaven. He saw radiant joy in her face, he saw the flowers beat against her dress in blue waves. The bushes above them closed. He stepped quickly forward and kissed her. (109-110)

In line with Forster's commentary, Lucy had met George Emerson forcefully in the piazza, and now she has met him "in the solitude of Nature ...." (94) Just as her first intimate encounter with George had been by the Arno, so her second such encounter takes place amid a veritable sea of water imagery. Clearly Forster is doing something with water imagery when he is so often associating it with love, light, honesty, and life.

"Before she could speak, almost before she could feel, a voice called, 'Lucy! Lucy! Lucy!' The silence of life had been broken by Miss Bartlett, who stood brown against the view." (110) The bright colors and spontaneity of life have been overcome by the brown death, Charlotte. Charlotte does indeed stand against the view, no matter in which sense the word is taken. Her insensitivity to the Arno's roar is now paralleled by her failure to respond rightly to a scene laden with water imagery.

In the next chapter, Charlotte firmly secures her hold over Lucy, starting from the very instant of her triumph over the view, the water images, and George's kiss. In contrast to the joy, harmony, and pleasant weather which obtained when love and water were ascendant, the chapter opens with gloom, confusion, and a threatening thunderstorm. If water appears actively during a time when the wrong values are dominant, it appears in a threatening or unpleasant form.

The storm rages, and the values of Mr. Eager and Charlotte are triumphant in their proper element--darkness. "Courage! Courage and love," had been the admonition of the Italian driver as he had presented George to Lucy. (110) Amid the dark and storm, Mr. Eager tells Lucy, "Courage--courage and faith." (113) Love belongs in the light and amid water images; faith, or "watered-down English Puritanism," belongs in darkness and chaos. 7

With the ascendancy of Charlotte's values, Forster gives an explicit statement of her view: "the complete picture of a cheerless, loveless world in which the young rush to destruction until they learn better--a shamefaced world of precautions and barriers which may avert evil, but which do not seem to bring good, if we may judge from those who have used them most." (125) Darkness and thunderstorms fit this world-view perfectly.

Chapter Eight opens in a flood of bright water imagery; Windy Corner, the Honeychurch home in England, is described as bathed in "the intolerable tides of heaven" and in "a

sea of radiance." (129) This promise of life is fulfilled for the reader by the words and deeds of Freddy, Lucy's younger brother, and Mrs. Honeychurch, her widowed mother. Freddy is a good-natured medical student; Mrs. Honeychurch is a sensible woman who abides by the proprieties without letting those proprieties run and ruin her life. These two stand in sharp contrast to Cecil Vyse, Lucy's fiance, who has no profession of any sort and who does not care about people, as people, at all.

From the first the reader learns of his courtship of Lucy, and throughout the chapters in which he appears, Cecil is consistently shown in situations similar to those the reader sees or has seen George Emerson handle satisfactorily. And he is just as consistently shown to be inferior in every way to George. By no accident, Cecil's most complete failures occur when he is near water or George or both. The two examples that the reader most readily recalls are of course the kiss by the Sacred Lake and the bathing scene.

As Lucy and Cecil come upon the Sacred Lake, he asks for and receives their first kiss. George, it will be recalled, also kissed her earlier in a watery scene. But in contrast to that earlier kiss, Cecil's is a self-conscious failure, marred by, among other things, his pince-nez's being dislodged and crushed as they embrace.

Between the kiss and the bathing scene, there are two chapters which are devoid of any water references whatever, for in them Cecil's values are dominant. In striking contrast

to the drouth of these two chapters, the chapter in which the bathing scene takes place gushes with water from the very start.

