The Functions of the Narrator's Voice In Literature and Film: Forster and Ivory's "Maurice"

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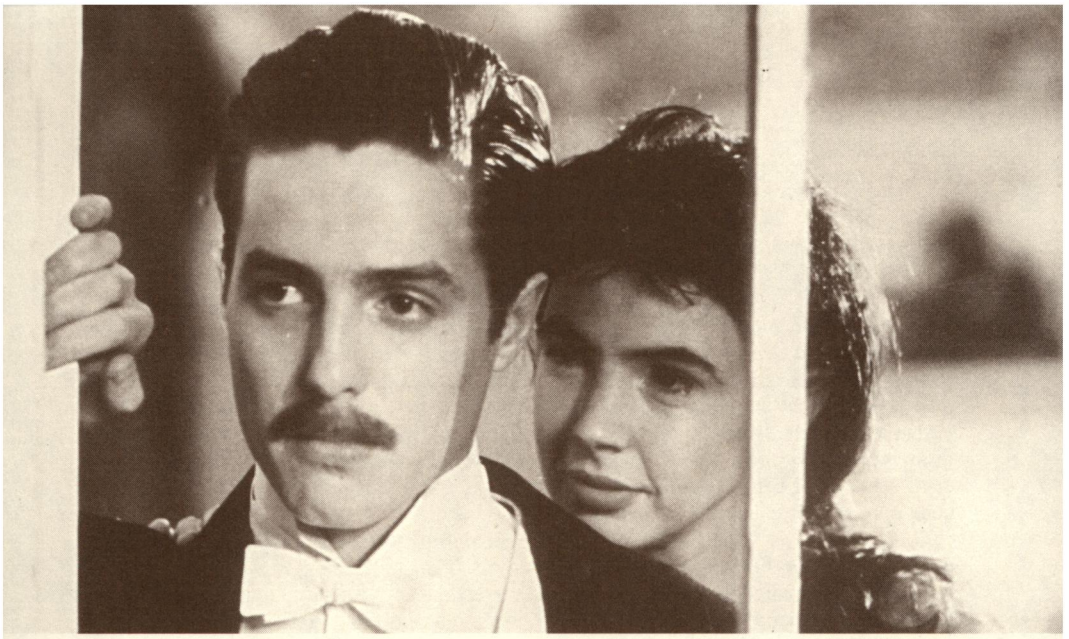
Source: *Literature/Film Quarterly*, 1996, Vol. 24, No. 3 (1996), pp. 309-321

Published by: Salisbury University

Stable URL: https://www.jstor.org/stable/43796738



The Functions of the Narrator's Voice In Literature and Film: Forster and Ivory's *Maurice*

"How do intelligent film adaptations grapple with the overtly prominent narrator, the expositor, describer, investigator of characters' states of mind, commentator, philosopher?" Thus, in *Coming to Terms* (163), Seymour Chatman poses a question with broad implications for narrative forms: is the agency of film narrative a narrator; is it useful, even in analyzing novels, to posit a narrator as the source of narration. How these issues are framed will serve either to connect novels and films under an umbrella theory that strengthens the universality of narrative constructs or to separate these media through the formation of narrative distinctions. The study of adaptation serves as a heuristic point of entry into the entire subject of narrative structure.

Chatman now believes that "every narrative is by definition narrated," but he writes that "some narratogists—I include myself—even claimed that the [literary] narrator had disappeared" (*Terms* 115). Some narratologists assert that, in films at least, the narrator has never existed. David Bordwell calls the narrator an "anthropomorphic fiction": "Narration is better understood as the organization of a set of cues for the construction of a story. This presupposes a perceiver, but not any sender, of a message" (62). Although this formulation may sound strange to users of ordinary language—a message is that which is sent—the idea is part of Bordwell's rejection of a communication theory of art. His schema assigns all of the work of creating meaning to the film viewer; what is often understood as the filmmaker's work, "the organization of the set of cues," is effaced in favor of the perceivers' responsive processes. This shift of focus from a work's creator to its recipient rids us of that critical cul-de-sac "intention," but does not dispel our awareness of judgments operating through the text.

In the novel, judgment is often expressed by narratorial tone, "the implicit evaluation which the author manages to convey beyond his explicit evaluation" (Booth 74). Bordwell acknowledges the presence of "judgmental factors" in cinema: "When we say that film takes pity on its characters or has contempt for its audience, we are talking, however loosely, about ways in which a film's narration can strike an attitude" (61). Chatman, who had previously held that "the camera, poor thing, is powerless to invoke tone, though it can

present some alternative to it" ("Novels" 132), has, more recently, returned to this issue:

> "If we are to say that *both* telling and showing can transmit stories, and in any combination, we need a term that can refer to either or both indifferently. If 'to narrate' is too fraught with vocal overtones, we might adopt 'to present' as a useful superordinate. Thus we can say that the implied author presents the story through a tell-er or a show-er or some combination of both. Only the one who tells, then, can be said to have a 'voice.'" (*Terms* 113)

I find the use of quotation marks around "voice" important because, although it may be argued that "said" has governed their use, they also suggest that Chatman understands voice in all non-oral narrative media as metaphorical. In any event, the voice of the novel's narrator is inscribed by means of diction and word order, that is through the codes of written verbal language. It is my contention that the voice of the film's presenter, to use Chatman's term, is inscribed through filmic means—camera work, sound, editing, etc.—and that camera placement or editing juxtapositions, for example, can thus be tonal, using the term, of course, metaphorically.

