STRANGERS AND BROTHERS: THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY IN THE NOVELS OF C. P. SNOW

A Thesis

Presented to

the Faculty of the Department of English

University of Manitoba

In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Arts

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by

William Brent McGregor Denham

April, 1962

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This thesis is based on a study of all available writings of Sir Charles Percy Snow and on all available biographical and critical material on him, but it concentrates on the novels of the "Strangers and Brothers" series and The Search.

As the title of his major series of novels implies, one of Snow's chief concerns is the situation of man both as stranger and as brother, and as an individual and as a member of society. Each of these aspects is examined to discover what must be the proper balance between them if a society is to be achieved that is meaningful, fulfilling, and effective as a community, yet not too restrictive of individuality.

This achievement, the steps leading to it, and the human characteristics which encourage or prevent it, are examined by Snow in his novels, as he looks at an era in English life--1914-1954--and at one man in that era, Lewis Eliot. The range of character, setting, and situation, is broad. The background is one of actual events. From this examination of his time, Snow draws certain conclusions which it is the purpose of this thesis to describe.

Man may ascend from stranger to brother through an ever-widening awareness of community, concern for its maintenance, and involvement in it. Through Lewis Eliot

we see this development. We see him with his parents, rejecting his mother's possessive love and responding to his father's less demanding feeling. We see Lewis in his two marriages, crippled in the first by the memory of his mother's possessiveness, and in the second learning to give himself. We see him in his male friendships, establishing relationships which involve an increasing self-forgetfulness. We observe his development as a brother by examining his reactions to the working-out of relationships between other individuals. He sees the efforts of one of his friends to escape the overpowering demands of the family, as well as the efforts of another to form a smaller society of individuals, in the face of opposition from the established society.

Lewis Eliot next becomes involved in the life of a Cambridge college. In the academic community, men--individuals, strangers, selfish and prejudiced--are sufficiently willing to sacrifice their individuality to maintain their community intact, if not unstrained, through a time of severe testing. From the college, Lewis moves into the world of science and government. There his outlook is further widened as he sees the need for scientific truth and integrity, for national loyalty, and for human justice and brotherhood. Although for a time he slips back

into selfishness, he finally sees the truth of his own experience as stranger and brother, as well as the need for others to follow his example. Through what Lewis Eliot experiences and observes, Snow points out the need for brotherhood and the means by which it is achieved.

The process is not inevitable. Man may reject the need for brotherhood, he may accept it, or like Lewis, he may be drawn into it almost in spite of himself. Even if he becomes a brother, his own nature always threatens the certainty of his fully doing his part in achieving community.

But the steps are there--levels of achievement through which man must pass. In a world threatened by the tendency of individuals or smaller social groups to retreat into themselves, the only hope that Snow sees is that men may learn to live together in a meaningful and vital community.

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ABBREVIATED TITLES

BY WHICH C. P. SNOW'S WORKS

ARE CITED IN THIS THESIS

A	The Affair
CR	The Conscience of the Rich
H	Homecomings
LD	The Light and the Dark
M	The Masters
NM	The New Men
S	The Search
SB	Strangers and Brothers
SG	Science and Government
TC	The Two Cultures and the Scientific Revolution
TH	Time of Hope

INTRODUCTION

I

In recent years the angry young men, the outsiders, have been loud in their criticisms of English society and international morality. Their clamourings have received great publicity, but they have offered no real answers. Other voices have also spoken -- voices of moderation, voices offering solutions. One of these voices appeals not only to the more conservative, but also to the radical outsiders. Out of a background as a scientist, a teacher, a civil servant, a businessman, a novelist, and a literary critic, Sir Charles Percy Snow works at solving difficulties, not merely at decrying them. Instead of agitated idealism, he offers calm realism; instead of political extremism, sensible humanism; instead of either revolt or reaction, compromise -- a willingness to stay within the establishment and its traditions, to modify them when necessary, but never to be dominated by them. All this Snow does in prose which, if it is not artistically brilliant, is sensible, clear, and pointed. To him are drawn people of various backgrounds, political beliefs, and ideological persuasions.

Kenneth Allsop blames Snow for being "unreconciled" to the post-war world,[1] for not being "within the psyche of the Fifties."[2] The concern of such writers as Colin Wilson has led them to become outsiders, strangers, disgusted with many aspects of society, but unable to do anything to achieve the changes they want. But Snow has an answer to such persons, for he portrays one of them in his novel, Strangers and Brothers. George Passant is exactly like today's outsiders -- enraged at the injustices which are expressed through prejudice, snobbery, and favoritism, full of ideas about how to change the world, but in the end incapable even of maintaining his own integrity.

William Cooper points out that Snow attracts his younger contemporaries for the simple reason that they must "accept and try to make the most of their responsibilities as brothers" and "take part" in the practical activities of the world" simply because "they can no longer support themselves by writing novels."[3] Snow shows them how to find

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[1] The Angry Decade: A Survey of the Cultural Revolt of the Nineteen-Fifties. (London: Peter Owen Limited, 1958), p. 26.

[2] Ibid., p. 28.

[3] "The World of C.P. Snow", The Nation, CLXXXIV (February 2, 1957), 104.

this involvement.

The deeper reason why they look to Snow, according to Cooper, is that they see in him someone who is working to reconcile their divided society. Divisions are increasing: science is splitting off from the other disciplines; "highbrow art is steadily hiving off from popular art; in the Welfare State, the social structure is steadily ossifying. In whatever direction one looks, one sees bits of society becoming in some way or another more specialist, and as a result sometimes losing even the desire to communicate."[4] In his writings and practical activities, Sir Charles is acting as "go-between, as integrator of a divided society,"[5] and for this reason he has found a following. Whether or not Snow's influence is as strong as Cooper suggests, it is true that Snow speaks with relevance to his age.

In his novels Snow examines various aspects of English life between 1914 and 1954. He looks at different levels of society: a Midlands town, a Cambridge college, London society, the world of science and government. He examines many

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[4] Ibid., p. 105.

[5] Ibid.

areas of professional life: legal, academic, business, scientific, and governmental. He presents a variety of people, from the peasant to the aristocrat, from the ignorant to the genius, from the kindest and most self-forgetful to the most despicably selfish, from the powerless to the all-powerful. Snow studies the working of human motives, the nature of science, the intricacies of college politics, the workings of government. He looks at an almost infinite variety of material.

Out of all this, one could choose as a subject for study almost any aspect of Snow's work. One could look at his descriptions of power, of what it does to those who wield it and to those who come under its domination. Or there is his concept of the college community. Or his view of scientific truth. Or his conception of justice. Or his study of the Anglo-Jewish community. Or the responses of his characters to historical events.

Each of these is important in itself, and yet many of these areas of concern are part of a wider one, one which seems to me of utmost significance in the novels of C.P. Snow: his concern with man as stranger and brother -- isolated and at the same time a part of society.

II

In all of his novels, Snow is concerned with the relationship of an individual to the society in which he finds himself. Should he maintain himself in splendid isolation? Or should he surrender to his society, accepting its values at the cost of giving up his own? Can a man exist alone, or must he work with his fellows to arrive at a community wherein each individual maintains his own personality? If a man can do this, if he can reach a middle ground between the two extremes of utter isolation and absolute identification, then there is hope for a vital society. The individual will avoid the situation where the person who wants to follow his own way must reject out of hand the customs and usages of the society into which he is born. He will avoid the attitude on the part of the establishment, be it political, social, religious, racial, or intellectual, that whoever deviates from the set line must be abandoned, shut out. It is in his examination of the relationship between the individual and society that Snow's novels find their fullest meaning.