Freddy invites George to go swimming in a local pond, the Sacred Lake, near which the first kiss between Cecil and Lucy had been such a ridiculous failure. Mr. Beebe goes along, and soon all three are swimming. The spirits of the bathers rise in response to the water:

It was ordinary water, nor was there very much of it, and, as Freddy said, it reminded one of swimming in a salad. The three gentlemen rotated in the pool breast high, after the fashion of the nymphs in *Gotterdammerung*. But either because the rains had given a freshness or because the sun was shedding a most glorious heat, or because two of the gentlemen were young in years and the third young in spirit--for some reason or other a change came over them, and they forgot Italy and Botany and Fate. They began to play. Mr. Beebe and Freddy splashed each other. A little deferentially, they splashed George. He was quiet; they feared they had offended him. Then all forces of youth burst out. He smiled, flung himself at them, splashed them, ducked them, muddied them, and drove them out of the pool. (200-201)

Here the reader has a graphic illustration that the vital force of the water is able to express itself most vigorously through George.

Everyone is having lots of fun, but the reader is even more amused when Lucy, Cecil, and Mrs. Honeychurch come upon the scene, at which time all kinds of flutter and scurry occur. But as the ladies and Cecil move away,

"Hullo!" cried George, so that again the ladies stopped.

He regarded himself as dressed. Barefoot, bare-chested, radiant and personable against the shadowy woods, he called:

"Hullo, Miss Honeychurch! Hullo!"

"Bow, Lucy; better bow. Whoever is it? I shall bow."

Miss Honeychurch bowed.

That evening and all that night the water ran away. On the morrow the pool had shrunk to its old size and lost its glory. It had been a call to the blood and to the relaxed will, a passing benediction whose influence did not pass, a holiness, a spell, a momentary chalice for youth. (204)

Presumably the last paragraph of the above applies at least to the three happy bathers, but what about Cecil? The answer is to be found in his reaction to the first appearance of Freddy and George as they burst into full view:

"Come this way immediately," commanded Cecil, who always felt that he must lead women, though he knew not whither, and protect them, though he knew not against what. He led them toward the bracken where Freddy sat concealed.

...  
They followed him up the bank attempting the tense yet nonchalant expression that is suitable for ladies on such occasions.

"Well, I can't help it," said a voice close ahead, and Freddy reared a freckled face and a pair of snowy shoulders out of the fronds. "I can't be trodden on, can I?" (202-203)

Cecil is completely inadequate for the situation; he just gets rattled and makes matters worse even by his standards.

In the next chapter, Mrs. Honeychurch asks Lucy whether Charlotte had mentioned her boiler in her latest letter. Lucy expresses bewilderment at the question; she says that Charlotte had not seemed too cheerful. Mrs. Honeychurch replies "Then, depend upon it, it is the boiler. I know myself how water preys upon one's mind." (213) The perceptive reader instantly associates water preying upon one's mind with George's preying upon Lucy's mind, with her fears that Cecil will discover that George had kissed her in Italy, and with her subconscious recognition of Cecil's



inferiority to George. The second sentence of the above quotation may also be taken as Forster's playfully poking fun at his use of water imagery in this novel. And of course the reader can see that the bottled water of the Pension Bertolini is now in open revolt; Charlotte is being driven from her house by the failure of its plumbing. And just as Charlotte has been driven from her house by water, so reality will force Lucy from her retreat into convention and pretense.

A few days later, George, having been invited by Freddy, comes up to Windy Corner to play tennis. In conversation following the tennis game, George says that his father had said "that there is only one perfect view--the view of the sky straight over our heads, and that all these views on earth are but bungled copies of it." (241) The reader recalls that the Sacred Lake, the pond in which Freddy, Mr. Beebe, and George had gone swimming, reflected the sky overhead: "There lay the pond, set in its little alp of green--only a pond, but large enough to contain the human body, and pure enough to reflect the sky." (198) The water is intimately bound with the perfect view, with light and space, the stuff out of which all views are made.

Cecil's mood gets worse and worse as the conversation goes on because he wants to read the group a passage from a bad novel by Miss Eleanor Lavish. Lucy finally asks him to read the passage, but Cecil mistakenly gets the wrong page and consequently reads the wrong passage. The result is a shock for Lucy; the passage is a narration of George's



kissing her on the mountain. "Miss Lavish knew, somehow, and had printed the past in draggled prose for Cecil to read and for George to hear." (244) "Draggled" is a strong word; it means that something has been soiled by being dragged through mud and dirty water. If "draggled" be accepted as a water image, then considering that Miss Lavish also holds the wrong values, it may be said that when those who hold the wrong values cannot contain or ignore the water of life, they pollute it.