Gérard Genette has, in *Narrative Discourse*, carefully articulated the various functions performed by the literary narrator. By employing Genette's categories to analyze E.M. Forster's *Maurice* and its film adaptation—directed and cowritten by James Ivory—I hope to demonstrate that a single terminology and method is applicable to both media and easily generalizable beyond the specific works under consideration; that literary and film narratives are narrated by narrators and, thus, voiced, granting that voice in film, as in the novel, is inflected by various genre-specific codes and conventions. I have chosen *Maurice* because Forster's narrators exemplify a wide range of narratorial functions and because the film falls into the largest category of adaptations, that which seeks to reproduce the literary text within the possibilities of the film medium rather than to alter or subvert it (Larsson 74).

In analyzing the construct of the narrator in literature, Gérard Genette has distributed five functions "in accordance with several aspects of the narrative . . . to which they are connected" (255-56). The first function is the presentation of the story, the narrative function. The second is the text, for which narrative discourse "mark[s] . . . articulations, connecting interrelationships." Genette terms this the directing function, on the model of stage directions. The narrating situation is the third aspect: "the narrator's orientation toward the narratee, . . . [whether] present, absent or implied." He labels this category the function of communication. He next addresses "the narrator's orientation toward himself . . . accounting for the part [he] takes in the story he tells, the relationship he maintains with it"—affective, moral, intellectual. This is termed the testimonial function. The final aspect of the narrator's role "take[s] the more didactic form of an authorized commentary on the action": the ideological function, for which term, in *Narrative Discourse Revisited*, he prefers "the more neutral *interpretive function*" (131n). Genette recognizes that "these five functions are certainly not to be put in watertight compartments" (257); but, despite a certain amount of overlapping, I find the categories useful in examining the work of the narrator in Forster's novel and the issues that confronted the adaptors. For film, the communicative, testimonial, and ideological functions are especially problematic.

Forster's narrator presents the story in a variety of conventional ways. Description and exposition, for example, are frequently used: "[Maurice] was a plump, pretty lad, not in any way remarkable. In this he resembled his father, who had passed in the procession twenty-five years before, vanished into a public school, married, begotten a son and two daughters, and recently died of pneumonia" (4-5). In the film, shots of Maurice and some dialogue with his schoolmaster, Mr. Ducie, easily convey the narrative aspect of this passage, if not the flavor of a word such as "vanished." Dramatization and analysis are also used extensively. A feature of the analysis is its remarkable fluidity in moving its locus from narrator to character. Claude J. Summers is referring to this quality, I think, when he mentions "an elusive narrative technique that combines the point of view of the focal character with frequent though cryptic authorial intrusions" (61). An example of this technique occurs at the novel's conclusion after Maurice has implied to Clive Durham, who is the "focal char-

acter" here, that he is about to make a new life with the gamekeeper, Alec Scudder:

> To the end of his life Clive was not sure of the exact moment of [Maurice's] departure, and with the approach of old age he grew uncertain whether the moment had yet occurred. The Blue Room would glimmer, ferns undulate. Out of some external Cambridge his friend began beckoning to him, clothed in the sun, and shaking out the scents and sounds of the May Term.
>
> But at the time he was merely offended at the discourtesy, and compared it with similar lapses in the past. He did not realize that this was the end, without twilight or compromise, that he should never cross Maurice's track again, nor speak to those who had seen him. (230-31)

Until the final sentence of this passage, the point of view is Clive's: the perceptions, states of mind, thoughts, and feelings are presented from his perspective. But, with "he did not realize that this was the end," there is a clear shift to the point of view of the narrator whose knowledge is, unlike Clive's, unlimited. Although not always as obviously indicated, this shifting perspective characterizes the presentation.

In film, the shift of camera angle can easily transact the exchange from an objective to a subjective point of view. I am not suggesting, however, that the novel's narrator—even when serving the narrating function—is reducible to the analogue of camera position or that camera is film's sole means of expressing this function. The narrative information of the final sentence of the excerpt quoted above is left implicit in the film, but Clive's state of mind, as described in the first paragraph, is poignantly presented. After Maurice's departure, Clive goes into the house and is closing the shutters in his bedroom. A reverse angle positioned from the night exterior of the house frames Clive's thoughtful face in the window pane. The next shot is of Maurice in bright sunshine in his student gown, presumably in a college quadrangle at Cambridge, beckoning and waving to someone from a frontal position that directs his gesture to Clive as placed in the previous shot. Maurice may be "beckoning . . . clothed in the sun, and shaking out the scents and sounds of the May Term," but he is standing at a medium distance and may also be perceived by the narratee as waving goodbye. This second shot is encoded as a shift from the external presentation of Clive in the preceding shot to an image of Maurice in Clive's mind, a mental figuration created by editing, of his subjective uncertainty about "the exact moment of departure" of Maurice from his life. Time shifts from the present to the past are not difficult to mark in film; but, although the novel's narrator can effortlessly say that Clive "did not realize . . . that he should never cross Maurice's track again," film, to convey the idea of ignorance of the continuous future, must resort to the stylistically rare flash-forward or an epilogue of Clive as an old man—in either case a possibly cumbersome dramatization of Clive's future, vague realization that this moment had been "the end."

Forster's narrators always do a great deal of stage managing—Genette's "directing function." In *Maurice*, we find such indications as "Sunnington was the next stage in Maurice's career" (14); "Episode of Gladys Olcott" (45); "Maurice had two dreams; they will interpret him" (15). Rather than effacing the narrator, emphasis on the directing function asserts the agency of the narration. Ivory's film uses titles, as in his *A Room With a View*, to direct the narrative, especially in regard to the passage of time. Thus, "Michaelmas, 1909" or "Lent, 1910" indicate the course of the academic terms at Cambridge as the relationship between Maurice and Clive grows. "Pendersleigh Park, 1910," "The City, 1911," "Bermondsey, 1913" continue to mark time and place after the men leave the university and the connection between them alters. Establishing shots are also used conventionally to guide the narratee immediately to the setting of the next section of the narrative. An exterior shot of Maurice's suburban home several times establishes this sort of transition. Editing markers also serve the stage managing function. The dissolve from Risley's face behind the bars of a black Maria to Clive reading in the newspaper "Viscount Risley arraigned on Morality Charges," with another dissolve to Maurice on the commuter train reading the same news over a man's shoulder, directs the narrative relationship between Risley's arrest and his Cambridge friends' concern. Genette holds that the literary narrator can refer to the text in a

discourse that is to some extent "metanarrative" in order to mark its internal organization (255). The film devices I have been describing here are metanarrative markers of the structure of the story.