Each man is at once a stranger and a brother; at different times he is more one than the other. Each man feels himself drawn by society; it claims him, tries to make him submit to its usages. But each man's desire to

maintain his integrity will cause him to build a wall between himself and such a society.

The tension that exists in the individual and therefore in any society composed of individuals could easily hamstring society by forcing it to either extreme or merely making it unable to act. Therefore individual and society must resolve the difficulty together. It is that resolution which we shall trace through the novels of C.P. Snow, as stranger becomes brother, as individual and society are reconciled.

In his condemnation of Snow as a critic of contemporary society, F.R. Leavis takes particular notice of Sir Charles's insistence on the need of a social solution to the problem of the tragic isolation of the individual.[6] But to ask, as Leavis does, "What _is_ the 'social condition' that has nothing to do with the 'individual condition'?.... where, if not in individuals is what is hoped for -- a non-tragic condition, one supposes -- to be located?"[7] and to imply that Snow has abandoned the individual, is misleading. Snow does not urge a complete renunciation of individuality.

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[6]"The Significance of C.P. Snow," _The Spectator_, March 9, 1960, p. 300.

[7]_Ibid_.

Men must face the most vital moments of life alone. So Lewis Eliot faces his threatened death from anemia alone. Sheila faces her hopelessness alone -- Lewis cannot comfort her. Nor can he comfort Roy Calvert in his despair. The Master faces death alone.

Man must reach out to his fellows. By doing so he will relieve (but not erase) his loneliness and theirs. The portion of Snow's writing to which Leavis especially objects is this:

> But nearly all [scientists] ...would see no reason why, just because the individual condition is tragic, so must the social condition be. Each of us solitary: each of us dies alone: all right, that's a fate against which we can't struggle -- but there is plenty in our condition which is not fate, and against which we are less than human unless we do struggle.
>
> (TC, 6)

Snow's description of the thoughts of Martin Eliot, one of the characters in The New Men, parallels this:

> For to Martin it was jet-clear that, despite its emollients and its joys, individual life was tragic: a man was ineluctably alone, and it was a short way to the grave. But, believing that with stoical acceptance, Martin saw no reason why social life should also be tragic: social life lay within one's power, as human loneliness and death did not, and it was the most contemptible of the false-profound to confuse the two.
>
> (NM, 301)

In no sense is this an attempt to "put aside our individual living and live instead on 'social

hope.'"[8] What Snow urges is not a denial of individuality, but a fulfillment of it. Here is no vague sense of sentimental brotherhood; man must maintain his individual integrity and at the same time reach out of his solitude to help his fellows. As he does so, he is closer to community. Leavis's criticism in this respect is far too sweeping.

III

As he defines the crisis facing modern society, Snow does so out of a varied and extensive experience and a background much like that of his central character, Lewis Eliot.[9] Born in the Midland town of Leicester in 1905, Snow reached manhood in the twenties, amidst the current efforts to rebuild a nation after World War I, amidst the rebellion of the young people of the day who protested against what they considered to be the hopeless efforts of their elders.

Educated in Leicester at Alderman Newton's Grammar School and Leicester University College--an institution classified by Henry Curtis Webster as definitely "not then recognized as a part of the higher education hierarchy"[10]--Snow won third class honours in Chemistry, received the

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[8] Ibid., pp. 300, 302.

[9] In this outline of Snow's life, I am grateful to William Cooper's C.P. Snow (No. 115 of the Writers and Their Work series, General Editor: Bonamy Dobree. London: Longmans, Green and Company, 1959), pp. 7-11.

[10] "The Sacrifices of Success", Saturday Review, XLI (July 12, 1958), p. 8.

Master of Science degree in physics in 1928,[11] and was awarded a scholarship to Cambridge as a research student in molecular structure. In 1930 he received his Doctor of Philosophy degree and was elected Fellow of Christ's College. His research papers were published by the Royal Society in 1928-1929, 1930-1932 and 1935.

As he continued his research, Snow began to write novels. Death Under Sail, an intriguing detective story, was published in 1932. New Lives For Old, a science-fiction story which described how thirty years could be added to a person's life, appeared in 1933.[12] In this same year, Snow had a portion of his research go wrong,[13] and as a result he gave up his scientific career and turned instead to writing, while supporting himself by teaching. The Search was a result of this experience. Published in 1934, it received favourable critical judgments at the time and

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[11] The B. Sc. degree was conferred by the University of London in 1927.

[12] Death Under Sail is not relevant to this thesis. New Lives For Old has not been available.

[13] Approximately the same thing happens to Arthur Miles, hero of The Search.

again in 1958 when it was revised and reissued. Encouraged by the success of the novel, Snow pursued a double career from then on. Continuing to teach science at the university, he became tutor of his college in 1934.

On January 1, 1935, he came upon the idea of writing a series of novels to be known as the "Strangers and Brothers" or "Lewis Eliot" series. Eight novels in this group have appeared to date. By 1939 Snow had decided on the general outline for the series. The first volume, entitled Strangers and Brothers, was published in 1940.

During World War II Snow served as Director of Technical Personnel for the Ministry of Labour, charged with choosing scientists to work on wartime experiments. Thus he has obtained intimate and intricate knowledge of a third area of life. For his wartime service he was made a Commander of the Order of the British Empire in 1943. After the war he became a Civil Service Commissioner and also a member of the Board of Directors of the English Electric Company, thus adding the world of finance to the list of areas of life with which he is familiar. He was knighted in 1957 and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Literature. He holds honorary degrees from the University of Leicester, the University of Liverpool, and Dartmouth College, New Hampshire. In July 1960 he was made an Extra-

ordinary Fellow of Churchill College, Cambridge. During the same year he served as Regents' Professor of English in the University of California at Berkeley.

All the while he has continued to work on the "Strangers and Brothers" series, and since the war seven more volumes have appeared: The Light and the Dark, 1947; Time of Hope, 1949; The Masters, 1951; The New Men, 1954; Homecomings,[14] 1956; The Conscience of the Rich, 1958; The Affair, 1960. His play, View Over the Park, was produced in London in 1950. The Affair was adapted for the stage by Ronald Millar, and appeared first in the fall of 1961. He continues his involvement in the world of government as his Rede and Godkin lectures testify. He has also edited the Cambridge Library of Modern Science and was editor of Discovery from 1938 to 1940. In his literary endeavours he was for a time fiction reviewer for the Sunday Times of London and is now advisory editor to the "Writers and Critics" series. Throughout his life he has published numerous articles dealing with all of his fields of interest.

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[14]Entitled Homecoming in the American edition.

In 1950 Snow married Pamela Hansford Johnson, a novelist and critic who did one of the earliest critical studies of him. Together they edited the seventh in the series of Winter's Tales, stories from the U.S.S.R.[15]

Thus Sir Charles has moved with considerable success in the worlds of science, government, and literature. Out of them he has drawn material for Strangers and Brothers, a roman-fleuve of a projected ten or eleven volumes of which eight have now been published. It is with this series, as well as The Search that this thesis is concerned.

