

**A SPATIAL POETICS OF THE NOVEL:
BAKHTIN/KRISTEVA/A PASSAGE TO INDIA**

by

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ABSTRACT

The structural significance of space in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* places the text in a material context seemingly denied by the novel's more theological themes. Through the development of a materialist poetics of the novel organized around space, a text such as *A Passage to India* yields the voices of those figures whose material existence is deprivileged by the authority of the dominant narrative voice.

A spatial poetics of the novel arises from the operation of the body in signification which links the symbolic code of language with the material world. Two critical traditions link the material body to discourse: the Freudian tradition describes the socialization of the body through the identification and valorization of the spaces between subjects; the Bakhtinian tradition describes the body through the dimensionality and chronotope (space-time orientation) revealed in the subject's discourse. Julia Kristeva, particularly in her *Revolution in Poetic Language*, brings Bakhtin's dimensional body under the influence of the transformations of Freudian discursive practice. The result is a highly spatialized subject participating in a revolutionary literary practice which overturns the social order of language.

The continuity between Bakhtin's and Kristeva's poetics extends the identification of Kristevan *signifiante* (that signification which demonstrates the symbolic operation of the bodily drives) in avant-garde texts to limit texts, such as *A Passage to India*, in which the signification of the material body is undermined by a theologizing structure that insists on transcendental signifiers.

In *A Passage to India*, the various chronotopes of the characters express changing spatial and social relationships. These chronotopes suggest the spatial relationships of Kristevan analysis and a materialist understanding of characters' discourse. By understanding the signification of spatial contexts and the spatialized body, the monologic text can be seen in a material, atheological order.

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My greatest gratitude is reserved for Miriam who patiently listened to me babble incomprehensibly about thetic cave fetishes in eight dimensions when I was supposedly writing a thesis in English, who endured my lengthy preoccupations with newspapers, unions and other non-academic interests, and who, knowing I would be talking nonsense and be continually distracted, came out to Vancouver to see me through this thing anyway.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Approval.....ii

Abstract.....iii

Acknowledgements.....v

Introduction.....1

Part I: Theory

Chapter 1 The Space Agency of the Letter, or,
The Shortest Distance Between Two Points is
The Letter a.....10

Chapter 2 Dialogic Space.....23

Chapter 3 Taking Positions: The Kristevan Subject.....37

Part II: Practice

Chapter 4 Passage Space.....49

Bibliography.....88

Introduction

The spatiality of signification may represent both the extremity of abstraction in contemporary literary and linguistic thought and the grounds for a materialist understanding of language. Though signification does not appear to occupy a volume, it both defines and is defined by the space in which it occurs. The concrete perceptions and measurements of material existence represent space as a signal in the most banal instance, yet signification is also inextricably bound to spatial dimensions and relations of proximity and distance, proceeding from the insistence of difference in signification.

This study will trace the use of spatial concepts in the psychoanalytic understanding of the material relationship between the subject and signification. Though this relationship has been well documented in such works as Coward and Ellis' 1977 study *Language and Materialism*¹, an emphasis on space--and its manifestations in absence, place, and proximity--will provide a useful key linking the

¹*Language and Materialism* shall be referred to throughout this introduction as a concise guide to the issue of materialism and as a point of departure for a discussion of space. Coward and Ellis also provide a number of useful summations of the theorists whose works I will engage and develop more fully in the following chapters of this thesis.

materiality of language and the subject with the materiality of the subject's attendant environment.

The issue of the materiality of language hinges on the identification of spatial markings in discourse as the first indicator of dimensionality. These markings provide evidence of what V.N. Volosinov might call "existence to sign transit," (*Marxism* 21) the relationship of external reality with reality as conceived by the subject. The phrase "existence to sign transit," with its connotation of a phase shift between a material and an ideological state, is drawn from an early stage of the debate on the materiality of language in a Marxist context which initially failed to account for the peculiar force and operation of language. Coward and Ellis describe how Marxism has failed to accommodate the modality of language:

. . . [T]he process of language is not reducible to any Marxist model of society, either to that of base and superstructure, or to that of three practices. On the other hand, language is an active (and perhaps vital) constitutive part of social relations: it is coextensive with thought itself; it sets up the positions that enable social intercourse to take place. We have seen that it is not univocal, not just a carrier of something else but has a reality of its own. And it is also evident that this reality is material

both in that it is constituted in several institutions (speech, writing, gesture) whose importance and forms differ from society to society; and in that its role is determining, playing a part . . . in the social process, in contradictions (80)

Coward and Ellis have here set out the essential characteristics of language from a materialist perspective, a perspective of which the function of space is only the most evident aspect.

Language is rationalized with a Marxist perspective through the spatializing impetus of the psychoanalytic subject. Psychoanalysis brings to the Marxist understanding of language a positionality set in an ideological formation. The articulation of a signifying practice, particularly in the work of Julia Kristeva, injects a radical motility into the signifying subject, and places psychoanalysis within a revolutionary political context:

The sign and identity can no longer remain as homogenous and non-contradictory, but are rather to be understood as produced in contradictory processes. Fixed, transgressed and renewed, there is only the discursive space of the subject in relation to a contradictory outside and ideological articulations. And this is always in process. (Coward and Ellis 155)

Kristeva succeeds in identifying the production of language with the material world through the space of the subject, a space overdetermined by ideological discourse and undermined by the operation of the physical bodily drives. This signifying practice operates by first fixing a provisional subject within a social relationship through the agency of the family and within the constraints of ideology. The subject is spatially organized and achieves a sense of place and social position. The symbolic construction of this signifying subject is then transgressed by the breaching of the symbolic by the drives, represented as an incomprehensible or nonsignifying discourse. This breach causes a realignment of subjective positionality, which is again provisional and again altered by the operation of the drives.

The Kristevan subject is one that occurs fundamentally in and through space:

. . .[P]ositionality . . . is structured according to psychoanalytic development by a break in the process of signification, which establishes the identification of the subject and its objects as the conditions of propositionality (meanings for a subject included as the place of their intention). This thetic propositionality installs, according to Kristeva, the realm of the symbolic in language since the act of predication which constitutes and

fixes the subject and its objects, is also the movement which establishes the universals of language, linguistic symbolism. It installs the ability to establish a relation of signification between one thing and another. (Coward and Ellis 134)

The Kristevan subject is thus constituted twice by spaces: initially by the recognition and valorization of spaces between the subject and others (a recognition which I will develop in the writings of Sigmund Freud and Jacques Lacan); and by the spaces which break the signifying chain of the subject and mark the intrusion of the drives across the barrier of subjectivity established by the symbolic's repression of the semiotic. The signifying subject is circumscribed by space, and the signification of space is indicative of subjectivity.

Having described the relationship of the subject to signification in terms of a spatial relation, that material relationship must then be extended to encompass the spatial relation between the signifying subject and the community in which she is situated. Mikhail Bakhtin, whose notions of dialogic communication and the carnival are integral to Kristeva's work, describes discourse and narrative relationships in spatial terms that situate the subject in a dimensional environment. Bakhtin socializes novelistic discourse through the development of an elaborate

classification of discourse types that reflects the differences in the orientation of a subject's discourse towards objects, objectified discourse, and the discourse of others. These discourse types are ways of describing the distances between Bakhtin's spatialized, chronotopic subject and his interlocutor and environment. By placing the Kristevan subject within a Bakhtinian understanding of discourse types, I will link the spatialized signifying subject with a spatialized community.

Three operations of space must therefore be considered in order to establish a practicable material relation between subjectivity, signification, and the external world. First, by examining Freud's understanding of the development of subjectivity, I will demonstrate how the recognition and valorization of space is crucial to the development of the subject, and how Lacan suspends this spatially circumscribed subject within discourse. Second, through Kristeva's understanding of the process of signification, I will examine how the signifying subject is structured through the continual assertion and destruction of positions through the relation of presymbolic drives and the symbolically constituted subject. Third, I will place this spatially motivated signifying subject within an understanding of discourse structured by spatial relations, namely that of the Bakhtin circle.

A spatial poetics is in part an attempt to assert the possibility of a meaningful material discourse without reference to transcendental signifiers. Working through the development of space in Freud and Bakhtin prepares the way for an understanding of the Kristevan subject as a spatialized subject. In the Freudian tradition the subject sets out to conquer space. The normalized subject endures a series of crises and complexes by which the appropriate valorization of the spaces between himself and other objects is learned. Bakhtin demonstrates that the perception of space(time) cannot be normalized, not only on the personal scale of psychoanalytic therapy but on the more vast scales of geography and narrative. Bakhtin's chronotope is a commanding but relative aspect of narrative. Relativity, however, is neither the end of space-time nor of meaning. Relativity instead anchors meaning and space-time to the material existence of the subject, that is the subject as dialogized participant in communication rather than the subject as abstracted individual.

Kristeva makes use of the Freudian description of the body's role in bringing the subject to language in order to place a material subject in a signifying social/spatial context. Relativity, despite admitting ambiguity, does not reduce the subject to solipsism but places the subject in a fluid social and material order. The possibility of change, even revolution, is asserted along with the acknowledgement

of the real through the recognition of the space of the subject's signification.

The commanding structural concern for both place (and space) and absence (nothingness) in E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India* suggests this novel as the subject for such an investigation into the operation of spatial signification in a narrative discourse. Aside from a couple of notable essays, *A Passage to India* has largely escaped the critical attention of contemporary language-oriented criticism. An investigation of *A Passage to India* employing the theories developed in this thesis will demonstrate the novel to be a Barthesian limit-text², which "disturbs the positionalities upon which the representations of bourgeois society depend, positionalities towards which these representations contribute," yet "can only dramatise the existence of positionality and representation" (Coward and Ellis 60). The application of these methods to *A Passage to India* will also demonstrate how Bakhtin's spatial demarcation of discourse types allows us to link with the Kristevan understanding of the subject those texts whose adherence to

²In "From Work to Text" (*Image-Music-Text* 155-164), Barthes defines the limit-text as "that which goes to the limit of the rules of enunciation (rationality, readability, etc.). . . . [T]he text tries to place itself very exactly *behind* the limit of the *doxa*. . . ." (157-158). Coward and Ellis are useful here for describing the limit-text in terms which demonstrate its spatial significance.

the symbolic would otherwise prevent them from displaying the characteristics of the process of signification. The spatial aspects of Kristeva and Bakhtin's work allows for the recreation of the otherwise inaccessible process of signification of separate characters. In *A Passage to India*, negation acts as a link between the materiality of the characters' discourse and the spaces of the sky and the caves. Within these spaces, the bounds of the characters' discourse is evident in their expression of negativity.

Chapter 1

The Space Agency of the Letter

or

The Shortest Distance Between Two Points is the Letter a

The spatial aspect of signification in Freudian psychoanalysis originates in the recognition of the other. Freud postulates the primary narcissism of the subject, by which he considers an infant's initial perceptions to be partial and fragmentary, incapable of making a distinction between the self and other objects.³ The subjectivity of the child takes its form through a series of separations, a process of distancing the other from the self, as Freud describes in *The Ego and the Id (Metapsychology 350-407)*:

At the very beginning, . . . object-cathexis and identification are no doubt indistinguishable from each other. . . .