Between the eighteenth century and contemporary novel, the construct of the narratee—the listener within the tale, the addressee of "dear reader"—has generally been effaced. Forster's fictions, however, often seem late Victorian rather than modernist. His narrators occasionally address the narratee directly; frequently they take him or her into account. "Appearing thus late in the story, Cecil must be at once described," the narrator of *A Room With a View* explains (99). Although the narrator's independent clause is directorial, the phrase that precedes it refers to the narrating situation itself. In fact, the whole sentence can be seen as the narrator's "care in . . . maintaining with the narratee contact," acting on the receiver (Genette 255-56). This communicative function of the narrating situation is not foregrounded as much in *Maurice* as in other Forster works, but it is, nevertheless, an aspect of the narration: "All which [about Maurice], if it can be understood, took place in a trance" establishes a connection with the narratee by acknowledging the difficulties in understanding Maurice's situation (16). In "Now Maurice, though he did not know it, had become an attractive young man," the particular enunciation of the story teller implies listeners (45). Delete the "now" and the narrator can be construed as talking aloud within the context of a convention that permits him to be overheard, but when "now" is added a narratee is as firmly indicated as by pointing a finger or uttering the rubric "once upon a time."

Because in film, as in the post-modernist novel, the functions of the narrator can be understood as dispersed, radically transformed, or nonexistent—depending in part on one's theoretical position—the designation of narratee becomes especially problematical. Two particular cases are, however, reasonably straightforward: films with an on-camera narrator telling the story to one or many on-camera listeners, and films that use a voice-over narrator addressing specified or unspecified listeners. Another special case—direct address to the camera—is, barring other eyeline-match indicators, perceived by viewers as an address to the audience: the addressee is not only not in the frame but cannot appear in any frame. This device, rarely used in fiction film, is usually confined to comedies—Woody Allen's, for example—although an occasional dramatic film has demonstrated the possibilities of the practice.

Since the communicative function of Forster's narration in *Maurice* is inscribed through traditional means, it is not surprising that Ivory's respectful adaptation usually conforms, in a similar manner, to the mainstream of dramatic film: the implied narratee. Most of the camera movement and framing parallels typical human movement and field of vision. Although some rack focus is used, non-subjective privileged shots—fast zooms, freeze frames, odd angles and movements—all of which can acknowledge and accommodate the narratee, are infrequent. There are exceptions, however, such as a brief scene at Clive's flat when he and Maurice are saying goodnight. A level closeup of Maurice removing Clive's cufflinks cuts to a ceiling-height shot looking down at the two men. This angle, unmotivated by narrative need or character subjectivity, voices Clive and Maurice as vulnerable—as struggling with their post-Cambridge relationship, which Clive has insisted remain platonic—as viewed from a perspective slightly distanced yet taking into account their situation.

If the shot just described can be understood as an instance of the acknowledgment of the narratee, I am nevertheless reluctant to designate, without further deliberation, the agency of the acknowledgment as the narrator. The difficulty of defining in cinema "the narrating agent of all film" has been addressed by Sarah Kozloff:

> At present, there is no agreement on what to call this narrating agent. Following Bill Nichols, I used one of the more common candidates, "voice," in my introduction, but surely Nick Browne is right when he stresses the "basic disanalogy between the camera and narrative 'voice.'" On the other hand, although people frequently use "camera" to refer to this agency (to wit, "the 'camera' cuts from X to Y"), the term is misleading in that film is narrated not only by what the literal camera does and does not do, but also by editing, lighting, graphics, processing, staging, and the sound track. (44, footnote numbers omitted)

Kozloff finally decides on "image maker," a phrase modified from Christian Metz's *Film Language*, where making "is broad enough to encompass all the selecting, organizing, shading, and even passive recording processes that go into the creation of a narrative sequence of images and sounds" (44). Kozloff understands that the term reflects a "bias" toward the visual track, but believes that, for her purposes, this presents no problem. For me, the privileging of the visual image, however, serves to obscure the dispersal or transformation of the narrating functions in film. The narration is achieved through all the means of cinema. Although it is often possible to reify the literary narrator as "the one who speaks in this voice," this narrator is, of course, a construction of language; the narrator of film is almost impossible to thus reify because it is a construction of images, sounds, and their layered arrangement. But if even nonnarrative arts "speak" metaphorically to their receivers—the notes of the quartet, the stones of the cathedral—in the narrative art of film, "voice" is an appropriate term for that which expresses the discrete parts and the whole of its complex presentation.

Since Genette terms the relationship of the narrator to the narratee that I have been discussing "the narrating situation," it may clarify his next category—the relationship of the narrator to himself and to the story—to call it "the narrator's situation." However, there is still a difficulty in Genette's linking the narrator's "orientation toward himself" with "the part the narrator as such takes in the story he tells, the relation he maintains with it" because of the two different emphases (256). The narrator's relation to the story is, I think, largely epistemological when, in Genette's analysis, "the narrator indicates the sources of his information or the degree of precision of his own memories," but "the feelings which one or another episode awakens in him" surely are connected to the narrator's constructed values and psychological temperament. In a work such as Dostoevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, in which the subject of the story is the first-person narrator's relationship to himself, the problem becomes the central thematic of the text; but, in a great many novels, including *Maurice*, the third-person narrator's attitudes and ideas serve as a filter through which the independent events of the story pass.