IV

In 1960 and 1961, Snow's importance as a novelist and as an analyst of society has increased. So has the number of critical reviews of his books.[16] The Two Cultures, The Affair, and Science and Government received many more reviews, both in literary and scholarly journals and in popular publications. One result has been the first publication in the United States of Strangers and Brothers (1960). There has also been an increasing number of

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[15] London: Macmillan and Company Ltd., 1961.

[16] The Masters (1951) was the first of Snow's novels to be widely received. With its publication he transferred The Search from V. Gollancz Ltd., and Strangers and Brothers, The Light and the Dark, and Time of Hope from Faber and Faber Ltd., to Macmillan and Company Ltd.

articles of criticism on Snow distinct from reviews.[17]

Jerome Thale emphasizes Snow's "all round competence" without "any outstanding single virtue," his "clarity," his "intelligence and sensibility."[18] He says that Snow avoids "tired melodramatic intensity on the one side and triviality on the other." He sees the facts of human existence but does not recoil from them "nor make an inverted romantic celebration of them."[19]

Possibly the most frequently voiced criticisms are of Snow's prose style. Bernard Bergonzi says it is one of his "least defensible literary characteristics...at worst so arid as to be almost unreadable...and at best efficacious but banal."[20] He also accuses Snow's characters of not really existing.[21] "Roy Calvert," he says, is "no more than a walking cliché from an old-fashioned novelette"

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[17]See bibliography.

[18]"C.P. Snow: The Art of Worldliness," Kenyon Review, XXII (Fall, 1960), 621.

[19]Ibid., 624.

[20]"The World of Lewis Eliot," The Twentieth Century, CLXVII (March, 1960), 214.

[21]Ibid., 217, 219.

described with "inept epithets," and in whom the reader can never really believe.[22] Bergonzi makes another common accusation -- that Snow often describes his characters as being brilliant or successful, but never demonstrates this in presenting them. Jago is a case in point.[23] "Eliot himself," says Bergonzi, never becomes more than "a fragmentary collection of attributes."[24]

Critics such as Peter Fison have come to Snow's defence.[25] He maintains that the "sparse prose has an organic function," that Snow "does not force his significances on us but lets them emerge naturally from the surrounding circumstances.... As in real life, climaxes occur almost unrecognized in the steady progression of existence...."[26] He defends Snow's portrayal of character by insisting that it is not Jago's character itself but the effects of it that concern Snow. Man is seen in "his political capacity, his power-relationship to other people."[27]

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[22] Ibid., 220, 221.

[23] Ibid., 221.

[24] Ibid., 224.

[25] Letter in reply to Bernard Bergonzi, "The World of Lewis Eliot," The Twentieth Century, CLXVII (June 1960), 568-571.

[26] Ibid., 568. This view is also held by Michael Millgate, review of The Affair, Commentary, XXX (July 1960), 76-79.

[27] Ibid., 571.

Snow's portrayal of women also draws complaints like that of John Metcalf,[28] who calls the picture of Irene Eliot "contrived and literary." John Berryman, on the other hand, while admitting that the portrayal of the women is not as good as that of men, praises the "learning and pain" that Snow has put into his portraits of them, and declares, "Nobody could mistake them for the sticks who impersonate woman's nature in most serious current fiction."[29] In The New Men, for example, Snow has been accused of having a style that is "flat and plain" and notable for its "prosiness," of producing comments that are "invariably sententious."[30] But another reviewer comments on "the unforced virtuosity of [Snow's] performance."[31] George Steiner has criticized Snow for his portrayal of life in bits and pieces, lacking "the quality of music...the vital fluid elements of experience that lie outside the grip of logical account and yet give our lives much of their

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[28]Review of "The New Men", The Spectator, May 14, 1954, p. 600.

[29]Review of "The New Men", The New York Times Book Review, January 9, 1955, pp. 4-5.

[30]Review of "The New Men, The Times Literary Supplement, May 7, 1954, p. 296.

[31]Giles Romilly, review of "The New Men", The New Statesman and Nation, XLVII (May 1, 1954), 573.

resonance and mystery!"[32] F.R. Leavis attacks Snow in his role as interpreter of contemporary culture, and in the process reiterates the usual literary criticisms.[33] Snow, he says, can do no more than announce action, character, or dialogue; he cannot portray them convincingly. Much of what Leavis says in this regard is biting but apt. There are characters in Snow's novels who do not come alive. Among the secondary characters, the Boscastles never realize their potential. Of the major characters, George Passant and Roy Calvert lack vitality: we are told about their different dilemmas, but the realization of them is not complete. But to declare that, as a result, Snow is unable to depict character is too sweeping a generalization. Who can forget the tortured Sheila Knight, the vibrant Leonard March, the incredible M.H.L. Gay, the politically dexterous Arthur Brown, the impressively inquisitive Mrs. Beauchamp, or the passionate Mary Pearson? Or scenes such as the joyous moments of scientific discovery in The Search, family conflict in The Conscience of the Rich, the workings of college power in The Masters, or political and scientific

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[32] "The Master Builder," The Reporter, XXII (June 9, 1960), 43.

[33] Op. cit., 299.

power in The New Men and Homecomings? Snow's moments of weakness do not negate his steady successes.

Snow has been acclaimed as a great living contemporary novelist and as a terrible one; as a superb craftsman and as an inept one; as a shrewd portrayer of character and as an ineffective one. But it is generally accepted that he has much to say about the condition of society and the steps that it must take to rid itself of its weaknesses. He provides insights into the motives of men, their need to be brothers and to achieve community, and the barriers that make this achievement difficult.

Because his analysis of society figures so largely in his novels, they have a value apart from the quality of their art, the power of their story, or the portraits of their characters. They contribute something larger: his theme of man as stranger and brother and of the place of the individual in society.

V

Lewis Eliot appears in each of the "Strangers and Brothers" series of novels. His role has two aspects. In most of the novels he is a participating narrator, moving among the characters he describes, reporting their actions and examining their motives. But in these novels the story is always about someone else. So Strangers and Brothers tells the story of George Passant, a liberal

whose radical and unwise actions bring about his trial on criminal charges and cause the dissolution of a group of which he is the centre.

The Conscience of the Rich[34] is the story of the possessiveness of Leonard March, a wealthy and conservative Jew, towards his son Charles. In each of these, Lewis Eliot, a close friend of the major character, tells the story, adding oblique references to his own life, which, because of their obscurity, arouse the reader's interest in Lewis himself. In Time of Hope Snow tells that part of Lewis's story which covers the time of the other two novels. Now, the allusions made by Lewis in the other novels are filled out, while further allusions are made to events described in other novels. Sometimes the summary of an event is given in another novel. So Roy Calvert's infatuation with Jack Cotery, which starts the action that is the centre of Strangers and Brothers (Chapter I), is mentioned in Time of Hope (159-160).