³In "On Narcissism: An Introduction" (*Metapsychology* 65-97), Freud describes the primary narcissism of children as a condition in which "The libido that has been withdrawn from the external world has been directed to the ego" (67). Freud observes that the "libidinal cathexis of the ego," the child's ability to receive sexual satisfaction from himself, is inversely proportional to the degree of object-cathexis (*Metapsychology* 68). The socialization of the child is, in the Freudian model, proportional to the degree to which the child turns from self satisfaction to sexual satisfaction through relations with others.

When it happens that a person has to give up a sexual object, there quite often ensues an alteration of his ego which can only be described as a setting up of the object inside the ego. . . . [T]he process, especially in the early phases of development, is a very frequent one, and it makes it possible to suppose that the character of the ego is a precipitate of abandoned object-cathexes and that it contains the history of those object-choices. (368)

The Freudian subject incorporates itself in and through its movement from the failure to distinguish between the self and other objects (in which the child has no sense of distance, difference, or self) to the identification of other objects (and the correlating development of repression, consciousness, and ego). The subject is constituted by the realization of its spatial relations.

The Freudian self and other co-develop through a series of separations that are initially traumatic and lead to ambivalence. These traumas define and valorize the spaces between the self and other, such as in Freud's example of the male child:

At a very early age the little boy develops an object-cathexis for his mother . . . ; the boy deals with his father by identifying himself with him. For a time these two relationships proceed

side by side, until the boy's sexual wishes in regard to his mother become more intense and his father is perceived as an obstacle to them. . . . His identification with his father then takes a hostile colouring and changes into a wish to get rid of his father in order to take his place with his mother. Henceforward his relation to his father is ambivalent; it seems as if the ambivalence inherent in the identification from the beginning had become manifest.

(*Metapsychology* 371)

This Oedipal relationship is dependent upon--and sexually and politically charges--the space between the subject and his parents. It entails a material and emotional distancing from the parents and, as importantly, a valorization of that space. Initially a male child sees himself in the place of the father, to which the mother is enclitic. The mother is identified as the site of drives, as an extension of the child's as yet unrealized body. Such a state is contingent upon the boy's failure to recognize or signify the space between himself and his parents. This recognition succeeds as the father, whom the boy has assumed as a model, becomes recognized as an impediment to the mother as drive-site. The boy comes to both *identify with* the father as a model of relations with his object of desire, and *identify* the father as the other who prohibits the satisfaction of desire.

Desire, as a result, is repressed and difference is recognized. The space between self and other is realized as desire becomes alienated both from its model and from its object. The recognition of the other circumscribes the space of the (male) subject.

Lacan's analysis of the Freudian model emphasizes the implications of this ambivalence for the language of the subject. Lacan recognized that the subject's initiation into both language and space are simultaneous and occur in what he described as the mirror stage (*Écrits* 1-7). The mirror stage is typified by a delighted child, aged 6 to 18 months, seeing his image reflected in a mirror, or seeing the image of another child. Lacan locates in this activity the initiation of an identity through the recognition of an image of the self in others. "We have only to understand the mirror stage *as an identification*, in the full sense that analysis gives to the term: namely, the transformation that takes place in the subject when he assumes an image-- whose predestination to this phase-effect is sufficiently indicated by the use, in analytic theory, of the ancient term *imago*," (*Écrits* 2). Despite Lacan's assurances, the mirror stage demands the understanding of much more than an identification.

The mirror stage is preparatory to Oedipal relations. As described above, the Oedipus complex is dependent upon

the child's identification with his parents. The mirror stage represents a primary and pre-Oedipal identification, the first spatialization of the self in the recognition of the inside and the outside. Lacan comes to "regard the function of the mirror-stage as a particular case of the function of the *imago*, which is to establish a relation between the organism and its reality--or, as they say, between the *Innenwelt* and the *Umwelt*," (*Écrits* 4).

Recognitions, however, of a non-spatial and largely non-scorpic nature, precede the mirror stage and, as Ragland-Sullivan points out, are important for understanding the significance of how the mirror stage works (Ragland-Sullivan 22-24). These pre-mirror stage recognitions acknowledge the infant's induction into time in its ability to anticipate repetition. The mirror stage therefore does not initiate chronology (either retroactively or in anticipation as suggested by Jane Gallop in her *Reading Lacan*, particularly Chapter 3, pp. 74-92) but cleaves space from time, identifying a mode unaffected by the vagaries of infant-time, a mode to which time must be responsible. The recognition of space thereby organizes time.

This difference between space and time is, however, imaginary rather than real. Space as an aspect of time precedes the mirror stage though it escapes recognition. The distinction of space--the child's image of herself in/and an other as a spatially organized being--is a

dislocation which not only separates the Imaginary from the Real,⁴ but space from time. The process which produces the subject, by positing the self as an image of the other, absolutely dislocates the subject from the space-time of the self:

But the important point is that this form situates the agency of the ego, before its social determination, in a fictional direction, which will always remain irreducible for the individual alone, or rather, which will only rejoin the coming-into-being (*le devenir*) of the subject asymptotically, whatever the success of the dialectical synthesis by which he must resolve as I his discordance with his own reality.

(*Écrits* 2-3)

In this way, the process that establishes subjectivity also establishes the subject's relative positions, the relativity of space-time. The subject necessarily loses his connection

⁴Ellie Ragland-Sullivan's cursory description of Lacan's three orders, in her *Jacques Lacan and the Philosophy of Psychoanalysis*, provides a concise outline of these orders: "In a narrow and technical sense the Imaginary order is the domain of the *imago* and relationship interaction. The Symbolic is the sphere of culture and language; and the Real is that which is concrete and already "full"--the world of objects and experiences. . . . The [Imaginary and Symbolic] exist, in part, as efforts to account for the Real that shapes them, and on which they, in turn, put their stamp: the Imaginary by identificatory, fusional logic; the Symbolic by a differential logic which names, codifies, and legalizes" (130-131).

with real and absolute space and assumes a (relative) position in accordance with his own image. It is then no exaggeration to claim that space and time (space-time) are subjective creations.⁵

The misprision which characterizes the infant's induction into space in Lacan's model is further emphasized in the coincidence of the infant's induction into language which also suspends the subject in a relative positionality. The basic form of signification by which one sign refers to another represents, in Lacanian discourse, an induction into the Symbolic realm. The utterance of a sign in isolation ('*fort*', in Lacan's development of this idea) represents a direct relation to the subject's drives, its recognition of its lack (of the mother) and desire for a return to fullness (unlacking, desirelessness, death). Such a sign--'*fort*', '*there*'--is unary, a direct representation of the Real, of the drive. The accompanying utterance--'*da*', '*here*'--suspends the drive not merely by signifying the return of the other object, thereby satisfying the lack and also signifying the return of the Other, but by signifying.

⁵This claim suggests the possible conflation of Lacanian and Einsteinian mathematics, which might give us the equation $s=mc^2/S$, where the sign (s) represents the relative position of the subject (Einstein's formula for the relativity of space and time, $e=mc^2$, over the subject, S). The equation can be further reduced to read $s=e/S$. The sign then expresses the dislocation of the speaking subject (S) from both space-time expressed as energy, and the unconscious (*Es*) (*Écrits* 128-129).

The second utterance refers not to the drive but to the unary sign. The discourse becomes self-enclosed, no longer referring to the site of the drives, but instead suspending the identity of the subject in the realm of a fluid signification of perpetual difference with no fixed reference point, no transcendental (or even Real) signifier or signified, only the difference between signs. The subject is then defined by its relationship to "other objects," (*les objets petit a*, as opposed *L'Autre*, the otherness the child finds in the first significant other, or Other, such as its mother) (*Four Concepts*, 62).

Lacan readily moves from the infant's "fort"/"da" to the pronouns I/you, from the here/there of the game to the signification of self and other (Lacan, *Four Concepts* 62-63). The signification of a spatial relation is identified with the signification of subjectivity. Emile Benveniste develops this link through the linguistic function of personal pronouns in the essay "Subjectivity in Language" (*Problems in General Linguistics* 223-230). Benveniste notes that, "Language is so organized that it permits each speaker to *appropriate to himself* an entire language by designating himself as *I*" (226). Other classes of words, including those which organize spatial and temporal relations--words such as this, here, now--are dependent on the subject for reference. "They have in common the feature of being defined only with respect to the

instances of discourse in which they occur, that is, in dependence upon the *I* which is proclaimed in the discourse" (Benveniste, 226). The use of these pronouns represents not only proximity but the subject itself. They acknowledge the orientation and relation of the 'I' to space and time, and thus also order the relationships between subjects along these coordinates.

The function of space in language is also temporized and historicized in Jacques Derrida's notion of "*différance*". In "*Différance*" (*Margins* 1-27), Derrida both describes and demonstrates the spatial-temporality of difference/deferral in language:

It is because of *différance* that the movement of signification is possible only if each so-called "present" element . . . is related to something other than itself, thereby keeping within itself the mark of the past element, and already letting itself be vitiated by the mark of its relation to the future element, this trace being related no less to what is called the future than to what is called the past, and constituting what is called the present by means of this very relation to what it is not: what it absolutely is not, not even a past or a future as a modified present. An interval must separate the present from what it is not in order for the present to be itself, thereby

also dividing, along with the present, everything that is thought on the basis of the present, that is, in our metaphysical language, every being, and singularly substance or the subject. In constituting itself, in dividing itself dynamically, this interval is what might be called *spacing*, the becoming-space of time or the becoming-time of space (*temporization*). And it is this constitution of the present, as an "originary" and irreducibly non-simple (and therefore, *stricto sensu* nonoriginary) synthesis of marks, or traces of retentions and protentions (to reproduce analogically and provisionally a phenomenological and transcendental language that soon will reveal itself to be inadequate), that I propose to call *archi-writing*, *archi-trace*, or *différance*. Which (is) (simultaneously) spacing (and) temporization. (13)

Derrida thus constitutes the present as an interval or space between the trace of the past and our deferral on to the future. The present is necessarily absent, constituted only as a never-to-be-achieved product of differing movements in time: a movement in time relative to a space never to be filled. The spatial-temporal function of signification denies its metaphysics, debunks the transcendental signifier, and situates meaning at a relativized point of

contact in the difference and deferral between and within signs. Meaning is not lost as spatial(temporal)ity is recognized in signification. Meaning is relativized. "The same, precisely, is *différance* . . . as the displaced and equivocal passage of one different thing to another, from one term of an opposition to the other" ("Différance" 17). *Différance* can be seen as an attenuation of the spaces between words, eliminating variations in proximity to (transcendental) meaning. The valorization of the space within signification--and therefore the creation of meaning--is then a function of the subject's orientation towards space.

The recognition of *différance* as an aspect of signification can perhaps be seen most easily and dramatically in the collapse of oppositions, as we have already seen Derrida's demonstration of the complimenting traces of the past and future in the sign. Derrida also describes the effect of *différance* upon oppositions in the context of our present discussion of the treatment of space in a psychoanalytic understanding of signification:

. . .[All] the oppositions that furrow Freudian thought relate each of his concepts one to another as moments of a detour in the economy of *différance*. One is but the other different and deferred, one differing and deferring the other. One is the other in *différance*, one is the

différance of the other. This is why every apparently rigorous and irreducible *opposition* . . . comes to be qualified, at one moment or another, as a "theoretical fiction."