Acknowledging this difficulty, Genette was later to say that the testimonial function has "hardly any place except in homodiegetic narrating," although it is "perhaps . . . operating [when] the narrator claims to be a chronicler or historian—that is, a retrospective witness" (*Revisited* 130-31). Genette divides homodiegetic (first-person) narration into two types: the protagonist-narrator and the witness-narrator. To distinguish them more clearly, he often refers to the former as autodiegetic. He terms third-person narration heterodiegetic, but holds that none of these categories is absolute in practice. The term "narrator's situation" includes both the epistemological and personal functions because it can refer to the way the narrator places himself or herself *vis-à-vis* the events he or she narrates—the question of access—and to the "affective . . . moral or intellectual" position in which he or she situates himself or herself. Genette labels the role the narrator takes in the story "the testimonial function"; it overlaps to some extent, as will soon become apparent, the area of his last category, "the ideological function."

The main role of Forster's narrator in the story he tells is that of a witness and guide in describing and analyzing Maurice's development from confusion to clarity. As Ivory knew before beginning to film his adaptation, "In most of [Forster's] books, he creates these muddled protagonists who at some point have to face up to the truth about themselves and live honestly, or go down to ruin" (Harvey 72). That the task of the novel's narrator as he describes and discusses Maurice's path is very close to Maurice's task as he traversed it has already been indicated in my remarks about the fluidity of movement from the narrator's thoughts to those of the character. This lack of distance—linguistic and psychological—between narrator and character may account for the narrator's occasional overblown rhetoric as, for example, when he describes the process of the resolution of an early misunderstanding between Maurice and Clive:

> "Madness is not for everyone, but Maurice's proved the thunderbolt that dispels the clouds. The storm had been working up not for three days as he supposed, but for six years. It had

> brewed in the obscurities of being where no eye pierces, his surroundings had thickened it. It had burst and he had not died. The brilliancy of day was around him, he stood upon the mountain range that overshadows youth, he saw." (52-53)

Because the narrator clearly knows more than Maurice—"The storm had been working up not for three days as he supposed"—I anticipate but do not hear an ironical tone in "[the storm] had burst and he had not died": the grandiloquent cadences of the last sentence seem to connect Maurice's perception with the narrator's own view. The narrator, however, does not forego irony completely. Until late in the novel, Maurice is a victim of self-deception who can pontificate, albeit to himself: "The feeling that can impel a gentleman toward a person of lower class stands self-condemned" (139). The narrator makes no comment, but shortly thereafter Maurice will meet gamekeeper Alec Scudder, who is to become the love of his life. With regard to sex, as to class, the narrator's attitude toward received opinion is irreverent: "The tone of the school was pure—that is to say, just before [Maurice's] arrival there had been a terrific scandal" (16) and, later, "Although undergraduates, unlike schoolboys, are officially normal, the Dons exercised a certain amount of watchfulness" (70). But about personal feelings the narrator is serious, perhaps sentimental: "A trouble—nothing as beautiful as a sorrow—rose to the surface of his mind" (20).

Ivory's film must, of necessity, transpose these sorts of voicings to camera position and movement, frame composition, lighting, editing, dialogue, music, and sound effects. When the letter with the news of Clive's forthcoming engagement is read aloud by Maurice's mother, Maurice is positioned in the foreground of the frame, very close to the camera, with the other members of the family in the background; thus, the import of this event on Maurice is strongly emphasized. Similarly, the pivotal role Alec is to play in Maurice's life is anticipated by his odd entrance from the top of the frame, feet first, coming down a ladder as Maurice leans at frame right lighting a cigarette. The comments of the novel's narrator must sometimes in the film be transferred to character subjectivity. A pair of low shots of Maurice's lit bedroom window at Pendersleigh—Penge in the novel—from Alec's point of view in the garden at night mark with a romantic tonality his aspiration toward a tryst. The receding figure of Clive on the station platform from Maurice's point of view as the train pulls away after Maurice has been expelled from Cambridge has, on the other hand, a melancholy tone as Clive's figure in the frame rapidly diminishes in scale. Elements other than these visual markers—such as music and the narrative event itself—affect, of course, the tone of these shots. Maurice is comic as he rehearses under a roofed colonnade his impending meeting with Risley, but the very long shot of a group of students in the background observing him heightens his absurdity. The pinkish sunlight in the opening shots of the cricket scene that follows Maurice and Alec's first night together provides the conventional rosy glow in which they bask after their encounter, just as the rosy firelight at their reunion in the boathouse at the film's end reaffirms their decision.

In the novel, Forster's narrator often situates himself through his presentation of and commentary on the characters' internal states. Although film can image thought as, for example, in the shots of Clive at Pendersleigh thinking about the young Maurice at Cambridge, dramatization of thought and feeling by means of action scenes or even dreams is frequently a more effective choice for conveying attitude. When the novel's Maurice is in turmoil at Penge after his first visit to seek a cure for his homosexuality from the hypnotist Lasker Jones, various images come before his restless mind as he lies in bed while, in the film, these imaginings are transformed into a dream. The novel's narrator describes a conscious Maurice:

> He began to worry—which Mr. Lasker Jones had forbidden him to do. . . . But he could not help worrying, and Penge, instead of numbing, seemed more stimulating than most places. How vivid, if complex, were its impressions, how the tangle of flowers and fruit wreathed his brain! Objects he had never seen, such as rain water baled from a boat, he could see tonight, though curtained in tightly. . . . He had paid a doctor two guineas to draw the curtains tighter, and presently, in the brown cube of such a room, Miss Tonks would lie prisoned beside him. (177-78)