Retaining her composure, Lucy suggests that they go to the house for tea. Cecil forgets the novel, goes back for it, and while he is gone, George kisses Lucy once more. George did this, as he explains when Lucy is telling him to go and not come back, "because the book made me do that ...." (254) The first kiss between George and Lucy has been described by Forster in water images, and Windy Corner has been associated with water images. Clearly George has been responding to water; this is obvious when the reader considers the great bathing scene and what George says of it: "'No good,' I thought; 'she is marrying some one else'; but I meet you again when all the world is glorious water and sun. As you came through the woods I saw that nothing else mattered. I called. I wanted to live and have my chance of joy." (255) But all this and more moves Lucy not a whit and she seems to successfully ignore some unpleasant facts about Cecil that George tells her and that she has resisted seeing.

But when Lucy does realize what a terrible person Cecil

is, she breaks her engagement. As she tries to explain to Cecil her reasons for rejecting him, she repeats almost word for word what George had said. George, under the beneficent influence of water and light, has borne the truth to Lucy, who, though she cannot ignore truth, can distort it and her responses to it. Implementing Charlotte's values, Lucy tells George to go and not come back; responding partly to the truth, she breaks from Cecil; and distorting the truth, tells Cecil and herself that she loves no one. Having done all this, she can have only a distorted response to these events:

It did not do to think, nor, for the matter of that to feel. She gave up trying to understand herself, and joined the vast armies of the benighted, who follow neither the heart nor the brain, and march to their destiny by catch-words. The armies are full of pleasant and pious folk. But they have yielded to the only enemy that matters--the enemy within. They have sinned against passion and truth, and vain will be their strife after virtue. As the years pass, they are censured. Their pleasantry and their piety show cracks, their wit becomes cynicism, their unselfishness hypocrisy; they feel and produce discomfort wherever they go. They have sinned against Eros and against Pallas Athene, and not by any heavenly intervention, but by the ordinary course of nature, those allied deities will be avenged.

Lucy entered this army when she pretended to George that she did not love him, and pretended to Cecil that she loved no one. The night received her, as it had received Miss Bartlett thirty years before. (265-266)

In the next chapter, the reader sees Lucy living a lie and he notices that along with Lucy's plunge into the wrong values, the weather has plunged into darkness and the threat of storms. This is in accordance with the previously repeated statement that light and beneficent water images are associated with the ascendancy of the right values, while darkness and unruly water images accompany the ascendancy of the wrong

values, unless the water is completely absent. The chapter closes on a somber note; Windy Corner is described "as a beacon in the roaring tides of darkness." (288) This is quite a contrast to the first view of Windy Corner, when it was bathed in "the intolerable tides of heaven" and in "a sea of radiance." (129) Windy Corner stands as a beacon despite Lucy's plunge because Mrs. Honeychurch and Freddy still think straight: of the despairing song that Lucy had sung, Freddy said: "The tune's right enough," ... "but the words are rotten. Why throw up the sponge?" (287)

In the nineteenth chapter Lucy shows beyond doubt that she is in the same army as Charlotte by consistently showing all behavior patterns which Charlotte does. Lest the reader miss this, Forster has Mrs. Honeychurch say to Lucy that she is acting just like Charlotte. With this, the reader realizes the full significance of the thunderstorm that Lucy has insisted on travelling in: Charlotte always goes out into unsuitable weather, especially rainstorms. But later in the chapter, as Lucy talks to old Mr. Emerson and starts making her final and successful approach to the truth, the storm references fade away and other water imagery is used.

Lucy tries to verbally fence with the elder Emerson, and as she does so, her confusion becomes apparent to him. She, unable to lie to him, finally admits that her engagement to Cecil is off. This is the clue that Mr. Emerson needs to complete his understanding of her situation; after some further talk, "he burst out excitedly; 'That's it; that's what I mean.