In the next group of novels, The Light and the Dark is the story of a Cambridge scholar, Roy Calvert, whose

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[34]The novels are considered here in the order in which it is suggested that they be read: Strangers and Brothers (1925-1933); The Conscience of the Rich (1927-1936); Time of Hope (1914-1933); The Light and the Dark (1935-1943); The Masters (1937); The New Men (1939-1946); Homecomings (1938-1948); The Affair (1953-1954).

brilliant future is destroyed by an inability to control his frequent periods of depression. The Masters depicts the election of the head of a college.[35] The New Men deals with the professional activities and moral conscience-searchings of atomic scientists in World War II. In these, Lewis Eliot is participant and narrator; the problems and activities of others are the major subject. In Homecomings, however, he tells of his career and of his two marriages. The latest of the novels, The Affair, is the story of a college investigation into alleged scientific fraud with overtones of concern for human justice. It is the beginning of yet another group.

Lewis Eliot's life resembles Snow's in many respects. Like Snow, he was born in a Midland town: like Snow, his parents are of the lower middle class: his father too works in a boot factory.[36] After attending the town grammar school, Lewis works for a time in the local education office while studying law in the evenings. Then he studies full time for the Bar, under the guidance of George Passant.

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[35]The same election also forms part of The Light and the Dark.

[36]The picture Sir Charles gives of his own mother in "A Quarter-Century: Its Great Delusions," Look, XXV December 19, 1961), 120, is very like Lewis Eliot's, as seen in Time of Hope.

In London he continues his studies under Herbert Getliffe, and soon he builds up his own practice, in spite of threatened anemia, which he escapes. In the meantime he marries Sheila Knight, whose mental instability demands so much of his attention that his career never achieves the promise it had shown. Recognizing the little chance he has of succeeding, Lewis becomes a Fellow of a Cambridge college, teaching law there and maintaining a practice in London, chiefly as legal consultant to Paul Lufkin, a London financier.

When World War II breaks out, Lewis becomes assistant to Thomas Bevill, the minister in charge of obtaining scientific personnel for work on the atomic bomb. Sheila commits suicide during the war; by 1948 Lewis has married Margaret Davidson, and has a son Charles. By 1953 he has resigned his fellowship and has returned to his law practice. Thus, like Snow, he moves in various areas of society, in different realms of knowledge and endeavour. His range of acquaintances is wide and his area of observation is broad. Lewis Eliot is not an omniscient narrator. There are situations where he is not present, but where conversations are reported to him (CR, 159). He has his own prejudices,[37]

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[37]He finds himself hating Roy Calvert's cleric friend, Ralph Udal, almost automatically (LD, 81).

his own private difficulties,[38] his own weaknesses.[39] There is never the sense of an all-wise person, but rather a human being, learning from what he observes and experiences.

It is Lewis Eliot's particular role to become a brother rather than a stranger. Through his observations we see the same process taking place in other characters; he becomes a focus through which the reader may follow man's progress from solitariness to community and from an emphasis on the individual as the centre of existence to a realization of the need to maintain a meaningful society. As Jerome Thale says, "as spectator and participant, he is all of us."[40]

Because he observes and knows the other characters, Lewis Eliot can interpret them for the reader. He can relate what is happening to the individual with the times in which the action takes place.[41] But besides telling

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[38]His early life and his struggles for a career.

[39]His infatuation with Sheila.

[40]Op. cit., 631.

[41]So the rebels of Strangers and Brothers are seen against the background of the 1920's; the March family are seen in the context of the gradually disintegrating Anglo-Jewish society of London; and the soul-searchings of the scientists of The New Men are observed as a part of the fast approaching atomic age.

and interpreting what is going on, Lewis is interesting for himself. In the novels where he is telling principally about others, Lewis lets the details of his own life go by, but we see the effect on him of the changes he observes. No man can be left unaffected by personal crises in the lives of others. By his very reactions to people, whether they be of almost immediate sympathy, as for Roy Calvert (LD), and Leonard March (CR), or of immediate dislike with Donald Howard (A), or of a first mistrust changing to friendliness, as with Sir Hector Rose (NM, H), something of Lewis's character is revealed. These revelations are then consciously examined by Eliot in the books which deal with his own life. With these two points of view, Snow offers in his novels both a chronicle of an era and the life of one man--a man very much of his time--a man engaging in that experience which all men must share, either to accept or to reject: the growth and development of strangers as they become brothers. We shall see Lewis take the necessary steps to move from stranger to brother. We shall see him establish relationships with other individuals: his parents, the family in the widest sense, and the group (friends, town, and college). We shall see him as he enters the world of science and government and as he learns the need for national loyalty as well as inter-

CHAPTER I

INDIVIDUAL RELATIONSHIPS: THE BASIS OF COMMUNITY

The most evident point of departure for a study of the individual and society is the relationships that one individual can achieve with another. Before the ideal state Snow envisages can be reached--that state wherein a host of solitary, tragic individuals work together to fashion from their isolation a society of common effort, a community of fellowship--one must learn to establish some sort of rapprochement with his neighbour. This beginning--and it is only a beginning--must be achieved to provide a basis for the wider fellowship. To arrive at the society which Snow envisages something more must be achieved: some manner of feeling, devotion and love must be established between individuals.

In Lewis Eliot's lifelong progress from totally selfish isolation to a self-forgetful, outward-looking awareness of a wider fellowship, the first steps involve individuals, and in particular members of one's family and one's friends.

I

The relationships Lewis has with his father and mother are indicative, on the whole, of those he develops

with other individuals during the course of his life as described in the eight novels of the "Strangers and Brothers" series.

The fullest picture of Lewis's home and parents is given in Time of Hope, which deals with the period from 1914 to 1933. This is the only detailed account Snow provides, for the references in all the other novels are brief, of little help in understanding the character of Lewis Eliot, and frequently so shadowy that the reader is only perplexed by them.

Lewis's father, Albert Eliot,[1] is of the lower middle class, content in his position as a "kind of utility man and second-in-command" in a boot factory (TH, 21). When he sees the owner's wealth he thinks vaguely that he would like to acquire his own business. His wife, Lena, is from a family somewhat higher in the social scale, her forebears having been "game keepers and superior servants" on large estates (TH, 42), while her husband's have been artisans (TH, 41). Mrs. Eliot is proud and ambitious and so prods her submissive and almost unworldly husband into buying a boot factory of his own.

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[1]All he is ever called in the novel is "Bertie."

Because of his total lack of concern for his business and his inability to manage it, Mr. Eliot goes bankrupt.

Throughout the disgrace of her husband's financial failure, Mrs. Eliot's pride and ambition enable her to maintain a nobility and dignity which win her the grudging recognition of her friends. After the disaster, sunk into a "helpless, petrified, silent gloom" (TH, 32), Mrs. Eliot is unable for some days to confront her neighbours, but soon recovers and goes to church, accompanied by Lewis. There she takes a prominent seat, gives her offering in an obvious manner, and talks to her friends as if nothing had happened.

Mrs. Eliot's life has been for her a disappointment. She finds that she does not love her husband; indeed she feels at times that she hates him. She tells Lewis she has married the wrong man and has lost hope thereby of fulfilling her youthful dreams. In her youth she had expected "a husband who would give her love and luxury and state" (TH, 41). Now, "beaten down by misfortune" as Lewis describes her, she is left with only her "romantic, surging, passionate imagination" (TH, 41) and her great pride.

Because she cannot realize her dreams and ambitions for herself, Mrs. Eliot sees her two children, and Lewis

in particular, as the means of obtaining the social satisfaction otherwise unavailable to her. She feels that Lewis is like herself and will not be content until he has achieved wealth and fame. And in this hoped-for achievement she bases all her hopes and dreams. She sees Lewis's success not in terms of him alone, but in terms of the fulfillment of her own ambitions. In that she wants the best for Lewis, her concern is love, but it is also pride, in that she wants to find in his success her own happiness.