The film renders this passage by starting with a high angle shot of Maurice tossing on his bed in dappled light. Then, superimposed on this image is a closeup of Lasker Jones slowly waving his finger in admonishment. The superimposition codes the image as occurring in a dream. Another superimposition follows of Maurice and a young woman in white lying side by side, high angle, in a coffin-like box, hands clasped. The couple dissolves during a pedestal down into another superimposition of a boat being bailed in closeup; Maurice is still visible tossing in bed. The film has followed the novel's images closely, but the dream is somewhat ambiguous, in part because only in the novel had Miss Tonks been introduced as a friend of Maurice's sister Kitty; Maurice attends a concert with her at a time when he knows that he is "abnormal. But hopelessly so?" (148). The young woman in the box with Maurice cannot be individualized, although the narratee is probably to understand that she represents the prison of a death-in-life marriage. The image of the bailing of the boat has been prepared for in both novel and film: Alec had sent word through the butler Simcox that he has just bailed out the boat and wonders if Mr. Hall would care to go down to the pond between the innings for a bathe. The image represents in both versions the presence of the gamekeeper in Maurice's unconscious at a point just before Alec climbs the ladder into Maurice's room and embraces him. Ironically, the artifice of the dream conveys Maurice's feelings and thoughts more "naturally," as well as more economically and evocatively, than more "realistic" filming might have done because the narrator can present Maurice's dreaming mind more readily than his waking thoughts.

The sympathies of the film are more pronouncedly with Maurice, who pushes through his muddle to clarity; Clive, who takes the path of prudence and denial, does not fare well. Ivory has said, "I was interested in the psychological development of the boys—Clive's closing down as much as Maurice's flowering" (Pally 53). There is less about the influence of the Greeks on Clive and more about how they awaken Maurice's understanding of himself; Maurice's development dominates the film. Perhaps the most skillful narrative transformation from novel to film occurs in the translation scene. Forster's narrator uses only one sentence to describe it: "[Maurice and Clive] attended the Dean's translation class, and when one of the men was forging quietly ahead Mr. Cornwallis observed in a flat toneless voice: 'Omit: a reference to the unspeakable vice of the Greeks'" (42). The film places Maurice and several other undergraduates—but not Clive—in the Dean's red-walled study. The scene opens on the feet of the sitters accompanied by voice-over; the camera pulls back to Chapman in the midst of translating an unnamed text, Plato's *Phaedrus*. Other students take up the translation in turn. The passage from which the film bits are extracted reads as follows in the Jowett translation, which was familiar to Forster:

> And when this feeling continues and he is nearer to him and embraces him, in gymnastic exercises and at other times of meeting, then the fountain of that stream, which Zeus when he was in love with Ganymede named Desire, overflows upon the lover. . . . And thus he loves, but he does not know what; he does not understand and cannot explain his own state; . . . When he is with the lover, both cease from their pain, but when he is away then he longs as he is longed for, and has love's image, love for love (Anteros) lodging in his breast, which he calls and believes to be not love but friendship only, and his desire is the desire of the other, but weaker; he wants to see him, touch him, kiss, embrace him, and probably not long afterwards his desire is accomplished. . . . After this their happiness depends upon their self control; if the better elements of the mind which lead to order and philosophy prevail, then they pass their life here in happiness and harmony—masters of themselves and orderly—enslaving the vicious and emancipating the virtuous elements of the soul; and when the end comes, they are light and winged for flight, . . . nor can human discipline or divine inspiration confer any greater blessing on man than this. (*Plato* 297-98)

The students' own translations—which are, of course, not identical to Jowett's—are interspersed with medium-close reaction shots of Maurice, who has not yet understood his own feelings, listening broodingly, distractedly, pensively. Certain phrases trigger these cuts: "Even as his soul beheld an excellent being"; "when the beloved has made him welcome . . . when intimacy is established"; "in the stream of longing, he thinks of it as friendship, not love." Thus, even before Clive's declaration of love and Maurice's scandalized reaction, Maurice has

an inkling about the nature of their relationship. Maurice is not a clear thinker and much that he experiences affects him unconsciously; nevertheless, Plato is beginning to shape his understanding. What can be explained so easily in verbal language is difficult in film. Dialogue among the characters could have accomplished some of it and, in fact, the next scene has Maurice, Clive, and Risley out punting as the latter two mock the Dean for his narrow-minded attitude about "the unspeakable vice of the Greeks"; but an elaboration of Platonic love and its unfolding in the clouded psyche of an undergraduate could tax ingenuity in a film the style of which is primarily realistic. By employing an ordinary event of Cambridge education—the study of the Greek classics—in a scene edited to emphasize the protagonist's response to such a text—albeit a silent one—the affective, moral, and intellectual material has been shaped through the agency of the narration.

The relationship of the film's narrator to the story told is most clearly indicated in the only sequence that exists in the film but does not appear in the novel: the entrapment, arrest, and trial of Viscount Risley. Freed of the constraint of adhering to the novel's narrative, the narrator embarks on a sociohistorical presentation of the world in which Maurice is coming to maturity. Risley picks up a guardsman in a bar and, when they are outside, attempts a kiss. The composition of the frame of this exterior shot is split: Risley and the guardsman are in the right midground of the frame with a brick wall behind them. The wall ends at approximately the middle of the frame so that the left side is in deep focus, enabling the narratee to observe a plainclothesman and a bobby approaching, while the guardsman stalls until Risley is arrested. The divided screen not only allows the entire action to be viewed simultaneously in real space, but the separating of Risley, close on the right, from his potential apprehenders in the left background marks an opposition: Risley, about to be betrayed, has been set up by a system that advocates his ruin because of the expression of his sexual preference. The voicing of this scene continues when Risley telephones Clive to ask him for his testimonial at the forthcoming trial. Risley is shot from a low angle, positioning the narratee as looking up to him, whereas the cut to Clive as he turns Risley down—"I'd be a sitting duck to the prosecution"—is shot at level angle. Although Clive is afraid to involve himself, he shows up at the trial holding his hat partially in front of his face to avoid being seen. Risley, standing in the dock, is again shot from a low angle. Only after the Judge sentences him—"I am empowered to sentence you to imprisonment with flogging, but I am inclined to leniency: six months in prison with hard labour. You will pay for the rest of your life"—is Risley shot, for the first time, from a high angle as he is led away down a narrow staircase.