("Différance" 18)

Derrida places the Freudian conception of subjectivity within the relativized space of *différance*, thereby constituting the subject as the trace of the play of past and future differentiations, and placing the subject in a space that is never entirely personal, constant, or identifiable but always relative.

Taken together, Lacan and Derrida create an image of the subject lost in the space of his own signification, a subject who locates himself through signifying others in an endless chain of dependent and relativized meaning. Meaning comes to signification through the psycho-sexual valorization of the linguistically relativized spaces between the signifiers through which the subject has achieved subjectivity. Meaning is relative to the place which the subject achieves, the space from which he signifies. That space, however, is indeterminate, disturbed by the displacement of the self on to *les objets petit a*, in Lacanian terms. The subject of signification is, as we will see in our discussion of the work of Julia Kristeva, best constituted not as the site of meaning or as an absence but

as the pattern of valorization of the spaces of
signification.

Chapter 2

Dialogic Space

The critical works published by Mikhail Bakhtin from 1929 until the time of his death in 1975, as well as posthumous publications, elaborate the artistic implications of a dialogic theory of discourse developed prior to 1929 in works published by V.N. Volosinov but often credited to Bakhtin.⁶ Bakhtin's landmark studies of Dostoevsky and Rabelais and his theories of the chronotope, carnival, speech genres and novelistic discourse developed the idea of the shared utterance into models of social relationships in discourse. This socialization of the text emphasized the relationship of the subject of utterance, the nominal speaker of a text, with the elements of the text with which the speaker corresponds: *Problems in Dostoevsky's Poetics* addresses the speaker's relationship with other discourses in the novel; *Rabelais and His World* extends this relationship of discourses to the nature of the body of the subject; the chronotope expresses the orientation of discourse to the time-space of narrative. Whereas Julia

⁶The question of the authorship of these texts is too large to be considered in this discussion. The books shall be attributed in keeping with the editions referred to in this study. A continuity of ideas is evident regardless of the authorship of the works. All publication dates are taken from Clark and Holquist's bibliography in their *Mikhail Bakhtin*, 353-358.

Kristeva's work focuses on the production of the subject and discourse in a social context, Bakhtin's work concentrates on the status of the subject's discourse within a social environment after the discourse has been produced. Explicit in some of his work, and implicit in all of it, is a spatialized, dimensional understanding of discourse and the signifying subject. Discourse always maps the subject's spatial relation to her social environment.

The early works of the Bakhtin circle insist upon the social nature of all discourse. V.N. Volosinov, in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1929), sets out the fundamental tenet of dialogism in the phrase, "Signs emerge only in the process of interaction between one individual consciousness and another"(11). The elaboration of this premise leads to an understanding of signification in particularly spatial terms:

Orientation of the word toward the addressee has an extremely high significance. In point of fact, *word is a two-sided act*. It is determined equally by *whose* word it is and *for whom* it is meant. As word, it is precisely *the product of the reciprocal relationship between speaker and listener, addresser and addressee*. Each and every word expresses the "one" in relation to the "other." I give myself verbal shape from another's point of view, ultimately, from the

point of view of the community to which I belong. . . . A word is territory shared by both addresser and addressee, by speaker and his interlocutor. (86)

Marxism and the Philosophy of Language describes a semiotic process in which the individual has no autonomy in the formation of signs but rather is dependent upon an interlocutor for the meaning of any utterance which she has generated. The formation of that utterance will also signify the positionality of the subject with regard to her interlocutor and her community. The utterance, the interlocutor, and positionality are intrinsic to all instances of signification within Volosinov's schema. The ideas of "verbal shape" and word as territory emphasize the spatial character of signifying positions.

Such an understanding of signification within a Marxist/materialist framework poses problems which Volosinov did not fully articulate. The materiality of the sign, its dependence on being generated in a social context, and its ability to reflect unique positional relationships in every utterance are not easily rationalized. The sign's social nature indicates a peculiar materiality which Samuel M. Weber identified in his preface to the 1975 German edition of *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*:

By defining the sign now in terms of non-identity and referentiality and now in terms of exteriority

and materiality, Voloshinov himself has already called *the life of the sign* into question. If the sign is constituted in the process of transition, of transference, then the materiality, the "objectivity," of every individual sign necessarily becomes a vehicle for differences, an intersection which cannot be traced to any state of self-identity. Hence the identity of the sign would appear to be a *transitory after-effect of difference*. And the exteriority of the sign would consist not simply in the circumstance that its locus is exterior to consciousness, but primarily in the fact that it has no locus because it is actually *exterior to itself*--an instant in a process of transference with no origin, no beginning, and no end. (99)

This peculiar exteriority of the dialogic sign to itself brings it to the edges of materiality, temporality, and relativity. The result of the Bakhtinian project is the redefinition of these boundaries to conform with an understanding of subjectivity that is essentially social rather than transcendent. It is a project whose results, as we can see in Weber's description, bear resemblance to those of Derrida's project.

Bakhtin's *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, also published in 1929, translates many of the ideas developed in books by Volosinov and Medvedev into a literary practice, and further develops the implications of those ideas in the framework of discursive practice. Bakhtin develops an elaborate classification of discourse types based on aspects of the double-voiced nature of the utterance established in theory in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. These discourse types reflect differences in the orientation of a discourse towards objects, objectified discourse, and the discourse of another (*Dostoevsky 185-200*). This typology does not merely provide Bakhtin with a means of classifying novels but serves to resocialize novelistic discourse. Bakhtin attempts to rescue the criticism of the novel from the monologizing tendencies of linguistically oriented stylistics by emphasizing a metalinguistic dialogics:

The plane of investigation proposed by us here, an investigation of discourse from the point of view of its relationship to someone else's discourse, has, we believe, exceptionally great significance for an understanding of artistic prose. Poetic speech in the narrow sense requires a uniformity of all discourses, their reduction to a common denominator. . . . The possibility of employing on the plane of a single work discourses of various types, with all their expressive

capacities intact, without reducing them to a common denominator--this is one of the most fundamental characteristic features of prose.

(*Dostoevsky* 199-200)

Bakhtin establishes the significance of the shared, dialogic nature of all utterance within the context of narrative, and from that premise establishes an understanding of narrative in which many distinct voices can exist in a multi-dimensional metalinguistic universe. The word of the author no longer exists in solitude on the flat plane of the page but is joined by the voices of distinct subject/characters, by other authors who are revoiced in the text, by the objectified presence of the reader as respondent, and by the authors' own voice, objectified and revoiced within its own text. The world of the novel is given depth, distance, and differentiation. Discourse has become *différance*.

This play of dimensionality and space is developed by Bakhtin in his 1938 essay "Forms of Time and the Chronotope in the Novel" (*Dialogic* 84-258). The chronotope outlines how discourses, and more particularly relations between discourses, are dependent upon spatial aspects of the novel. Bakhtin describes the chronotope as the relationship between narrative and spatial and temporal (historical) realities. The chronotope illustrates how the text is concretized by its relation to that which is outside the text. The

structure of both the narrative and the subject are responsive to time and space:

. . . [A]ny concretization--geographic, economic, sociopolitical, quotidian--would fetter the freedom and flexibility of the adventures and limit the absolute power of chance. Every concretization, of even the most simple and everyday variety, would introduce its own *rule-generating force*, its own *order*, its *inevitable ties* to human life and to the time specific to that life. Events would end up being interwoven with these rules, and to a greater or lesser extent would find themselves participating in this order, subject to its ties. (*Dialogic* 100)

The chronotope is not itself a concretizing force within the novel but is the expression or recognition of concretizing forces which are necessarily present within the novel. The construction of plot and setting necessarily comments on the character of time and space.

Bakhtin also considers the understanding of the word itself as being fundamentally chronotopic, as "the mediating marker with whose help the root meanings of spatial categories are carried over into temporal relationships" (*Dialogic* 251). As he points backward in this reference to Cassirer's *The Philosophy of Symbolic Forms*, Bakhtin also points forward to the work of Emile Benveniste who, as we

have seen, has demonstrated the power of subjective discourse to appropriate spatial categories throughout language by the use of pronouns and demonstrative adverbs and adjectives (*Problems in General Linguistics* 226).

The development of the chronotope allows Bakhtin to cast the novel in specifically spatial terms, as in his 1941 essay "Epic and Novel" (*Dialogic* 3-40):

I find three basic characteristics that fundamentally distinguish the novel in principle from other genres: (1) its stylistic three-dimensionality, which is linked with the multi-languaged consciousness realized in the novel; (2) the radical change it effects on the temporal coordinates of the literary image; (3) the new zone opened by the novel for structuring literary images, namely, the zone of maximal contact with the present (with contemporary reality) in all its openendedness. (*Dialogic* 11)

This distinctively spatial understanding of the novel does not, in Bakhtin's hands, lend itself to a banal interpretation of settings but provides a link between spatial considerations and discourse. The zones postulated in "Epic and Novel" are not topographical in a direct sense but represent the language images of subjects. Only by disrupting the convention of distance between author and character--each represented by distinct zones of

discourse--can the novel represent the dialogic nature of communication theorized earlier, particularly in the works published by Volosinov.

An authorial voice isolated from the other voices in a novel represents the denial of the dialogic principle of communication and asserts a monologic and completed view of the world of the narrative. When the discourse of the author moves into a zone of contact with the characters of the novel, the chronotope acquires a dimensionality, an unfinished quality, a potentiality, a dialogic character. This zone of contact allows for a voice other than the narrator's to be "simultaneously represented and representing." Other voices are allowed to "retain their direct significance . . . but at the same time they are 'qualified' and 'externalized', shown as something historically relative, delimited and incomplete--in the novel they, so to speak, criticize themselves," (*Dialogic* 45).

The effect of the dialogic discourse on narrative described here is two-fold and constitutes a restructuring of discourse comprehensible only in spatial terms. By translating the discourse of the author from a zone of completeness of understanding and fullness of speech--a zone which transcends and oversees the territory of the narrative--to a zone of "dialogical contact" with the characters of a narrative, the purview of the author's

discourse has been reduced as the characters have been given added dimensions. Characters are translated from a two-dimensional surface condition in which they are rendered and understood completely by their authors, to a zone in which they are credited with depth--the effect of which is to limit the author's access to the full extent of their subjectivity (their front, back, and both sides are not simultaneously visible in a three-dimensional zone)--and history, an uncertainty of origin and an openendedness of destiny. In this way Bakhtin directly links the qualities of space, discourse, and subjectivity through the chronotope.