You love George!' And after his long preamble, the three words burst against Lucy like waves from the open sea." (306) Lucy's reaction also uses water imagery: "'How dare you!' gasped Lucy, with the roaring of waters in her ears." (306)

The twentieth and final chapter, "The End of the Middle Ages," is a short one in which the reader sees George and Lucy, now happily married, back at the Pension Bertolini in the same room with a view of the Arno that Lucy had occupied a year earlier, on an Italian holiday. They are trying to figure out why Charlotte had let Lucy go into the rectory for her final confrontation with the truth borne by old Mr. Emerson, for George has proof that Charlotte knew that his father was in Mr. Beebe's study. "As they talked, an incredible solution came into Lucy's mind. She rejected it, and said: 'How like Charlotte to undo her work by a feeble muddle at the last moment.' But something in the dying evening, in the roar of the river, in their very embrace warned them that her words fell short of life, and George whispered: 'Or did she mean it?'" (317)

After some prodding by Lucy, George develops his point:

"I'll put a marvel to you. That your cousin has always hoped. That from the very first moment we met, she hoped, far down in her mind, that we should be like this--of course, very far down. That she fought us on the surface, and yet she hoped. I can't explain her any other way. Can you? Look how she kept me alive in you all the summer; how she gave you no peace; how month after month she became more eccentric and unreliable. The sight of us haunted her--or she couldn't have described us as she did to her friend. There are details--it burnt. I read the book afterwards. She is not frozen, Lucy, she is not withered up all through. She tore us apart twice, but in the rectory that evening she was

given one more chance to make us happy. We can never make friends with her or thank her. But I do believe that, far down in her heart, far below all speech and behaviour, she is glad." (317-318)

The water could force its way from the bottles; it could and did force its way out of Charlotte's plumbing to drive her out of her house; it could and did overcome the maze of her intentions and motives, forcing her to subvert the values by which she lived. And as George and Lucy are embracing, "they heard the river, bearing down the snows of winter into the Mediterranean." (318) They have emerged from darkness and storms into the sunshine; they both affirm life together "when all the world is water and sun." (255). The water has won.

### Conclusion

As the novel progresses to its triumphant finale, the reader becomes more and more aware of the water imagery and its significance. By using water imagery in a manner consistent with the novel's story, Forster produces a rhythm that enhances the effectiveness of the novel as a whole. By associating beneficent water images with the values that are assumed to be the correct ones for Lucy to follow, and either no water or its confined or unruly forms with the values that are assumed to be wrong for Lucy, Forster gives the perceptive reader an additional means of knowing what is going on both within and outside the characters.

## Notes

- 1 James McConkey, The Novels of E.M. Forster (Ithaca, 1957), p. 56.
- 2 Frederick Crews, E.M. Forster: The Perils of Humanism (Princeton, 1962), p. 83.
- 3 Edward Morgan Forster, Aspects of the Novel (London, 1947), pp. 210-211.
- 4 Forster, Aspects of the Novel, p. 215.
- 5 Forster, Aspects of the Novel, p. 214.
- 6 Forster, A Room with a View (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1953), p. 13. All further references will be to this edition and printing and will be indicated by page numbers within parentheses.
- 7 Crews, p. 83.

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A Room with a View has a simple line of main action in which a young lady, Lucy Honeychurch, chooses a husband. But in making this choice, the heroine must choose between two world-views: she can live solely in the world of social conventions, or she can live by the realities which lie beyond the conventions while she respects such of them as help her to live by the realities. When she chooses George Emerson, Lucy Honeychurch chooses to use a social convention, marriage, to live by one of the greater realities: a man and a woman who love each other belong together in a united life. The water imagery in the novel is used to dramatize and clarify various phases of Lucy's struggle to choose a natural life. Though the water imagery is subordinate to the imagery of light and darkness which also parallels Lucy's struggle, the water imagery always works with and reinforces the superior image pattern. When the right values are dominant, light and beneficent water abound; when the wrong values are dominant, darkness is everywhere and water is either absent or present in a confined or unruly form. By this use of water imagery, Forster gives the perceptive reader an additional means of knowing what is going on both within and outside the characters.