This added sequence accomplishes two things: it dramatizes for the narratee the powerful threat that English law posed to homosexual activity in the period in which the film is set—Maurice is speaking literally, not melodramatically, when he calls himself an "outlaw"—and it thus serves as motivation for the change that Clive begins to undergo at this point. Although viewers are aware of the prejudices against gays and lesbians in contemporary society, the sequence indicates that the legal, social, and, therefore, psychological consequences were even more extreme in Edwardian England. The novel's narrator offers no explanation for the change of heart that leads to Clive's marriage. Things have been going well between Maurice and him; then he falls ill, goes to Greece after his recovery, and writes to Maurice—this letter is significantly absent in the film—saying: "Against my will I have become normal. I cannot help it" (106). The irony of Clive's undergoing this alteration in Greece of all places, given the importance for Forster of the classical world's views about homosexuality—made clear in the scene of the translation of Plato's *Phaedrus*—implies the depth of Clive's panic. Ivory may have felt, however, that Clive's dramatic change required fuller motivation. The film narrative, by adding the Risley sequence, creates a causal chain for Clive's behavior. His illness, although not overtly ascribed as a response to Risley's situation, follows immediately after it, the trip to Greece is uneventful, and, upon returning to England, he visits Maurice and tells him that things are now different in a scene very much like the novel's except that some dialogue has been added. Only in the film does Clive say, "We've got to change . . . we're risking everything we have: careers,

family, names." Maurice responds that he doesn't care: "I risk everything gladly." In a high angle two-shot, Clive insists that "there are other ways to be happy." That the narratee connects the force behind Clive's argument to Risley's ostracism is a moral and psychological interpretation shaped by the narrator's selection and arrangement of the material.

At the beginning of this confrontational scene, Clive is bandaged, a further narrational commentary. In both novel and film, Maurice is not at home when Clive arrives at his house to alter their relationship. Maurice's sisters Kitty and Ada need a victim on whom to practice the bandaging skills they are learning: war may come soon. When Maurice returns to find his friend's head and arms bandaged, only in the film does Maurice attempt to embrace him. Because of his stiff bandages, Clive's arms are awkwardly raised and he submits passively to Maurice's hug. Although wrapped as a semi-mummy, Clive is not literally wounded, yet he wears bandages that cripple his response to Maurice, that are the emblem of self-inflicted damage.

Of all the elements in film that serve the testimonial function, the music track most easily expresses the affective relation of the story teller to the story, because nondiegetic music is not the result of the actions of any of the characters, and even diegetic music is often an addition in an adapted film. Music expresses mood or nonverbal commentary on the action and, thus, implies the agency of the narrator. The score for *Maurice* was composed by Richard Robbins, who also wrote the music for Merchant/Ivory's *A Room With a View*. But, as with that film, some of the most interesting uses of music develop from the orchestration of classical music, in this case Tchaikovsky's 6th Symphony, the *Pathétique*. In a scene that closely follows the novel, Clive takes some pianola rolls of the Symphony from Risley's room and plays them for Maurice, whom he has just met. Maurice and Clive are side by side in a warm glow of lamplight, sharing an apple, as the diegetic piano transcription is gradually overlaid by a nondiegetic full orchestra rendition and all ambient sound disappears from the track. The scene ends with Tchaikovsky's romantic music in full swell over an image of Maurice and Clive. When the mechanical thumping of the pianola is replaced by the lush orchestral sound, the tone of the scene alters markedly. The removal of all other sound generalizes the situation, suggesting that this is the way a love affair between two privileged young men should begin.

In the novel, Tchaikovsky's life plays a role: Maurice, in despair over Clive's recent change of heart, reads a biography of the composer, making "the acquaintance of 'Bob,' the wonderful nephew to whom Tchaikovsky turns after the breakdown, and in whom is his spiritual and musical resurrection. The book blew off the gathering dust and he respected it as the one literary work that had ever helped him" (148-49). The film's use of the Tchaikovsky motif is confined to the music track. The theme from the pianola scene repeats when Maurice and Clive set off from Cambridge in a sidecar for an outing: the piano roll rendition again turns into the orchestral version, underscoring their romantic high spirits. More curious is the scene at Pendersleigh in Clive's car the day after Maurice and Alec have spent the night together. Maurice, worried abut the character of the man on whom his reputation now rests, asks Clive: "What sort of man is Scudder?" When Maurice hears that Alec is a butcher's son, his suburban soul is wounded and he covers his face with his hands. The gesture is accompanied by the theme from the *Pathétique*, making the ironic comment that Maurice's "spiritual . . . resurrection" depends on his trusting Alec, although he does not yet understand this.

If the placement of a musical motif indicates the work of a narrator, other elements of the sound track can also mark the narrator's relationship with the story. When Maurice has apparently failed to convince Alec to stay with him in England instead of emigrating to Argentina, he is left alone, sitting dejectedly on the hotel room bed. A piercing whistle is heard seconds before the cut to the next scene in which it is the diegetic sound of Alec's steamship, the *Normannia*, in Southampton: Maurice has come to see him off. The use of the whistle is a comment on the final image of the previous scene because it is the correlative of Maurice's pain, and the edit to the new image while the sound is sustained links the pain to the courage of his decision to say goodbye to his lover.