The profound influence of this spatialized, chronotopic discourse upon the structural condition of the subject in narrative is considered directly by Bakhtin in both *Rabelais and His World* and in the uncompiled notes made toward the end of his life, edited and translated as "From Notes Made in 1970-71" (*Speech Genres and Other Late Essays* 132-158). These notes are examples of some of Bakhtin's most reflective and abstract thinking, reducing the subject most often to an I, yet lauding the surfeit of humanity found on the plane of presentness and openendedness and iterating the dependency of the self on others. The connotations of his ideas, which Bakhtin pursues here in the fragmented prose of note-making, shows evidence that these terms--I, self,

other--are largely insufficient to the reconception of the subject he has undertaken:

The image of *I*, a concept or an experience, a sensation, and so forth. The nature of this image's existence. The composition of this image. (How it accommodates, for example, ideas about my body, about my exterior, my past, and so forth.) . . . The historical development of self-awareness. It is related to the development of signifying means of expression (language above all). . . . The heterogeneous composition of my image. A person at the mirror. *Not-I* in me, that is, existence in me; something larger than me in me. . . . My temporal and spatial boundaries are not given for me, but the other is entirely given. I enter into the spatial world, but the other has always resided in it. The differences between space and time of *I* and *other*. They exist in living sensation, but abstract thought erases them. Thought creates a unified, general world of man, irrespective of *I* and *other*. In primitive, natural self-sensation, *I* and *other* merge. There is neither egoism nor altruism here. (*Speech Genres* 146-147)

In a fragmented way, Bakhtin here brings together the nexus of space and subjectivity in discourse: the dialogism of

discourse, the construction of the self in/and the other through discourse, the relativity and necessity of positions, the excess of subjectivity not seen in discourse. Dialogics confirms the necessity to reconceive the subject, not as an individual but as that which both exceeds itself and has been infiltrated by the other. Self and other can not be exclusive in a dialogic framework but necessarily incorporate one another. This reconception both brings about and is reflected in the changing perception of the space of the subject.

The representations of subjectivity suggested above resemble abstract recreations of Bakhtin's reflections on the grotesque body in Rabelais. Bakhtin sees in Rabelais a celebration of the dialogic subject in contrast to the advent of the Cartesian unified image of man. The varying treatments of the body described here by Bakhtin also indicate differing conceptions of space and discourse:

The body of the new [Cartesian] canon is merely one body; no signs of duality have been left. It is self-sufficient and speaks in its name alone. All that happens within it concerns it alone, that is, only the individual, closed sphere.

Therefore, all the events taking place within it acquire one single meaning: death is only death, it never coincides with birth; old age is torn away from youth; blows merely hurt, without

assisting an act of birth. All actions and events are interpreted on the level of a single, individual life. They are enclosed within the limits of the same body, limits that are the absolute beginning and end and can never meet.

(*Rabelais* 321-322)

This conception of the body is essentially monologic, self-contained, entirely perceptible and understandable. It is complete in itself. Its aspects are represented digitally, as distinctive portions rather than continuums. Its signification is denotative, assuming the precise correspondence of the signifier and the signified. It exists in two dimensions. Its space is determinate.

Bakhtin contrasts the certainties of the monologic body with a body that reflects the ambivalence of dialogic discourse:

In the grotesque body, on the contrary, death brings nothing to an end, for it does not concern the ancestral body, which is renewed in the next generation. The events of the grotesque sphere are always developed on the boundary dividing one body from the other and, as it were, at their points of intersection. One body offers its death, the other its birth, but they are merged in a two-bodied image. (*Rabelais* 322)

The grotesque is the physical embodiment of the dialogic subject, representing interrelationships between persons, generations, discourses, and objects. The individual is not a functional unit. No signification is possible beyond the point of intersection, or each signification results from a point of intersection regardless of the intentions of the subject. As a result, the subject can never be seen as whole. Its place and identity are never certain.

Taken together, the books attributed to Mikhail Bakhtin trace a path from the principle of the shared utterance, outward from interpersonal signification to a spatial conception of discourse on the level of entire narratives, returning to personal discourse types as communicative strategies arranged through the proximity of the addresser and addressee, and finally to the conceptualization of the physical body entailed by the spatial reference of these discourse types. Throughout the work of the Bakhtin circle, discourse and the spatial conception of subjectivity are inextricably bound to one another. Bakhtin's methods for discourse analysis, when combined with an elaborated conception of the subject, provide the tools for an understanding of subjectivity in discourse through an examination of the signification of space.

Chapter 3

Taking Positions: The Kristevan Subject

The work of Julia Kristeva describes the movement of the body in language as the intersection of the psychoanalytic and dialectical materialist traditions. Kristeva suggests that the symbolic realm of language overlaps with the realm of bodily drives. The semiotic functioning of the drives, apparent in the poetic language that denies the limitations of the symbolic, provides language with a dimensionality, relating it directly to the physical.

Kristeva, deeply immersed in the psychoanalytic tradition, takes off from Bakhtin's idea of the dialogic nature of the utterance and his elaboration of a theory of carnival in his book on Rabelais. In her 1966 essay, "Word, Dialogue, and Novel" (*Desire* 64-89), Kristeva describes the Bakhtinian carnival as being "composed of distances, relationships, analogies, and nonexclusive oppositions," in which, "Two texts meet, contradict, and relativize each other," (78). Kristeva also sees in the carnival the eclipse of the prohibition of the body and the acknowledgement of excess in signification. The relativization of texts, which Kristeva would later refer to as intertextuality, shatters the theological ordering of the monologic text and subject. "Magic, shamanism, esoterism,

the carnival, and 'incomprehensible' poetry," she writes in *Revolution in Poetic Language*, "all underscore the limits of socially useful discourse and attest to what it represses: the *process* that exceeds the subject and his communicative structures"(16). Language that denies the limitations of conventional discourse signifies the generative process of language itself. By accounting for the generation of rule denying signification, the process of signification--which Kristeva terms *signifiance*--can be understood.

Kristeva's *Revolution in Poetic Language* presumes a carnivalesque textual practice from which she proceeds to deduce a signifying practice in defiance of the logocentrism of monologic discourse:

If there exists a "discourse" which is not a mere . . . testimony of a withdrawn body, and is, instead, the essential element of a practice involving the sum of unconscious, subjective, and social relations in gestures of confrontation and appropriation, destruction and construction--productive violence, in short--it is "literature," or, more specifically, the *text*. . . . We shall call this heterogeneous [textual] practice *signifiance* to indicate, on the one hand, that biological urges are socially controlled, directed, and organized, producing an excess with regard to social apparatuses; and, on the other,

that this instinctual operation becomes a *practice*--a transformation of natural and social resistances, limitations, and stagnations--if and only if it enters into the code of linguistic and social communication. (*Revolution* 16-17)

Kristeva takes as the subject of her investigation the poetic text that, like Bakhtin's descriptions of carnival and the grotesque, demonstrates the inconsistencies of the practice of the ordering social code of language. Kristeva's *signifiante* turns away from a discourse of transcendental signifiers and towards the incomprehensible; away from the theological and towards the physical and psychological. We can see in Kristeva's argument, both in its origins in the dialogic and its emphasis on the body and historical and political change, the extension of the spatial characteristics of signification into a full linguistic materialism.

Signifiante is defined by Kristeva in terms that are characteristic of dialogic communication, particularly in their description of the space in which and across which communication occurs:

What we call *signifiante*, then, is precisely this unlimited and unbounded generating process, this unceasing operation of the drives toward, in, and through language; toward, in and through the exchange system and its protagonists--the subject

and his institutions. This heterogeneous process, neither anarchic, fragmented foundation nor schizophrenic blockage, is a structuring and de-structuring *practice*, a passage to the outer *boundaries* of the subject and society.

(*Revolution* 17)

Signifiante requires a plurality of subjects and is simultaneously underwritten by and overwrites the cultural institutions which inform the utterance of the subject. The subject is territorial and communication is necessarily transterritorial. The process is thus heterogeneous, crossing boundaries, as in Bakhtin's "translinguistics". Kristeva, however, brings to the shared utterance the signification of the drives. Whereas Volosinov dismissed the internal processes of language generation as unknowable, Kristeva accentuates their role in *signifiante*.

This new emphasis on the signification of the drives fundamentally radicalizes the Bakhtinian shared utterance as elaborated in *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*. The body, repressed by Volosinov, returned to as a product of the dialogic in Bakhtin's celebration of the grotesque and carnival, is reinserted into the signifying process by Kristeva's insistence on drive signification. In *Revolution in Poetic Language*, Kristeva challenges Volosinov's claim that, "it would be a practical impossibility to describe in any one . . . accidental experience or expression its

socioeconomic premises," (*Marxism* 92). The relationship of the subject to language theorized by Freud and Lacan, which acknowledges the function of the drives in signification, provides the tools for this return to the repressed which Kristeva identifies in the avant-garde text.

In order to witness the *signifiante* of the drives, however, we must accept the possibility of a signification prior to language, that linguistics is the codification and death of a previously vital semiotic function. "The genesis of the *functions* organizing the semiotic process can be accurately elucidated only within a theory of the subject that does not reduce the subject to one of understanding, but instead opens up within the subject this other scene of pre-symbolic functions," (*Revolution* 27). This revision--authorized by the Freudian primary processes--to the Bakhtinian assumption that all that signifies is knowable in terms of signs is strategically necessary for Kristeva. To read the avant-garde text as signifying and to accept the "incomprehensible" as evidence of that which precedes signification--as that which participates in the yet-to-be-completed process of signification--presumes a knowable presymbolic function. Kristeva invents such a

function, which she designates the *chora*, so that she might prove its existence.⁷

Despite the abstract nature of the *chora*, Kristeva employs it to build the link between the materiality of language and its production, a link which was missing particularly in the work of the Bakhtin school. The implicit inconsistency in Volosinov's statement, ". . .The encounter is not a physical one: *the organism and the outside world meet here in the sign*" (*Marxism* 26), is a sign of the limitations placed on the concept of the shared utterance by Volosinov's dismissal of the psychological aspect of signification. The encounter between the physical subject and the physical world requires a physical medium of signification. The symbolic code of language can not support this encounter. A modality which links the physical body with the material sign is required. Kristeva

⁷ Philip E. Lewis's description of the *chora* in his landmark review of the first edition of *La Révolution du langage poétique (diacritics, Fall 1974, 28-32)*, points to the discernible function of the indiscernible *chora*. "[T]he poetic subject is a dialectical process in which the structured language of the ego comes into contact with a violent, heterogeneous force which is its ground, with the flow of psychic instincts . . . which Kristeva terms the semiotic *chora*, designating thereby a music, a rhythm, an architecture, a non-verbal articulation of the semiotic process which redistributes the linguistic and grammatical categories of a language to which the *chora* remains unassimilable" (31). The *chora* gives evidence of itself in the rhythm or musicality that accompanies all signification yet remains outside language. It is evident in the process that occurs between the placements of signs that both produces the next sign and questions the denotative integrity of the sign.

identifies that modality in what Volosinov had dismissed: the Freudian drives, repressed by the socialization of the body, yet vitalizing an otherwise stagnant symbolic order.

Drive articulation is achieved through Kristeva's revisionary conception of the semiotic. "The displacement of the term semiotic onto unfamiliar territory resembles the conversion of the term *text* into a dynamic operative concept: in each case, the focus is downward, toward the generative process of semiosis, toward the core of corporal and psychic energy which is the ongoing heterogeneous ground out of, over, and against which all symbolic activity is articulated" (Lewis 31). The semiotic, rather than a term blanketing all aspects of signification, becomes both the realm and the process that underlies all signification: that which regulates the drives and provides for their relationship with the symbolic:

Although we recognize the vital role played by the processes of displacement and condensation in the organization of the semiotic, we must also add to processes the relations (eventually representable as topological spaces) that connect the zones of the fragmented body to each other and also to "external" "objects" and "subjects", which are not yet constituted as such. This type of relation makes it possible to specify the *semiotic* as a psychosomatic modality of the signifying

process; in other words, not a symbolic modality but one articulating (in the largest sense of the word) a continuum: the connections between the (glottal and anal) sphincters in (rhythmic and intonational) vocal modulations, or those between the sphincters and family protagonists, for example. (*Revolution* 28-29)

The semiotic is the site of signifieds which are not articulated through signifiers but through signification in the absence of signifiers. The semiotic signifies between signifiers, between words, as in rhythm and intonation. The passage from the semiotic to the symbolic constitutes the ultimate expression of the organization of the drives and is, for Kristeva, the site of the expression of subjectivity. The processes and drives, which are organized in the semiotic, constitute the subjective element of a speaker as she enters the social code of communication. It is through the semiotic that the subject assumes a position from which to signify, from which to enter the symbolic. Only through the expression of the semiotic in the symbolic does the subject establish the reference point of the self from which, according to Benveniste, language is ordered. "Language is possible only because each speaker sets himself up as a *subject* by referring to himself as *I* in his discourse" (Benveniste 225). The semiotic must be introduced into the symbolic in order that the positions

which generate statements may be obtained even though the subjectivity which it represents subverts the structural unity of the symbolic.