Lewis looks upon this concern of his mother's not as pure love, but as the desire to dominate. In response to it he experiences what he calls elsewhere the "claustrophobia of being loved" (LD, 192). Because he sees his mother's love as intruding on his privacy, Lewis is unable to respond to it. Although he can agree with Mrs. Eliot's ambitions for him, although he can be happy with her, although he can give himself to the friendliness of others, there is a barrier between his mother's love and his acceptance of it. Lewis describes their relations:

> I could make the response [of giving himself] that others wished for, except to my mother. I was less spontaneous with her than with anyone else.... It was long before I tried to understand it. She needed me more than any of the others needed me. She needed me with all the power of her nature --....

> She needed me as an adult man, her son, her like, her equal. She made her demands: without knowing it, I resisted.
>
> (TH, 45)

When Lewis starts school, his mother, anxious that he should take his place as an equal with the other boys, gives him a ten-shilling note for his war contribution. When he offers the note to his teacher, a Mr. Peck, the response is not the respect and admiration Mrs. Eliot envisaged, but rather Mr. Peck's scathing declaration: "I wonder you don't feel obliged to put it by towards your father's debts" (TH, 53).

When his mother insists on being told what has happened, Lewis first puts her off and then makes up a lie which does not reveal any of what has happened, but which, even though it is a story that would be pleasing to her, Mrs. Eliot will not accept. Lewis realizes his lie hurts his mother worse than the truth would have done:

> I thought that I was romancing simply to save her from a bitter degradation. Yet I should have brought her more love if I had told her the truth. It would have been more loving to let her take an equal share in that day's suffering. That lie showed the flaw between us.
>
> (TH, 56)

At school, Lewis is successful, giving his mother, for the first time, some tangible rewards for her concern

as he wins the Senior Oxford examination. Even so, he still keeps himself apart, managing to keep "buried deep" (TH, 58) the claims his mother makes. After completing school, he takes the job most available -- the position of clerk in the local education office, beginning at the same time to study law at evening classes. Thus he is still unable to give his mother any indication that he is going to fulfill her hopes. He cannot let her into his private existence, not even to the point of telling her that he is not unambitious, that his position as a clerk is a stepping-stone to something greater. And so, when Mrs. Eliot dies, it is without receiving a really convincing sign of the love and gratitude Lewis feels deep within him. He describes his feeling as his mother's death nears:

> I tried to console her. I told her that, whatever I did, I should carry my childhood with me; always I should hear her speaking.... Yet afterwards I never believed that I brought her comfort.... She knew as well as I, that if one's heart is invaded by another, one will either assist the invasion or repel it....
>
> (TH, 85)

Lewis chooses to repel it, making his understanding of how a stranger becomes a brother more difficult to achieve.

II

Because of his inability to give of himself, Lewis is unable to achieve a relationship satisfying either to him or his mother. But with his father, Lewis manages something more satisfying. This he can do because Mr. Eliot requires less of Lewis than his wife does.

As we have seen, Mr. Eliot is a detached person, going at his own speed, and usually untouched by the cares and activities of those around him. Everything about him seems to emphasize his meekness and inassertiveness (TH, 18). He is happy, willing to submit to his wife's demands, ready to adapt himself to whatever comes along.

He does not have the driven feeling that possesses Mrs. Eliot, because his daydreams are more realistic than hers. At his first cricket match, Mr. Eliot suddenly imagines himself a great player, but, as Lewis points out:

> It would not have done for the dream to be absolutely fantastic. It had to take him as he was, forty-five years old and five feet four in height. He would not imagine himself taken back to youth and transformed unto a man strong, tall and glorious. No, he accepted himself in the flesh.
>
> (TH, 24).

Mr. Eliot is a realist; he does not let himself be carried away either by his memories of the past or by his dreams of the future. He does not feel the urgency of succeeding through Lewis and so does not require much of his son. Lewis is aware of this and grateful for it:

> She [his mother] meant far more to me than my father; yet with him I never felt a minute's awkwardness. He was amiable, absorbed in his own daydreams; he was dependent on me, even as a child, for a kind of comic reassurance, and otherwise made no claims. He did not invade my feelings....
>
> (TH, 45)

It is with his father that Lewis achieves a rapport which is actually a policy of mutual non-interference. Neither enters deeply into the thinking or the actions of the other. Each maintains his privacy; each keeps his secret places inviolate.

III

The relationships of Lewis and his parents set the pattern for his relationships with other individuals. Where women and love are concerned, Lewis is not adept. The demands his mother makes upon him unfit him for the self-giving necessary in marriage. Lewis's relationships with men, however, follow the pattern of his relationship with his father. It is only when nothing vital is

required of him that Lewis is able to forget himself and form deep bonds with other people. His two marriages offer a picture of his growth from stranger to brother; in them he takes his first real steps, is discouraged, retreats into himself, and then finally sees what is required of him.

In his first marriage Lewis is handicapped, not only by his experience of a possessive mother's love, but by the emotionally disturbed nature of his wife, Sheila Knight. This first marriage is traced primarily in Time of Hope, which follows it until 1933, and in Homecomings, which completes the story. Sheila is referred to in Strangers and Brothers, The Conscience of the Rich, The Light and the Dark, The Masters, and The New Men, but there she remains a shadowy background figure.

The daughter of a country vicar, Sheila is extremely beautiful, and in spite of his wariness of love, Lewis allows himself to develop an infatuation with her that he terms "delectable beyond my expectation" (TH, 149). He soon becomes aware, however, that Sheila is not the ideal being that he has pictured. When he receives from his Aunt Za a loan that will enable him to study full-time for the Bar examinations, Lewis comes to Sheila bursting with happiness and expecting her to rejoice with him.

But he is disappointed, for her responses to his eagerness are abrupt and never touch the basis of his elation -- the opportunity to succeed (TH, 59). To make it harder to take, Sheila immediately becomes absorbed in Lewis's story of the difficulties of two of his friends, whom she has never met. This is the first indication of something that Lewis has been unaware of -- Sheila's inability to become really interested in him, or to love him.

Soon she gives further evidence of this. After inviting him to go to a Christmas party with her and sending him on ahead, Sheila arrives with another man. Just as Lewis begins to leave his isolation, to be sufficiently devoted to someone that he can achieve a degree of self-forgetfulness, he is mistreated by Sheila. In his humiliation, he becomes suspicious, ready to withdraw his love. "Seared," as he says, by his humiliation, his pride wounded, Lewis determines never to see Sheila again, "to act as though she had never been" (TH, 191). His treatment at Sheila's hands, combined with the memories of his mother's demanding love, threatens to turn him from his progress to brotherhood and to force him back into his isolation.

Sheila returns to him, but her thoughtlessness increases, as well as her uncertainty as to her own feelings. Time and again she rejects Lewis; time and again Lewis resolves to be done with her. At one point, Sheila finds a man, Hugh Smith, whom she feels she can love. Lewis chases him off. Finally, in her despair, she consents to marry Lewis. As she does so, she insists that she still cannot love him, that she will not be a satisfactory wife, that the marriage will not satisfy either of them. Her reason for giving in is simple: "I'm not strong enough to go on alone" (TH, 371). In spite of what he knows about her nature, Lewis marries her. In doing so, as Mr. Jerome Thale has pointed out,[2] Lewis keeps himself independent from another's demanding, possessive love, since Sheila is unable to love him.