The line separating the function of the narrator that Genette calls "testimonial" from the one he terms "ideological" is more fuzzy in practice than in theory. Genette describes this last function as "the narrator's interventions, direct or indirect . . . [taking] the more didactic form of an authorized commentary on the action" (256). Forster's narrators do not shy away from pronouncements; however, distinguishing their "didactic" role from their "affective, moral, or intellectual" relation with the story rests on the nice distinction between the rhetoric of the polemicist—what is "authorized"—and the dramatization of a witness—what is "attested to."

Dicta in Forster's novel most frequently concern class, religion, or sex, which are the interrelated subjects of *Maurice*'s ideology. After Maurice misunderstands and mistrusts Alec's intentions—in no small part because the gamekeeper is also a butcher's son—the narrator evaluates what is at stake in the potential union of two people from such different worlds: "if the will can overleap class, civilization as we have made it will go to pieces" (191). The civilization "we have made" is the object of much of the novel's satire. References to the matter of social class rigidity abound; even after his night with Alec, Maurice thinks, "But I must belong to my class, that's fixed" (199). In the film, this material is largely confined to the character's dialogue. There is one brief nonnarrative image, however, that is close to the novel's ideology. As Clive escapes down Maurice's staircase after fellow students have barged in on a tender moment between them, a low level shot shows his feet running past a servant on his hands and knees, washing the steps. The juxtaposition between the well-shod feet, not altering their rhythm, and the middle-aged scout, crouched over his tedious labor, is a deliberate if fleeting emblem of the English class system so often attacked in Forster's novels.

Christianity is also treated at length in the novel, but dealt with more sparingly in the film. The narrator analyzes Maurice's youthful orthodoxy with irony and disapproval:

> During this Lent term Maurice came out as a theologian. It was not humbug entirely. He believed that he believed, and felt genuine pain when anything he was accustomed to met criticism—the pain that masquerades among the middle classes as Faith. It was not Faith, being inactive. It gave him no support, no wider outlook. It didn't exist till opposition touched it, when it ached like a useless nerve. (37)

Clive, who, at this point, has done much more thinking about the subject than Maurice, provides the occasion for the narrator's comment on the disjunction between Christianity and homosexuality:

> [Clive] was obliged however to throw over Christianity. Those who base their conduct upon what they are rather than upon what they ought to be, always must throw it over in the end, and besides, between Clive's temperament and that religion there is a secular feud. No clear-headed man can combine them. The temperament, to quote the legal formula, is "not to be mentioned among Christians," and a legend tells that all who shared it died on the morning of the Nativity. (62)

The authorized comment that homosexuality and Christian belief are incompatible because the latter denies the reality of the former makes unmistakable the ideology of a text that affirms "the temperament." The film treats this subject more lightly. In the punting scene that I have already mentioned, Maurice's defense of Christianity—that "Western civilization is run on the principle of Christ's doctrine, not Plato's" and that "you have to maintain a standard of decency"—is greeted by derisive laughter by Clive and Risley who proceed to sing mockingly "Three in One and One in Three" to let Maurice know their contempt for the idea of the Trinity.

There is a tiny addition at the beginning of the film that provides a subtle marker of the social context which has formed Maurice's youthful conventionality. In a kind of prologue, Maurice and his schoolmaster, Mr. Ducie, are walking on the beach as Mr. Ducie takes it upon himself to explain the facts of life to the fatherless boy. For a visual aid to his lecture, he draws in the sand a diagram of the male and female sex organs about to be joined in copulation. As they stroll on, Mr. Ducie suddenly remembers that he "never scratched out those infernal diagrams." Meanwhile, a very proper family group, including a young girl,

has discovered the drawings. All of this is also found in the novel's opening chapter. Only in the film, however, does a horrified adult quickly lead the child away, saying, "Come, Victoria." Surely, this small addition is not gratuitous. Mr. Ducie's lecture and what is implied in their conversation about Maurice's upbringing and schooling indicate how oppressively Victorianism hung over the Edwardians, some of whom, such as Risley, are energetically trying to dispel the cloud. Through the simple device of naming the child of these staid Victorians, their ideological world is evoked. In both novel and film, as Mr. Ducie is running off to erase the drawings, Maurice calls after him not to worry: "The tide'll have covered them by now." Whether, in fact, the tide *has* covered Victorian orthodoxy is what Maurice sets out to explore.

Forster's narrator sees Maurice and Clive as pioneers and applauds their efforts in the new terrain: "They were concerned with a passion that few English minds have admitted, and so created untrammeled" (83-84). If the tone here is hyperbolic, it nevertheless asserts the importance of their undertaking. Yet the narrator's opinion about the physical expression of their love is ambiguous. After Maurice has been sent down from Cambridge, "he remembered that Clive and he had only been together one day! And they had spent it careening about like fools—instead of in one another's arms! Maurice did not know that they had thus spent it perfectly—he was too young to detect the triviality of contact for contact's sake" (73). Since they had both already confessed and demonstrated their love, "contact for contact's sake" expresses a Platonic—and puritanical—judgment about sex. Yet, when Maurice again finds himself, late in the novel, "regretting that he had not possessed Clive in the hour of their passion," this time the narrator is silent, indicating no disagreement (199). About Maurice's courage and endurance after Clive breaks with him, however, the narrator's judgment is clear and strongly didactic:

> Yet he was doing a fine thing—proving on how little the soul can exist. Fed neither by Heaven nor by Earth he was going forward, a lamp that would have blown out, were materialism true. He hadn't a God, he hadn't a lover—the two usual incentives to virtue. But on he struggled with his back to ease, because dignity demanded it. There was no one to watch him, nor did he watch himself, but struggles like his are the supreme achievements of humanity, and surpass any legends about Heaven. (132)

Maurice's struggle is finally rewarded in his relationship with Alec Scudder. His creator clearly did not want an ending in which virtue would be its own reward in an otherwise gloomy tale (Levine 75).