The positioning of these (partial) subjects in the (otherwise empty) space of the symbolic remains an im-position, not the reflection of a transcendental presence but the establishment of a place based on fragmented, partial, and refracted information. The very achievement of the im-position denies the denotation of place:

. . . [When poetic language--especially modern poetic language--transgresses grammatical rules, the *positing* of the symbolic . . . finds itself subverted, not only in its possibilities of . . . denotation . . . but also as a possessor of *meaning* (which is always grammatical, indeed more precisely, syntactic). In imitating the constitution of the symbolic as *meaning*, poetic mimesis is lead to dissolve not only the denotative function but also the specifically thetic function of *positing* the subject.

(*Revolution* 57-58)

Despite the denial of the position of the subject as achieved by the thetic, poetic language--which incorporates drive signification--does not render positionality meaningless. The im-position remains partially functional as an informed imitation of subjectivity. "Mimesis, in our

view, is a transgression of thethetic when truth is no longer a reference to an object that is identifiable outside of language; it refers instead to an object that can be constructed through the semiotic network but is nevertheless posited in the symbolic and is, from then on, always verisimilar" (*Revolution* 58).

Through this verisimilitude, the reader can detect functions of the semiotic character of the subject. Alongside the symbolic construction of the subject in language occurs the signification of the pre-positional drives, which Kristeva calls the genotext and identifies in "the transfers of drive energy that can be detected in phonematic devices (such as the accumulation and repetition of phonemes or rhyme) and melodic devices (such as intonation or rhythm), in the way semantic and categorical fields are set out in syntactic and logical features," (*Revolution* 86). Kristeva stresses that the genotext is not linguistic but "a *process*, which tends to articulate structures that are ephemeral . . . and nonsignifying. . . ." As such the genotext disrupts the symbolic structure of language while informing our understanding of the mimetic representation of the subject in what Kristeva terms the phenotext, the linguistic structure which "obeys rules of communication and presupposes a subject of enunciation and an addressee" (*Revolution* 87). The genotext traces the subjective operations of the drives through the symbolic representation

of the subject in the phenotext. The genotext thereby gives evidence of the processes the subject has endured to achieve representation in the symbolic.

The Kristevan model of the relationship of the subject to discourse provides a mechanism for understanding the character of the speaking subject through an analysis of the spatial relations of discourse. We have seen in Bakhtin's analysis of speech genres the function that the conception of the space between the subject and the respondent serves in determining the form of discourse. We have seen in Kristeva as well how the subject assumes positionality as a precondition of discourse, and how this positionality can be detected in discourse, particularly the discourse of the avant-garde. This positionality, Kristeva notes, requires that the "subject must separate from and through his objects" as posited in space (*Revolution* 43). This separation and the discourses attendant upon a subject's relations with objects and other subjects will then give indication of the process of thetic positioning in the subject.

Though poetic language and the avant-garde text provide the evidence by which Kristeva elucidates her thesis, she also indicates that thetic positioning is prerequisite for all discourse, and that semiotic motility is a necessary part of her definition of textual practice, even of a text that is not marginalized as being incomprehensible

(*Revolution* 180). In the second part of this thesis, we will use the spatial aspect of discourse as a key to an understanding of the function of character in a more socially acceptable and comprehensible textual practice.

Part II

Practice

Chapter 4

Passage Space

E.M. Forster's concern with the metaphysical, with the overarching sky in his novel *A Passage to India*, structures the discourse of his fiction so as to prevent it from escaping the bounds of the monologic. Though the characters speak with different voices, they remain isolated from the discourse of the narration which strains to connect these voices with the overarching sky. They are positioned on the precipice of monologic truths, continually witnessing the limit of the theological only to reassert its transcendence. The relativizing, carnivalizing effect of Kristevan *signifiante* is evident throughout *A Passage to India* in the characters' perception, valorization, and signification of space and nothingness. Forster's characters and narration continually endow space and nothingness, with which they intermingle freely and continually, with mystical and transcendental value. The limits of these characters' discourse are spatialized in the context of the novel. The limits of discourse can therefore be seen in their confrontation with space.

The hundred voices attributed to India do speak but not in chorus with the overarching sky which the narration presumes speaks for all India. The discord, however, does not amount to "infinite fissures" in the soil. Each voice in the novel maps out for itself a space, not an absence, from which to speak. These spaces are drawn around bodies which register the participation of the subject in material discourse. Signifying bodies located in particular material circumstances undermine the authority of the overarching sky yet maintain signification without reference to the transcendental. By asserting a signifying position--a relationship between the material body and symbolic discourse evident in the signification of space--the subject maintains a dialogic communication with other subjects though correspondents value words and spaces differently. A spatial poetics of the novel accentuates those voices not entirely obscured by a monologizing force which attempts to encompass all positions.

The primary structural feature of *A Passage to India* is a zone of absence, of nothingness through which all major characters must pass and which spills over to inform the rest of the novel. This nothingness emanates from the caves, infusing both the land and sky. Nothing becomes part of the landscape of Forster's novel. For Wilfrid Stone, in his book-length study of Forster *The Cave and the Mountain*, nothing becomes "a substantive, not just an emptiness, a

presence as well as an absence" (307). For Benita Parry, in her essay "The Politics of Representation in *A Passage to India*," "[t]he contemplation of negative and Nothing within the text culminates in the transfiguration of the ascetic world view, and, if 'Everything exists, nothing has value' is a statement of nihilism, it has an alternative meaning, one which acknowledges the material world as verifiable but assigns significance only to Nothing, to complete detachment" (39). Parry's gloss on Nothing approaches a Derridean sense of spacing, though rather than attaching significance to complete detachment, significance in Derrida might be attached to the attachment of significance.

Acknowledging both Stone's and Derrida's ways of reading nothing serves to contrast the forces and limits within *A Passage to India*. Reading with Stone, nothing, and its linguistic coordinate silence represent the transcendence of the characters' speech and give the narration its authority. Through its connection with the overarching sky, nothing draws India and the novel's characters into a structural relationship. Reading with Derrida, nothing, the space that betokens the non-presence of the sign, is a peculiar zone which does not transcend signification but is a context for and product of the signification of the characters through which we can witness a Kristevan production of meaning. Through Derrida and Kristeva we see the approach of the moment of signification

in which the subject in process is revealed; through Stone we see how the chaos of this transition between forms is averted. This contrast emphasizes the dependency of the characters' discursive positions upon spatial relationships, whether reading with Stone or with Parry, Derrida and Kristeva. Discourse expresses a subjective relation to space.

In either reading, nothing remains an animated force in the novel which begins and ends with the displacement of presence, from "Except for the Marabar caves--and they are twenty miles off. . ."(31) to "'No, not yet,' and the sky said, 'No, not there'"(316). Nowhere is this force of nothing more apparent than at the caves:

There is something unspeakable in these outposts. They are like nothing else in the world, and a glimpse of them makes the breath catch. They rise abruptly, insanely, without the proportion that is kept by the wildest hills elsewhere, they bear no relation to anything dreamt or seen. . . . Nothing, nothing attaches to them, and their reputation--for they have one--does not depend upon human speech. It is as if the surrounding plain or the passing birds have taken upon themselves to exclaim 'Extraordinary!' and the word has taken root in the air, and been inhaled

by mankind. . . . Nothing is inside them, they were sealed up before the creation of pestilence or treasure; if mankind grew curious and excavated, nothing, nothing would be added to the sum of good or evil. (137-138)

Here a nexus of the cave-hills, sky, and utterance is evident. The word (literally, 'Extraordinary') of the hills "has taken root in the air, and been inhaled by mankind,"-- inhaled in opposition to the exhalation of speech, making the breath catch. The effect of the Marabar is to stymie speech and signify through the air, as if we were to realize that what we thought we had conceived independently had been given to us by our surroundings.

The cave-hills and the sky represent the central duality of the novel, expressed in the axiom, "Everything exists, nothing has value" (160). The sky represents an infinity which springs from the emptiness of the caves. The signification attendant to such a scene, such as in Fielding's observation of the hills at sunset, expresses the ambiguity Parry identified in the axiom, namely the confirmation of the material world and the valorization of nothing:

It was the last moment of the light, and as he gazed at the Marabar Hills they seemed to move graciously towards him like a queen, and their charm became the sky's. At the moment they

vanished they were everywhere, the cool benediction of the night descended, the stars sparkled, and the whole universe was a hill. Lovely, exquisite moment--but passing the Englishman with averted face and on swift wings. He experienced nothing himself; it was as if someone had told him there was such a moment, and he was obliged to believe. (197)

Reading with Stone, the duality of the infinite sky and the empty caves inspires an existential angst. Reading with Derrida and through Kristeva, the caves do not signify either of themselves or through the observer but rather provide a space against which each character is able to assume a position and give evidence of a signifying process in the face of the over-arching sky.

Forster has established setting as the basis for signification by asserting the absence of transcendence. Forster, however, cannot structure his novel without making an appeal to a transcendental power, as he notes the influence of the weather, an attribute of the sky, in determining the chapters of the novel (337). The absence of transcendence is muted by the transcendence of absence in *A Passage to India*. As a result, the significations of the characters display many of the indicators of the process of signification, but within a pattern of comprehensible signification, within a context that refers to a

transcendence. The spatial expression of this transcendence allows us to engage it within a Bakhtinian context. By doing so, we can understand the signifying relationships between the separate characters and the transcendental signifier and recreate, within this limit text and through the correlation of the Bakhtinian and Kristevan dynamics of space, the process of signification.

Aziz, the poet and doctor, is the character most dependent upon language and attached to the land of India. Aziz attaches himself to the verbal trappings of his religion, to the label "Moslem", to the stories of the six Mogul emperors, and to the ninety-nine names of God inscribed on the frieze of the mosque. In his relationships, Aziz emphasizes intimacies and the authority endowed in private spaces. His discourse in describing these relationships to people and spaces is a "direct, unmediated discourse," the first type of discourse which Bakhtin enumerates in *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics*, which is intended "as an expression of the speaker's ultimate semantic authority." His discourse strives for the monologic through a chronotope which dismisses the bounds of past and present, absence and presence.