After the marriage, relations between them deteriorate further, as Sheila tries frantically to find love: she consults psychiatrists, and throws herself at down-and-out people. As she becomes increasingly schizoid, Lewis has to care for her so much that his career begins to suffer. Finally, unable to endure the tortures she feels

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[2]"C.P. Snow: The Art of Worldliness," Kenyon Review, XXII (Fall, 1960), 630.

she is suffering, Sheila commits suicide. At first Lewis feels a welcome relief, but he soon begins to experience a "private misery" (LD, 304) when he examines his part in the failure of the marriage.

Lewis's love for Sheila consists of three elements. His desire to have her as a wife is pure selfishness and much like his mother's wish to see her son successful, in that having Sheila is a measure of his achievement. He also wants her physically; he is consumed by sexual desire for her, a desire which Sheila repulses until their marriage. Coming upon Lewis suddenly and expressed chiefly by the shaking of his hands (TH, 241), this desire seems little more than animal. Even after their marriage, mutual sexual love does not develop. Most often it is a question of Lewis's sudden urges and Sheila's unresponsive submission. There is no searching for knowledge of the other, no tenderness -- only a carnal, mechanistic relation (H, 55). Snow's language and style here is cold and clinical, matching the emptiness of the emotion.

But Lewis's love for Sheila has a third quality, purer and more selfless. He does sacrifice himself for her. He could abandon her many times -- indeed he tries it once, but soon regrets his harshness and, seeing his

wife's helplessness, goes back to her (TH, 414-416). Though his persistence is explained partly by his infatuation and his fierce desire to possess her, this element of self-giving indicates that he is nearer to being a "brother" than when he first knew her. But having such an unfortunate partner serves, in the long run, to hold Lewis back from brotherhood. This is seen in his second marriage.

IV

Two years after Sheila's death, Lewis meets Margaret Davidson, with whom he soon falls in love. Quite unlike Sheila, Margaret is an extraverted, self-giving person, a "bookish blithe spirit," as one review of Homecomings has it.[3] The relationship between Lewis and Margaret is followed principally in Homecomings, but she figures in The Affair and is mentioned, though not by name, in The Light and the Dark.

Although she loves him, Margaret is wary of Lewis. The first time they talk of their love, she shows immediate insight into the nature of his first marriage. Talking of it, she says, "It wasn't a relationship. You were standing outside all the time" (H, 110). Her fears about

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[3]Time, LXVIII (October 8, 1956), 112.

Lewis turn out to be true, for he is unable to leave his former ways. Having had to deal with Sheila's schizoid nature for so long has left him even less capable of committing himself to love than he had been in his youth. His desire to keep himself a stranger has been reinforced by Sheila's nature. But Sheila is replaced by someone who is eager to give herself and who demands that he give himself in return.

Lewis does not reveal to anyone that Sheila's death was self-inflicted. Only the housekeeper, the doctor, and Sheila's parents know the truth. Not even Margaret has been told. When she finds out, her doubts about Lewis's nature are justified.

Gilbert Cooke, a friend of Lewis's, with an obsessive curiosity, makes investigations into Sheila's death, finds out the truth, and tells his story to others. Margaret learns it from her sister Helen and, confronting Lewis, tells him of the impossibility of their relationship:

> "What kind of life are we supposed to be living? Do you think that I couldn't accept anything that has happened to you? What I can't bear is that you should try to censor something important. I can't stand it if you insist on living as though you were alone."
>
> (H, 160)

She also berates his attitudes towards his friends:

> "All Gilbert has done is just to treat you as he treats everyone else. Of course he's inquisitive. It's all right when he's being inquisitive about anyone else, but when he touches you -- you can't bear it. You want to be private, you don't want to give and take like an ordinary man". She went on: "That's what has maddened you about Gilbert. You issue bulletins about yourself...."
>
> (H, 163)

This then is Lewis's attitude towards loved ones and friends. It is essentially the same as that towards his mother. In the face of this attitude, his relationship with Margaret deteriorates; they cannot even talk their problems out. They cannot break through the wall of misunderstanding and self-sufficiency between them (H, 173). Despite her love for Lewis, Margaret sees the hopelessness of the situation, breaks off the relationship, and soon marries a doctor, Geoffrey Hollis.

It is only when he thinks over his affair with Margaret that Lewis comes to a clearer understanding of where their mistakes lay and where he especially was at fault. It seems for a time that he will keep away from Margaret, but just as he could not help but return to Sheila, he is now drawn back to Margaret.

There is a difference: Lewis's realization of his fault brings an awareness of what is required of the in-

dividual. Society must be based on self-giving, on the sharing of secrets and worries, on involvement. He sees that he is content to be a "spectator," remaining on the outside of life, desiring to retain himself completely (H, 229). Elsewhere, Lewis condemns persons with such an attitude as "dead inside" (A, 112).

With this revelation there comes to Lewis an increased need of Margaret, so he meets her again, persuades her to divorce her husband, and soon marries her. But there is still a block to complete "brotherhood": Lewis is little concerned for Dr. Hollis, whose son Maurice Margaret brings with her. Even as he proceeds towards "brotherhood," Lewis is hampered by his selfishness.

Lewis and Margaret start a new life and soon have a son of their own. Lewis learns slowly how to absorb himself in others, in Margaret and the two boys. But when his own son, Charles, becomes ill with meningitis, Lewis reverts to his former self. He seeks to keep his anxiety to himself, to let no one intrude on his private sufferings. He rejects Margaret's attempts to comfort him, retreating, as he says, to the time "when I wanted to keep my inner self inviolate" (H, 390). Facing the possibility of Charles' death, Lewis wants to assure his

ability to "lose [himself] in sadness, have no one near [him]" (H, 391). The steps Lewis has taken towards emotional maturity seem for a moment to have been lost. But Margaret is finally able to make him understand the essence of community, for in spite of her own desire to be with her son, she tells him to go to the hospital alone. Lewis finally sees someone else's self-giving. He sees Margaret's self-denying love contrasted with his selfishness. He changes his mind and says simply, "Come with me" (H, 392).

With these words, Lewis moves beyond the narrow world in which he has existed. The child recovers and there takes place in Lewis a healing of the scars left by his past experience. He has been drawn out of himself by Margaret's love and devotion. Before he has kept himself separate. Now he has the hope of a fuller existence. The stranger has reached the first major stage in his progress towards becoming a brother.

Reflecting Lewis's progress is the difference in the descriptions Snow gives of Lewis's sexual relationships. The stilted, clinical descriptions of Lewis's animal desire for Sheila are replaced by descriptions of his feelings after a night of love. The previous note of hopelessness is replaced by one of fulfillment and contentment (H, Chapter XXII).

V

The tracing of Lewis's relationships with his parents and with his two wives has taken us through two decades and more. And while it is 1948 by the time Lewis has reached the doorway to full brotherhood, he has had other experiences which have helped point him in the right direction.