Direct didacticism is difficult in scripts that avoid creating a character to serve as the mouthpiece-for-the-message because nonverbal means of expressing ideology are almost always more ambiguous than enacted dialogue. Films out of the mainstream—Jean Luc Godard's, for example—employ both titles and voice-over in the manner of novelistic "authorized comment," thus establishing the narrator's view and ignoring commercial film's own dominant ideology: the illusion of the fiction's reality. Few dramatic films, however, totally eschew authorized dialogue. The script of *Maurice* retains the strong line of Lasker Jones when he is discussing Maurice's homosexuality with him: "England has always been disinclined to accept human nature" (196). The slow, emphatic delivery of the actor and the frontal medium shot give weight to the novel's idea that established opinion avoids accepting the way people are in favor of dictating how they ought to be. The film also expresses its ideology graphically through the composition of frame-within-the-frame shots, a major subgroup of which is the mirror shot.

One impetus for these shots may lie in the novel's literal and figurative references to mirrors (13, 141, 161-62). If these passages, although different in content, provide precedents for the film's mirror shots, the use the film makes of the frame within the screen frame that usually results from this composition is more didactic in tone. Ivory's *Maurice* contains four scenes in which mirrors play a prominent part: Maurice's hearing the news of Clive's forthcoming marriage, Alec's telling Maurice that he still intends to emigrate to Argentina, and Clive and Anne, on two occasions, together in their bedroom. If there is a pattern that recurs in the mirror scenes, its motif is the divided self, the temptation of self-deception.

Maurice is at his stockbroker's office when he receives the telephone call from Clive and Anne with their news. The initial camera angle on Maurice is very high: he is in a terribly vulnerable position, knowing the facts but accepting them with great difficulty. He goes to a fireplace with a mirror over it to continue the conversation. A small statue of a boxer is on the mantle, a reminder that Maurice has been trying to sublimate his misery over Clive's defection by teaching boxing to working class youths in Bermondsey. As Maurice receives the wounding announcement—Anne tells him that he is the eighth friend of Clive's with whom she has spoken that morning—his relation to the mirror is in flux. He is shot briefly in profile at right angles to it, in three quarter angle away from it; then he turns, again in three quarter angle, toward it. At no time does he look at his reflection; the mirror, which is shot frontally, often shows the side or the back of his head. Yet, that Maurice, in this crisis, cannot construct in the mirror a public image of the sort on which England can rely is no bad thing. He is muddled, but he is not caught.

The scene with Alec Scudder is filmed differently. The two men have just spent an important night together in a London hotel room. In the morning, to Maurice's pained surprise, Alec indicates that his plans to leave for Argentina are unchanged. As Maurice sits on the bed naked, Alec is shot in the mirror over the basin, cursorily washing, putting on his tie, still arguing. Maurice has just said, "It's a chance of a thousand that we met. Why don't you stay?" to which Alec has replied, "Wouldn't work. It would be the ruin of us both." Although common sense supports Alec's position—"You talk like a man who never had to earn a living"—the mirror frames him within its tight boundary like a constricted man, unable to follow the promptings of his heart. Maurice is in the background of this reflection: as long as Alec deceives himself, Maurice, who loves him, is also inside the frame. When Alec leaves the room saying "Pity we ever met," the camera holds on Maurice, sitting dejected on the bed and reflected in the mirror, divided still.

The *mise en scène* when Clive and Anne are framed inside the oval of her dressing table is appropriately symmetrical and formal. In the first scene, Anne sits demurely, reflected in the mirror, telling Clive, who joins her in the oval, that she thinks Maurice is in love. Clive moves out of the mirror frame but returns as Anne fatuously predicts that Maurice "has a little girl in London." A decorous couple in a Victorian brooch, their conventional hopes for Maurice's happiness are contained inside the oval. Clive, who should know better, has joined Anne in her make believe.

The second of these scenes, which itself mirrors the first, occurs at the film's end and follows Maurice's visit to tell Clive about his relationship with Alec and imply that they are about to begin a new life together. When Clive goes indoors, Anne is again sitting at her dressing table. Their embrace, framed in the mirror, reinforces the iconography of the earlier scene and indicates that, despite what Clive has just heard from Maurice, he is bound not to understand the meaning. He moves to close the shutters against the night into which Maurice has disappeared to join Alec. At this point, there is an insert of the subjective shot that I have described earlier of Maurice's beckoning and waving goodbye from Clive's point of view. Clive is framed inside the rectangular window pane; Anne joins him. The emblem of the tight boundary which will contain their lives is the frame within the frame.

After the failure of Maurice's second visit to Lasker Jones, he has, in the novel, a revelation about conventional people: "He was not afraid or ashamed any more. After all, the forests and the night were on his side, not theirs; they, not he, were inside a ring fence" (199). Maurice's idea of the "ring fence" becomes, in the film, these private reflections of public images. The language of insiders and outlaws that informs the ideology of Forster's narrator is transformed into a graphic representation; the value system underlying the words has not been lost.

Cinema works as symbolically as literature but, because of its direct, representational images, that is, because of its being more fully imitative than the novel, its hermeneutics are especially complex. The novel is a purely verbal narrative and, therefore, Forster's *Maurice* lends itself readily to an analysis employing Genette's articulation of the functions of the narrator. The attempt to apply these functions to Ivory's *Maurice*, although more tentative,

indicates that, no more than the novel, does film simply present itself. The voice of the novel's narrator as it narrates, directs, relates itself to the narratee and to the story, and instructs does persist in the film, but it is now rendered by image, sound, and editing: its locus is dispersed. This conclusion applies to the narrator's voice in most dramatic films. The narrative and its management are easily conveyed, but the communicative, testimonial, and didactic functions, spread through such a wide range of means can seem less pronounced. Nevertheless, Maurice's path from muddle to understanding, the narrator's endorsement of his success, and the acknowledgment and appreciation of the courage that nonconformity entails are unmistakably voiced in the film as in the novel.

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