The chronotope of Aziz's discourse is commented on directly in the narration. His ability to seize fragmentary thoughts and imbue them with the fullness of meaning is

characteristic of a discourse which presupposes an unbounded power over time and space:

But Aziz was addicted to cameos. He held the tiny conversation in his hand, and felt it epitomized his problem. For an instant he recalled his wife, and, as happens when a memory is intense, the past became the future, and he saw her with him in a quiet Hindu jungle Native State, far away from foreigners. (274)

Aziz sees in a brief exchange with Fielding on poetry the whole of his being in time and extrapolates from it the merger of his deceased wife and his yet to be realized home in a quiet Hindu jungle Native State. Discourse for Aziz is highly circumscribed yet translucent. Vast truths are contained in highly contextualized comments and meaning is always certain.

Despite this certainty and circumscription, Aziz is not literal minded. Rather, Aziz's discourse pursues the dream-logic of condensation and displacement, and the accompanying dismissal of perceived time and space, in the service of wish fulfilment. The exaggeration of what is into what Aziz wishes it to be is evident throughout the novel in his relationship to his most valued institutions: Islam and poetry:

[Aziz's] memory was good, and for so young a man he had read largely; the themes he preferred were

the decay of Islam and the brevity of love. . . .
India--a hundred Indias--whispered outside beneath
the indifferent moon, but for the time India
seemed one and their own, and they regained their
departed greatness by hearing its departure
lamented, they felt young again because reminded
that youth must fly. (37-38)

The value and power ascribed to poetry by Aziz is evident both in his commitment to the memorization and incantation of it and in its ability to displace the present. His failure to contextualize the poems within the contemporary religious and political setting of India, however, limits this power. Aziz's discourse functions within a chronotope that contracts all space and time to the immediate present. The presence of the present easily gives way to the traces of pasts and futures which are absent.

The directness of Aziz's discourse exposes its displacements in increasingly absurd ways as he nears the zone of the caves and the material processes of his signification are confronted by a looming absence. The morning gains an intensity which places increasing value on the adherence to the spoken word, the adherence to the unity of signifier and signified, sign and referent, and the further contraction of Aziz's chronotope, of the space-time of his signification. Conversational comments are received by Aziz with deep offence, an unwanted social engagement is

termed "the happiest moment in all my life," a tree is named a snake, hospitality is named intimacy, his dream of universal brotherhood is disavowed, he expresses what he wishes as being real and claims his deceased wife to be alive. The contraction of his space-time culminates in the wild distortion of his and Adela's second cave visit:

Incurably inaccurate, he already thought that [what he said] was what had occurred. He was inaccurate because he was sensitive. . . . He was inaccurate because he desired to honour her, and-- facts being entangled--he had to arrange them in her vicinity, as one tidies the ground after extracting a weed. Before breakfast was over, he had told a good many lies. 'She ran to her friend, I to mine,' he went on, smiling. 'And now I am with my friends and they are with me and each other, which is happiness.' (168)

Reality is intensely localized by Aziz's discourse. Facts are placed with convenience, the spoken word is more convincing than experience, and happiness is the state of being in the proximity of friends. Aziz responds to the space by attaching to what he finds to be present, and loading with signification what presence he does find.

Aziz's chronotope, and the value and emphasis he places upon intimacies, demonstrates a need for the attachment, and the rejection, of other objects. Aziz's personal

relationships are characterized by spontaneous intimacies and irrational repulsions. The initial meeting between Aziz and Mrs Moore, who later becomes his great friend, is a cameo of this attraction/repulsion:

And near [his mosque], under a low dome, should be his tomb, with a Persian inscription:

Alas, without me for thousands of years
 The Rose will blossom and the Spring will bloom,
 But those who have secretly understood my heart-
 They will approach and visit the grave where I lie.

He . . . regarded it as profound philosophy--he always held pathos to be profound. The secret understanding of the heart! He repeated the phrase with tears in his eyes, and as he did so one of the pillars of the mosque seemed to quiver. It swayed in the gloom and detached itself. Belief in ghosts ran in his blood, but he sat firm. Another pillar moved, a third, and then an Englishwoman stepped out into the moonlight.

Suddenly he has furiously angry. . . . (41-42)

In the midst of his appreciation of serendipitous intimacy, of avowing that an approach is the sign of a secret understanding of another's heart, Aziz becomes furious at the approach of Mrs Moore. This scene, however, does not undermine Aziz's commitment to intimacy but demonstrates his ability to oscillate between intimacy and rejection.

Intimacy leads Aziz to an identification which incorporates the object of identification within the fantastic discourse of his chronotope. Intimacy engages Aziz in a fetishistic relationship with his correspondents, which in turn allows him the illusion of animating them by the power of his discourse. Forster describes this integration on the morning of the caves excursion:

Like most Orientals, Aziz overrated hospitality, mistaking it for intimacy, and not seeing that it is tainted with the sense of possession. It was only when Mrs Moore or Fielding was near him that he saw further, and knew that it is more blessed to receive than to give. These two had strange and beautiful effects on him--they were his friends, his for ever, and he theirs for ever; he loved them so much that giving and receiving became one. He loved them even better than the Hamidullahs, because he had surmounted obstacles to meet them, and this stimulates a generous mind. Their images remained somewhere in his soul up to his dying day, permanent additions. He looked at her now as she sat on a deckchair, sipping his tea, and had for a moment a joy that held the seeds of its own decay, for it would lead him to think, 'Oh, what more can I do for her?' and so back to the dull round of hospitality. (154-155)

The pattern of intimacy is also one of incorporation and, inevitably, rejection. The taint of possession grows into a spiritual identification as Fielding and Mrs Moore become permanent parts of Aziz's soul, though parts which he will eventually feel the burden of entertaining, evidence of their otherness. The obstacles which Aziz surmounts reflect the taboos which, at the time of the British Raj, were intended to maintain the integrity of both the Anglo-Indians and individuals. "Trouble after trouble encountered [Aziz], because he had challenged the spirit of the Indian earth, which tries to keep men in compartments" (141). In incorporating Mrs Moore and Fielding, Aziz has overcome the obstacles of the Raj, the land, and the monologized self all of which insist on the singularity and stability of the signifying subject.

Aziz's chronotope of intimacy yields a pattern of subjectivity that reflects Kristeva's concept of negativity, particularly that negativity expressed as rejection. Kristeva uses the term negativity, drawn from the fourth term of the Hegelian dialectic, "to designate the process that exceeds the signifying subject, binding him to the laws of objective struggles in nature and society," (*Revolution* 119). In this sense, Kristevan negativity is similar to the Bakhtinian grotesque, characterized by the excess of subjectivity, but with an emphasis on the production of signification. Negativity operates as the force within A

Passage to India which relates the abstractions of the sky and the caves (transcendence and absence, being and nothingness) to the materiality of signification through the process by which characters achieve signifying positions. Negations permeate the text as static signs of the operation of negativity in the process of the signification of the characters and narration. The excesses of the processes of signification links the materiality of the characters' discourse and space through the expression of negativity.

Rejection as a function of negativity is a corollary to the incorporation undertaken in Aziz's discourse. Though the chronotope of his discourse is circumscription and incorporation, it is the inevitable product of--and inevitably produces--rejection. Incorporation attempts to augment the perceived insufficiency of a subjective space through identification with what is externally present. The result is a subjectivity which overflows, which exceeds personal space. A rejection expulsion necessarily follows, creating a new personal space for the subject. Graysford and Sorley exemplify this process when they attempt to incorporate everything into the house of God. They discover that, "We must exclude someone from our gathering, or we shall be left with nothing," (58). To be left with nothing ironically would deny the transcendence which they hope to signify. The process of signification itself, dependent upon a material correspondence, confounds their

transcendence. Similarly, Aziz's intimacy with Mrs Moore and Fielding inevitably returns and is reduced to hospitality (*Passage* 155). His incorporation of them inevitably returns in the production of signification through the process of rejection, a process which both gives evidence of the excess of the subjectivity which results from their incorporation, and expels that excess.

This oscillation between incorporation and expulsion is typical of the ambiguity of the rejection process through which the "unity of reason" is asserted only to be shattered by the rhythm of the drives. ". . . [R]epetitive rejection seeps in through "prosody," and so forth, preventing the stasis of One meaning, One myth, One logic," (*Revolution* 148). Aziz incorporates Mrs Moore and Fielding, that is to say his relationship with them, as part of his subjectivity, as the basis of a signifying (thetic) unity. From the basis of this reconstituted unity, Aziz's peculiar signifi-ance involves a process of rejection, a shattering of this unity and an expulsion of part of what constitutes it through signification.

Rejection is particularly evident in the discourse which characterizes Aziz's relationship with Mrs Moore, a name which becomes dialogized, shattered, and remade over and over again by Aziz and other persons in the novel. Aziz incorporates Mrs Moore in the events leading up to his arrest. Her silence, departure, and death which follow

those events serve to separate the real Mrs Moore from the values which she symbolizes. She becomes an absence, a space to which signification is lent. "I must repeat that as a witness Mrs Moore does not exist," says Das, the Magistrate. "She is not here, and consequently she can say nothing" (229). She does, however, speak, both as Ronnie's mother and as a Hindu goddess invoked in prayer (228), and remains an integral part of Aziz's subjective position.

For Aziz, Mrs Moore is the unacknowledged dead person who infects his conversation (253). Fielding reluctantly asserts her durability in the recognition that she is incorporated in the discourse of others. ". . . [I]t struck [Fielding] that people are not really dead until they are felt to be dead. As long as there is some misunderstanding about them, they possess a sort of immortality" (254). The identification of Mrs Moore in the errors of Aziz's discourse with Fielding demonstrates Aziz's incorporation and resymbolization of her. Through Fielding's agency, the incorporation is brought to produce a rejection in the name of Mrs Moore:

Aziz had this high and fantastic estimate of Mrs Moore. Her death had been a real grief to his warm heart; he wept like a child and ordered his three children to weep also. There was no doubt that he respected and loved her. . . . Fielding was not ashamed to practice a little necromancy.

Whenever the question of compensation [from Adela] came up, he introduced the dead woman's name. Just as other propagandists invented her a tomb, so did he raise a questionable image of her in the heart of Aziz, saying nothing that he believed to be untrue, but producing something that was probably far from the truth. Aziz yielded suddenly. He felt it was Mrs Moore's wish that he should spare the woman who was about to marry her son, that it was the only honour he could pay her, and he renounced with a passionate and beautiful outburst the whole of the compensation money, claiming only costs. (259)

This renunciation is the first sign of an expulsion discourse resulting from the shattering of Aziz'sthetic stability that had incorporated Mrs Moore. After the assault upon his social and semiotic stability, Mrs Moore and the compensation monies were the guarantors of his character, of the social acceptance of his innocence, and his symbolic connections to the English. The compensation is made by Fielding to be incompatible with Aziz's incorporation of Mrs Moore. Aziz must reject one of these two items around which he had constituted himself following his wrongful prosecution.

The persistence of Mrs Moore also leads to the rejection of Fielding, who also had constituted part of

Aziz's thetic stability. Fielding's work upon Aziz's memory of Mrs Moore means that the two friends can no longer stably coexist in Aziz's mind. Aziz's thetic stability breaks down under the inconsistencies:

Aziz did not believe his own suspicions. . . .
 Suspicion and belief could in his mind exist side by side. . . . Aziz was seized by [suspicion], and his fancy built a satanic castle, of which the foundation had been laid when Fielding and he talked at Dilkusha under the stars. The girl had surely been Cyril's mistress when she stopped in the College--Mohammed Latif was right. But was that all? Perhaps it was Cyril who followed her into the cave . . . [sic] No; impossible. Ridiculous. Yet the fancy left him trembling with misery. . . . He was shaken, as though by a truth, and told Hassan to leave him. (275-276)

The irreconcilable coexistence of suspicions and belief represents the beginning of a breach in Aziz's thetic stability which will ultimately result in the exclusion of Fielding with whom Aziz had previously identified himself. Fielding later recognizes that he must give up his past intimacy with Aziz (296).