When Margaret berates Lewis for keeping secret the vital aspects of his life, she says in her anger, but with truth: "'With those who don't want much of you, you're unselfish.... With anyone who wants you altogether, you're cruel.... With most people you're good...but in the end you'll break the heart of anyone who loves you'" (H, 163). We have seen the truth of the latter part of this statement; but the truth of the first part can be seen in the relationship of Lewis Eliot with two men: Roy Calvert and Charles March. Neither wants to "possess" Eliot in the way that a parent or a lover would. Because nothing is demanded of him, Lewis achieves with each of these men a great degree of self-forgetfulness and brotherhood.

In the world of male relationships, Lewis encounters two men who are in different degrees strangers, but who, because of their particular situation, need a brother. The first of these is Roy Calvert. The Light and the Dark tells his story, but he appears in Strangers and Brothers

and The Masters and is alluded to in Time of Hope, Homecomings, The New Men and The Affair. He is a brilliant student, attractive to women and appealing to men, but "Byronically doomed to sexual and academic successes modified by a melancholia"[4] so dark that he often despairs of life itself. Roy plunges himself into his work, but he cannot avoid his despair, for, as Lewis points out;

> right from the beginning, there were times when his work seemed nothing but a drug. He had thrown himself into it, in revulsion from his first knowledge of despair. Despair: the black night of melancholy: he had already felt the weight of inexplicable misery, the burden of self. I thought that too often his work was a charm against the dark.
>
> (LD, 48)

Roy tries various devices to counteract or at least hide his melancholy. At times he is really gay and self-forgetful, rising to heights of exuberance, as during his holiday at Monte Carlo (LD, Chapters 11-13); at others, he is crushed by melancholy but forces himself to assume an air of gaiety in order to make life easier for others. So he comforts the Master's wife and daughter after Vernon Royce's death (LD, Chapters 16 and 17).

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[4]Hortense Calisher, "Can There be an American C.P. Snow?" The Reporter, XV (November 1, 1956), 42.

Again, Roy's gaiety becomes an expression of his despair; he often seems to be enjoying himself greatly, but Lewis always looks for the sign of danger, the "particular glitter of which I was afraid," as he describes it, "the flash in which his gaiety turned sinister and frantic" (LD, 156).

Another aspect of Roy's search for a way out of his despair is his pursuit of women. Once again, it is impossible to satisfy him. He first takes up with Rosalind Wykes, a girl from his home town, for whom, as Lewis says, "love was an engrossing occupation" (LD, 139). Her delight in sensuality cannot satisfy Roy, so he turns to Joan Royce, the daughter of the Master of the college. Unsure of herself in physical love, she is enraptured by Roy. Although she gives herself to him, she cannot please him. Eventually, in what seems to be a last desperate effort to shut out his despair, Roy marries Rosalind.

All this time he is engaged in a flirtation with Nazism, but this cannot satisfy him either. He also searches for religious faith, for God. He wants to "surrender his will, to be annihilated as a person.... to lose himself eternally in God's being" (LD, 191). This he is unable to do. There is no way for him to avoid despair, no way to bring meaning to his life.

With him during his tribulation is Lewis Eliot, who is "wrung by pain and by acute fear" when he sees Roy's suffering (LD, 163). Indeed, Lewis is so drawn into Roy's sufferings that his mind is taken from himself. For the first time Lewis really forgets himself and is drawn into someone else's dilemma.[5] Roy does not force himself upon Lewis; he makes no demands of him. Rather, Lewis is moved by Roy's suffering.

When war comes, Roy takes a job in the civil service. Not content with this, and still weighed down by his despair, he soon joins the Royal Air Force and becomes a pilot. He does this as a result of Lewis's once having innocently told him that the pilot is the military person most likely to be killed. It is at this time that Roy marries Rosalind. His sexual wanderings stop, Rosalind contents him, and soon a daughter, Muriel, is born to them. Roy cannot escape his melancholy and thinks of death. Rosalind tells of it:

> "Anyway he said that he'd been miserable for years. It was worse than being mad, he said. He hoped he'd get out of it. He'd struggled like a rat in a trap. But he couldn't escape. So he couldn't see any point in things. He might as well be eliminated. That was why he chose to fly."
>
> (LD, 351)

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[5]This takes place (1935-1943) before Lewis's revelation of the essence of brotherhood described in Section IV of this chapter.

As he loses himself in his wife and child, and in his flying, Roy's despair seems to lift. But even as his hope is increasing, he is killed on a bombing mission.

Despite Roy's virtual suicide, Lewis Eliot's concern for him has had two vital effects. The first is the effect on Roy. He is very much a stranger, alone, unable to come to terms with his society. Lewis, also a stranger, also isolated, but whose nature is not as dark as Roy's, reaches out of his loneliness to help a fellow man.

Lewis's whole concern is for Roy: he is prepared to sit up with him all night to help him through the worst of his black melancholy. He worries endlessly over Roy's mad pursuit of extreme ways of alleviating his despair. He protects Roy when his escapades could cost the young scholar his position in the college -- the one community to which he really belongs (LD, Chapter 18). Lewis talks to Roy out of his own experience and offers him all the hope he can. He provides Roy with a friend and a friend's comfort; he is Roy's only beacon of light in a dark world. That alone justifies Lewis's self-giving, in spite of Roy's death.

But there is also the effect on Lewis. For the first time in his life he is really taken outside of himself. He learns the trouble of another -- a trouble deeper

than his own. He learns that by giving himself he can help a fellow stranger and make himself a fuller being. He resolves to become more like Roy:

> I had watched the absolute self-forgetfulness with which he spent himself on another [in caring for the Master's widow] , the self-forgetfulness he had so often given to me. I was not capable of his acts of selflessness, I was not made like him. But I could try to imitate him in practice.
>
> (LD, 178)

In seeing Roy's concern for others and in finding in Roy's predicament an object for his own concern, Lewis takes an important step on the road to community. Two strangers become brothers; such is the basis of society.

VI

C.P. Snow describes another male friendship important in the development of Lewis Eliot from stranger to brother: that with Charles March.[6] The full course of this friendship is seen in The Conscience of the Rich, and Charles appears very briefly in Time of Hope and Homecomings, and is alluded to in The Light and the Dark, The Masters, and The New Men.

When he first appears Charles is beginning a

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[6]Whose story will be examined from another aspect and at greater length in Chapter II.

promising career at the Bar. He comes from a well-to-do family, and with the connections provided by his family and his wealth, Charles's brilliant start seems certain.

Lewis Eliot, with whom he becomes acquainted during their Bar examinations in London, shares in much of Charles's subsequent experience. Charles decides that, instead of using the advantages handed him so readily, he must make his own way. He tells Lewis of his reasons:

> "The Bar represented part of an environment that I can't accept for myself. You see, I can't say it simply. If I stayed at the Bar, I should be admitting that I belonged to the world...of rich and influential Jews. That is the world in which most people want to keep me.... If I stayed at the Bar, I should get cases from Jewish solicitors, I should become one of the gang. And people outside would dismiss me, not that they need so much excuse, as another bright young Jew. Do you think it's tolerable to be set aside like that?"
>
> (CR, 40)

Charles feels he owes something to society. The rich, he thinks, must have a conscience, must do something more than build their lives on the base of wealth and position provided for them. So he decides to study medicine and to take up a practice in a poorer district of London. Instead of hiding within the well-off Jewish society into which he has been born, Charles wants to go beyond it, to enter into the larger brotherhood of man. Charles's father, Leonard March, objects to all this very

strongly. He thinks that his son is "crazy" to give up a safe, certain life to start out on such a hazardous course. He feels that Charles should pay greater attention to the wishes of his family.