Aziz's incuriousness with regard to Fielding's wife and brother-in-law--Mrs Moore's children--marks the end of this incorporation/rejection cycle. Aziz's encounter with Ralph,

Mrs Moore's son, brings about the recognition of Aziz's thematic stability. Aziz befriends Ralph through their mutual identification with Mrs Moore. Mrs Moore is confirmed as an aspect of Aziz's signifying position and the completion of a cycle is recognized:

'Then you are an Oriental.' [Aziz] unclasped as he spoke, with a little shudder. Those words--he had said them to Mrs Moore in the mosque at the beginning of the cycle, from which, after so much suffering, he had got free. Never be friends with the English! Mosque, caves, mosque, caves.

' . . . I must give you one little present, . . . you are Mrs Moore's son.'

'I am that,' [Ralph] murmured to himself; and a part of Aziz's mind that had been hidden seemed to move and force its way to the top.

. . . [Aziz] was silent, puzzled by his own great gratitude. What did this eternal goodness of Mrs Moore amount to? To nothing, if brought to the test of thought. She had not borne witness in his favour, nor visited him in the prison, yet she had stolen to the depths of his heart, and he always adored her. (306)

The stabilization of Aziz's thematic unity reaffirms his signifying position. Through his ambivalent feelings for Ralph, Aziz is able to reject the Englishmen Fielding and

Heaslop and affirm Mrs Moore as part of his stabilized thetic unity. Heaslop is forced to the top of Aziz's consciousness and expelled. Mrs Moore is incorporated into the depth of his heart and signifies.

Ralph's ambivalent relationship with Aziz, which both recognizes and is respectful of the distance between the British and Indians, supplants Aziz's relationship with Fielding, whose exteriority is established as Mrs Moore's incorporation is consolidated:

Something--not a sight, but a sound--flitted past [Aziz], and caused him to reread his letter to Miss Quested. Hadn't he wanted to say something else to her? Taking out his pen, he added: 'for my own part, I shall henceforth connect you with the name that is very sacred in my mind, namely Mrs Moore.' When he had finished, the mirror of the scenery was shattered, the meadow disintegrated into butterflies. . . . [H]e thought of his wife; and then the whole semi-mystic, semi-sensuous overturn, so characteristic of his spiritual life, came to end like a landslide and rested in its due place, and he found himself riding in the jungle with his dear Cyril. (314)

Aziz establishes his position and his relationship with Adela and Fielding through a semantic stability that incorporates Mrs Moore, and the pattern of rejection that

causes him to instruct Fielding and the English to "Clear out!"

Despite the shifts, shatterings, and reconstitutions of thetic stability endured by Aziz, *A Passage to India* continues to signify within a monologic symbolic field. The process of resymbolization in Aziz's discourse is detectable not through the incomprehensible significations which characterize the Kristevan genotext but through alterations to the character's chronotope. Aziz's thetic character is surmised from the assumption of a relationship between the subject's signification of space and the space by which the subject signifies. Through Aziz's coherent signification of his proximity to specific characters and ideas--Mrs Moore, Fielding, compensation money, Ralph Moore--and his valorization of those distances, we can trace Aziz's chronotope and alterations to his chronotope, suggesting a semiotic patterning.

As *A Passage to India* is a novel which circumvents its potential dialogism through the agency of an over-arching sky, Aziz must also be seen as a character whose potential for schizophrenia is somehow curtailed. Kristeva asserts the possibility of discourse types which are both characteristic of Aziz in *A Passage to India* and of the semiotic process attributed to him above:

The first of these modalities is *oralization*: a reunion with the mother's body, which is no longer

viewed as an engendering, hollow, and vaginated, expelling and rejecting body, but rather as a vocalic one--throat, voice, and breasts: music, rhythm, prosody, paragrams, and the matrix of the prophetic parabola; the Oedipus complex of a far-off incest, "signifying," the real if not reality. The second modality, always inseparable from the first, appears in the reunion with brothers' bodies, in the reconstitution of a *homosexual phratry* that will forever pursue, tirelessly and interminably, the murder of the One, the Father, in order to impose *one* logic, *one* ethics, *one* signified: *one*, but *other*, critical, combatant, revolutionary. . . . (152-153)

Both these modalities constitute a revalorization of the spaces between subjects which permit the comprehensible significance of *A Passage to India*. Negativity, such as expressed in Aziz's signifiante, is in fact the force which makes *A Passage to India* viable by motivating the Anglo experience of the land and the people of India. The Anglo passage to India creates a context for a negative discourse. The British Raj has not given Aziz his voice, but introduced negativity into his discourse by challenging his thetic unity, by requiring a redescription of the space of his subjectivity.

Two aspects of Forster's novel, of his way of rendering India in a European art form, force this negativity upon Aziz. Aziz's fraternal and oppositional relationship with Fielding has already been considered as an aspect of his rejection signification. Aziz's call for an Indian nationhood in which "'Hindu and Moslem and Sikh and all shall be one!'" (315) is evidence of his desire to replace the patriarchal British order with a monologized Indian order. The sustained contradiction of combatant brothers is signified in his final speech addressed to Fielding:

'Down with the English anyhow. That's certain. Clear out, you fellows, double quick, I say. We may hate one another, but we hate you most. . . . [We shall drive every blasted Englishman into the sea, and then'--he rode against [Fielding] furiously--'and then,' he concluded, half kissing him, 'you and I shall be friends.' (315-316)

Aziz has established, through the process of rejection, a signifying position which allows him to both sustain his friendship with Fielding, who acts as the point of access to India for Forster's western readers, and yet reserve his heart for his own people (298).

As Kristeva notes, the homosexual phratry characteristic of Aziz's relationship with Fielding is inseparable from a relationship with the vocalic body of the mother. The vocalic mother which draws the brothers Aziz

and Fielding together is none other than India, that motherland which fails to engender a nation, the land whose hundred voices share the novel's last (negative) words with the sky:

But the horses didn't want it--they swerved apart: the earth didn't want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single file; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau beneath: they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, 'No, not yet,' and the sky said, 'No, not there.' (316)

As a mother(land), India speaks negations in the context of a European novel, the land denying the geographic norms of the western observer. The land as the series of negative propositions by a vocalic mother must then be motivated by the negativity of the speaking subject.

Aziz also shows signs of attaining a relationship with this vocalic mother in the Temple section of the novel. In relocating to the Hindu state, Aziz has made an ambiguous marriage, returned to his poetry and the prophecy of a freed Indian woman:

His poems were all on one topic--oriental womanhood. 'The purdah must go,' was their burden, 'otherwise we shall never be free. . . .'

Illogical poems--like their writer. Yet they struck a true note: there cannot be a mother-land without new homes. In one poem--the only one funny old Godbole liked--he had skipped over the mother-land (whom he did not truly love) and gone straight to internationality. (290)

Aziz's conception of Indian womanhood is no longer that of the motherland which gives birth to a nation, nor one whose power must be contained, sheltered, and protected, but rather one that breaks down such barriers (the purdah, nationality) and gives voice to song and poetry. This relationship to a vocalic Indian woman allows Aziz to sustain fraternal opposition with Fielding, an opposition which rests on Aziz's need to assert a motherland in order to expel the English. The vocalic mother utters a rejection which separates the brothers. Aziz hears this oralization of the motherland on the one hand, and assumes it to be the expulsion of a vaginated motherland on the other.

The fraternity established by Aziz and Fielding is built around contrasts and circumscribed by the sky's totalizing effect. But whereas Aziz's chronotope is structured by a compulsion towards intimacy, incorporation, and expulsion, Fielding's chronotope is structured by respect and measured proportions. This chronotope is commented on in the contrast between Fielding's reveries

inspired by the formal discourse of Venetian architecture and the discontent he experiences in Indian settings:

The buildings of Venice . . . stood in the right place, whereas in poor India everything was placed wrong. He had forgotten the beauty of form among idol temples and lumpy hills; indeed, without form, how can there be beauty? Form stammered here and there in a mosque, became rigid through nervousness even, but oh, these Italian churches! . . . The Mediterranean is the human norm. When men leave that exquisite lake, whether through the Bosphorus or the Pillar of Hercules, they approach the monstrous and extraordinary; and the southern exit leads to the strangest experience of all. (277-278)

As no other character in *A Passage to India*, Fielding sees in discourse the possibility of form and distinguishes that which is beautiful from that which is monstrous.

As Bakhtin demonstrates in his study of Rabelais, the assertion of form over the monstrous is also the denial of the dialogic. The excess of subjectivity--the failure of signification to account entirely for the subject--is dependent upon correspondents meeting in three dimensional space-time, space-time that ensures openendedness and the impossibility of seeing all sides of a figure simultaneously. Though Forster's narrative perspective and

India's overarching sky inspect all sides of Aziz's character, he is nonetheless continually in the process of becoming, subverting and recreating himself through the incorporation of an unstable excess of subjectivity which makes him monstrous to the Anglo community of Chandrapore. Fielding denies the monstrosity of himself, Aziz, and all people through his belief in humanity's desire for form. He denies the dialogism of his discourse despite his disavowal of God by asserting the transcendence of the individual. The possibility of the breach or fragmentation of subjectivity is denied.

This aspect of Fielding's character is particularly evident when it reaches its limits, when the breach of thethetic is spotted and must be contained. Such a moment is the novel's final exchange between Fielding and Adela:

A friendliness, as of dwarfs shaking hands, was in the air. Both man and woman were at the height of their powers--sensible, honest, even subtle. They spoke the same language, and held the same opinions, and the variety of age and sex did not divide them. Yet they were dissatisfied. When they agreed, 'I want to go on living a bit,' or 'I don't believe in God,' the words were followed by a curious backwash, as though the universe had displaced itself to fill up a tiny void, or as though they had seen their own gestures from an

immense height--dwarfs talking, shaking hands and assuring each other that they stood on the same footing of insight. They did not think they were wrong, because as soon as honest people think they are wrong instability sets up. Not for them was an infinite goal behind the stars, and they never sought it. But wistfulness descended on them now, as on other occasions; the shadow of the shadow of a dream fell over their clear-cut interests, and objects never seen again seemed messages from another world. (262)

In this exchange, the flattening, dissatisfying, two-dimensional perspective of monologized form is literalized in the narration as Fielding's and Adela's perceptions of themselves. The virtues of containment (through their absolute perspective of their selves) and stability are reinforced. The transcendent basis of their discourse, however, is acknowledged in its margins in the occasional, wistful, shadow of a shadow of a dream, messages from another world.

Fielding's monological, theological insistence on form is confronted by India. "Men yearn for poetry though they may not confess it; they desire that joy shall be graceful, and sorrow august, and infinity have a form, and India fails to accommodate them" (215). Fielding's reaction to the disruption of form is evident in his conversation with

Godbole following the arrest of Aziz. Godbole's eastern philosophy and the events of the day disturb the fundamental dichotomies upon which Fielding's notions of form depend. "When evil occurs," Godbole tells Fielding, "it expresses the whole of the universe. Similarly when good occurs." "And similarly when suffering occurs, and so on and so forth, and everything is anything and nothing something," [Fielding] muttered in his irritation, for he needed the solid ground" (186). Fielding resists the threat India and eastern religion poses to his conception of form and the individual. The value Fielding places on the form of the individual causes him to avoid the potential shattering of his thetic unity. He mocks Godbole rather than submit himself to the denial of formal dichotomies.

India does force its denial of form upon Fielding and, though he again denies it, his resistance exposes a particular discursive mode. Following the aborted trial of Aziz, Fielding finds himself between the Indians whom he had sided with and Adela whom he had sheltered after she was abandoned by the other Anglos. When Fielding is told about the amount of compensation Aziz's lawyers would seek, Fielding's concept of form in human relations partially lapses:

He couldn't bear to think of the queer honest girl losing her money and possibly her young man too. She advanced into his consciousness suddenly.

And, fatigued by the merciless and enormous day, he lost his usual sane view of human intercourse, and felt that we exist not in ourselves, but in terms of each other's minds--a notion for which logic offers no support and which had attacked him only once before, the evening after the catastrophe, when from the veranda of the Club he saw the fists and fingers of the Marabar swell until they included the whole night sky. (249)

Both Fielding's notion and his resistance to it demonstrate a number of characteristics of his signifying position. Fielding's resistance to the notion that we all exist in terms of each other's minds rests on a logic that insists the subject is self-contained and autonomous. This presumption is denied even in the illogical notion itself, which places subjectivity not in exchange or dialogue but squarely within the realm of the other. Fielding more readily transposes the site of subjectivity than opens subjectivity up to relativizing discourses. Finally, and most banally and decisively, Fielding identifies with the individual who best fits his notion of form, namely Adela, the Englishwoman. Despite her dramatic irrationalities and inconsistencies, Fielding's insistence upon form identifies more readily with Adela than with his more consistent Indian friends.

The insistence upon form finally condemns Fielding to submit to being Anglo-Indian. His admiration of form in Venice contributes to his distance from Aziz by way of the "cold, unfriendly" postcards (289). Nor is Fielding's "irrefragable logic" able to overcome Aziz's apparent insularity at their meeting following Fielding's marriage to Stella Moore. Fielding comes to accept himself as Anglo-Indian, confirming the gulf between himself and the Indians which he had first recognized following the charges being laid against Aziz (181). "All the stupid misunderstandings had been cleared up, but socially [he and Aziz] had no meeting-place. He had thrown in his lot with Anglo-India by marrying a countrywoman, and he was acquiring some of its limitations . . ." (312-313). The extent to which Fielding acquires the limits of Anglo-India are evident in his final argument with Aziz.

The difference between Fielding's Anglo-India and Ralph's respectful relationship with Aziz again rests on form:

Fielding sighed, opened his lips, shut them, then said with a little laugh, 'I can't explain, because it isn't words at all, but why do my wife and her brother like Hinduism, though they take no interest in its forms? They won't talk to me about this. They know I think a certain side of their lives is a mistake, and are shy.' (313)

The limits of Anglo-India which Fielding feels are the limits of form. Forster shows India as a land which insists on the transgression, shattering, and remaking of the signifying subject. By stubbornly maintaining form and the symbolic code of the Anglo-Indians, Fielding ossifies into a belief in the empty theology of "God Save the King" rather than opening to dialogue and allowing for the possibility of breach and signifiante.

Forster provides a key by which to gauge characters' appreciation of discourse when he compares possible reactions to errors in Aziz's description of Chandrapore's water system:

Ronny would have pulled [Aziz] up, Turton would have wanted to pull him up, but restrained himself. Fielding did not even want to pull him up; he had dulled his craving for verbal truth and cared chiefly for truth of mood. As for Miss Quested, she accepted everything Aziz said as true verbally. In her ignorance, she regarded him as 'India', and never surmised that his outlook was limited and his method inaccurate, and that no one is India. (88-89)

Adela's inability to separate verbal truth from truth of mood is an inability to separate content from form. But unlike Hamidullah's, Mahmoud Ali's, and Aziz's conflation of

the poetic past with the present, Adela's interest is entirely in the present and in words which signify presence. Adela's passage to India is a quest for interesting things. Words serve as the register of interest, but Adela owes no allegiance to them as words, only to the presence she senses they betoken.

The insistence upon such a direct relationship between words and the real is nearly fatal for Adela. In the face of the nothingness which permeates the novel, the compensation generated by words can only be tentative. The quiet at the heart of the novel is disquieting for Adela who confuses the materiality of signification with a transcendent presence. Adela is described in the narration as caught amid a nexus of interest, words, and India:

Most of life is so dull that there is nothing to be said about it, and the books and talk that would describe it as interesting are obliged to exaggerate, in the hope of justifying their own existence. . . . There are periods in the most thrilling day during which nothing happens, and though we continue to exclaim 'I do enjoy myself' or 'I am horrified' we are insincere. 'As far as I feel anything, it is enjoyment, horror'--it's no more than that really, and a perfectly adjusted organism would be silent.

It so happened that Mrs Moore and Miss Quested had felt nothing acutely for a fortnight. . . . [T]he difference between them was that the elder lady accepted her own apathy, while the younger resented hers. It was Adela's faith that the whole stream of events is important and interesting, and if she grew bored she blamed herself severely and compelled her lips to utter enthusiasms. (145-146)

Forster here inverts Henry James's commands that fiction be both interesting and sincere by claiming that to be sincere is to be silent, or, at best, boring. Adela's insistence on interesting things compels her to insincerities in the face of the nothingness which underlies her passage to India. Adela proposes words as compensation for absence. That Adela and Mrs Moore felt nothing acutely for a fortnight gives way to a Derridean/Kristevan reading of "nothing" through the differences in their signifying reactions to absence. The substantive quality Stone finds in Forster's use of nothing is the signification which the characters project upon the absences with which they are confronted. In Adela's case, insincere words are generated to lend importance and presence to the spaces.

In the psycho-sexual trauma that strikes her in the caves, Adela confronts both an absence for which words do not compensate and the materiality of her signifi-
cance. The

concurrence of boredom, sexuality, and absence in her second cave visit results in Adela's immersion in the materiality of her own body:

Hitherto she had not much minded whether she was touched or not; her senses were abnormally inert, and the only contact she anticipated was that of mind. Everything now was transferred to the surface of her body, which began to avenge itself, and feed unhealthily. People seemed very much alike, except that some would come close while others kept away. 'In space things touch, in time things part,' she repeated to herself while the thorns were being extracted--her brain so weak that she could not decide whether the phrase was a philosophy or a pun. (199)

In confronting the absence of the caves, Adela's insistence upon the transcendent value of the word gives way to the signification of the body. Abstract signification gives way to the material orientation of the body in time and space. "In space things touch, in time things part," is a philosophical pun on the order of the novel's "there is no God but God," and "God si love." For Adela, India's "final message" is neither tautology nor oxymoron, but the transfer from a theological signifying system to one which draws upon the materiality and spatiality of the body.

Adela's new found dialogism and the spatial/material emphasis of her discourse finds expression in her testimony at Aziz's trial. Her testimony is scripted by McBryde as a true discourse connected to the transcendent through its relationship with upholding the British Raj and its God, yet the truth of the event is irrevocably connected to her physical drives, to the shattering of a subjectivity which she had preserved suspended in discourse. "Adela had always meant to tell the truth and nothing but the truth, and she had rehearsed this as a difficult task--difficult because her disaster in the cave was connected, though by a thread, with another part of her life, her engagement to Ronny . . . her private failure she dared not allude to. . ." (229). As a result, her testimony represents a shattered perspective and, rather than the abstractions agreed upon by her and McBryde, is immersed in a highly spatialized experience of the visit to the caves:

As she spoke, she created the Kawa Dol, saw the niches up the curve of the stone, and felt the heat strike her face. . . .'

She was silent. The court, the place of question, awaited her reply. But she could not give it until Aziz entered the place of answer.

'The prisoner followed you, didn't he?'

[McBryde] repeated in the monotonous tones that they both used; they were employing agreed words

throughout, so that this part of the proceedings held no surprises. . . .

Her vision was of several caves. She saw herself in one, and she was also outside it, watching its entrance, for Aziz to pass in. She failed to locate him. It was the doubt that had often visited her, but solid and attractive, like the hills. 'I am not--' Speech was more difficult than vision. 'I am not quite sure.' (230-231)

Adela's memory is not of the abstractions of love and marriage but of the physicalness of the caves as place of answer, and from the physical perspective of the court as place of question. Words have lost their ability to signify in monologic monotones. Signification is dialogized and difficult from her position as agent and observer. The recollection of the experience of the caves completes the breach of Adela's thetic position and guarantees the resymbolization of her discourse.

Adela's partial return to a monologized discourse is evident in her final conversation with Fielding, in which signifiante is easily detected in the margins of their discourse. Adela's shift towards a more dialogized, grotesque discourse is evident in the chronotope which emerges after the trial. In her renunciation, the abstraction of religion gives way to the material world.

"Though the vision was over, and she had returned to the insipidity of the world, she remembered what she had learned. Atonement and confession--they could wait. It was in hard prosaic tones that she said, 'I withdraw everything'" (232). Though committed to a more physical orientation, Adela finds herself profoundly disoriented, "without part in the universe she had created" (233). "She felt emptied, valueless; there was no more virtue in her" (234). "'Excuse manners,'" she tells Fielding, "'but I don't know anyone's position'" (234).

In her final interview with Fielding, Adela sums up the ambiguity of her discourse which is both suspended in the dialogic and insists upon monologic truths:

'This false start has been all my own fault. I was bringing to Ronny nothing that ought to be brought, that was why he rejected me really. I entered that cave thinking: "Am I fond of him?" I have not yet told you that, Mr Fielding. I didn't feel justified. Tenderness, respect, personal intercourse--I tried to make them take the place--of--'

'I no longer want love,' he said, supplying the word.

'No more do I. My experiences here have cured me. But I want others to want it.' (260-261)

Adela and Fielding have given up their dependence upon abstraction and form, yet they remain insistent upon it. Adela has failed Ronny by not offering transcendence, presence. Upon their recognition that they cannot signify presence, Adela, Fielding, and Forster revert to the assumption that a transcendent, mystical voice must inform them of their inability to transcend. Thus the sky--and through it Mrs Moore--casts the thin veil of a monologized voice over *A Passage to India*.

In *A Passage to India*, a spatial poetics depicts a material relativity which Forster's use of the overarching sky attempts to circumvent. The differing responses to the abstractions of the novel, particularly the absence which emanates from the caves, relativizes those abstractions and returns the characters, and their discourses, to their bodies.

This study, with its enumeration of the material circumstances of the chronotopes of some characters in *A Passage to India*, suggests implications for the narrative as a vehicle by which the British can see and therefore rule India (*Passage* 301), as a vehicle for the objectification of Adela and the women of the club (and the near eradication of Indian women) and as a vehicle for repressed homosexuality. The examination of the spatial poetics of *A Passage to India* begins to suggest that the homogeneity which Forster strives to maintain through the totalizing agency of the overarching

sky fails to eliminate the varying but suppressed voices of the novel.

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