In this friendship with Charles, Lewis both acts and is acted upon. He is a friend for Charles, someone to back him up in his arguments with the March family. As The Conscience of the Rich progresses, Lewis becomes the friend, too, of Charles's father and of his sister, Katherine, often serving as a go-between for the individuals involved in the dispute. When legal problems arise, he is there to advise. In all this, Lewis once more becomes so involved in others' difficulties that he forgets himself. Once more he learns to give himself for others, even though the emotional extent of this giving is not the same as it is where Roy Calvert is involved.

Once more, Lewis is acted upon and is given new insights. Because his parents were poor and because he has had to gain his place by ability and determined effort, it is revealing to him to see someone give up the things for which he is working. From his youth, Lewis has lived in a narrow world -- narrow not only in the sense of poverty and lack of opportunity, but narrow also in his outlook on the world. He has been so bent on making his

way that he has forgotten that his goals in life are not necessarily the best. The horizon of his outlook is expanded as he meets someone with a wider social outlook than his own.

In his friendships with Roy Calvert and Charles March, little is asked of Lewis. Neither man demands to be let into Lewis's privacy.[7] With each he gets along well; he is liked by each and fond of each. Whereas the pattern of Lewis's relationship with his wives is controlled by his childhood experience of his mother's possessive love, his relationships with Roy and Charles follow the pattern of that with Mr. Eliot. By the first relationship he is held back from succeeding in society; by the second he is helped to give himself to others. Only by giving can real relationships be maintained.

VII

There is a third type of relationship at which Lewis is successful: a business or casual affair, where even less self-giving is required. Lewis and the other person usually like each other and their friendship is enduring. But it never really goes beneath the surface.

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[7]Roy tries once to intrude into Lewis's privacy (LD, Chapter I); he is rejected and never tries as hard again.

While he is involved with the Marches, Lewis comes upon another friendship. Charles's sister meets and marries Francis Getliffe, with whom Lewis becomes friendly, partly because of Katherine and partly because of their similar attitude towards politics. In Time of Hope and The Masters, there are indications that it is Francis who helps Lewis obtain his Fellowship in the College. In The Masters the two men find themselves on opposite sides in the election of a new Master and become estranged for a time, but the friendship recovers and is followed further in The New Men and The Affair.[8] This friendship is slight, but when it is subjected to stress it endures. The majority of relationships between individuals are of this sort; by them a meaningful society is achieved.

Another example of this casual, rather uninvolved relationship is that of Lewis Eliot and Herbert Getliffe, Francis Getliffe's half brother, under whom Lewis studies for the Bar. Herbert Getliffe is a peculiar man, an unorthodox but successful lawyer. He becomes quite attached to Lewis during their acquaintance and their friendship continues after Lewis leaves the chambers. Getliffe is

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[8]This friendship will be examined more fully in Chapter III.

helpful to Lewis, defending his friends in Strangers and Brothers; but he is also a source of concern, as he is the cause of a crisis in The Conscience of the Rich.[9] Lewis has doubts about Getliffe's ability as a lawyer: his nervousness in the courtroom and his tendency to confuse names irritates Lewis. Getliffe is miserly, always managing to have his poorly-paid assistants pay for the meals to which he invites them. He also sets Lewis to writing appreciations of cases and then takes the credit for them.

Although Lewis has doubts about Getliffe, he does not retreat into himself as he does with Sheila and Margaret, but because the relationship is not deep and demanding, he keeps on with the friendship. The relationship is neither deep nor especially smooth; nothing is entirely without difficulties in the world of strangers and brothers; but it is valuable in Lewis's opening up of himself, in his achieving community.

VIII

Lewis establishes three kinds of relationships:

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[9]His role in that novel will be examined in greater detail in Chapter II.

the intimate, soul-rending, self-giving love of mother and son, husband and wife; the less demanding, but yet binding, friendship between individuals; the more distant, less binding, but valuable and rewarding acquaintance. Reacting to the first, Lewis turns in upon himself and retreats into a private world from which he shuts others out. Lewis's response to the second is almost unconscious, because it comes from within himself and is not demanded by another. Because it is more formal and less demanding, the third type of friendship is easier to engage in.

As he moves toward brotherhood, Lewis's sexual relationships become more self-giving, more spiritual. So his second marriage is more successful in this aspect, largely because he has learned more about being a brother. The same is true of Roy Calvert. In general, strangers -- such as George Passant and Jack Cotery -- indulge in promiscuity for the sensual pleasure they can find in it. Those who are more near to being brothers -- the Master and Paul Jago, for example, as seen in The Masters -- are better able to achieve a happy marriage. Some, like Eric and Mary Pearson, in The New Men, are so capable of giving themselves that they achieve a vibrant sexual relationship, one which can remain chaste even throughout their separation. The descriptions Snow gives of their love (NM, 63-64,

102) offer an evocation of passion and an ability of description that are in sharp contrast to the harshness of his earlier handlings of sexual love. Whether this is a matter of literary ability is not the chief question here, but perhaps it is significant that the cold, unsuccessful relationships are described in bare, clinical terms, while the meaningful, happy ones come more alive.

It is Lewis whose growth in awareness and understanding we have been studying, but others too are learning: Charles March is aware of a social concern; Roy Calvert needs human fellowship; Margaret Eliot realizes the need for husband and wife to give themselves entirely to the other; Sheila Eliot searches for love because she knows that without it the individual is hopeless; Albert Eliot knows the value of companionship, but realizes the need to keep himself intact; Lena Eliot finds satisfaction and her real being in a loved one's success. Each of these persons is, for a time, more stranger, but each gradually becomes a brother. By observing them and by entering into their experiences, Lewis moves also from stranger to brother.

But before he can entirely move out of the isolation of a stranger to the socially-conscious awareness of a brother, he must learn to react to others, not as he does

to his mother and Sheila, for such reaction only makes him more a stranger; nor as he does to the Getliffes, for that does not take him far enough towards brotherhood. His reaction to Roy Calvert and Charles March is of a less frequent kind, for such relationship and devotion does not happen often to one man. But such a relationship is nearer to what is necessary for community. Only when persons are concerned for each other and are not limited in their awareness of the possibility of achieving fellowship can any effective society be established.

Strangers are becoming brothers. The individual is learning to exist in society. Only as he learns to join with his fellows in forming social units and institutions can he take the first major step towards brotherhood.

CHAPTER II

THE INDIVIDUAL AND HIS FELLOWS: FIRST STEPS TOWARDS COMMUNITY

The next level of human relationships through which Lewis Eliot moves as he progresses from stranger to brother is one of groupings of individuals--relationships between the individual and his family, his friends, his acquaintances, the town, the college. It is when the individual is faced with the combined attitude of a group of other people that he is aware for the first time of the existence of a larger concern than that of one individual for another. Linked with this is the danger that the group may dominate the individual, but this is an inherent danger that must be faced up to and solved; it cannot simply be avoided. In the relationships considered in this chapter, Lewis plays a secondary role; in most cases he is the narrator. The stories are chiefly about others, as Lewis describes the working out of these relationships.

I

It is from his mother, naturally enough, that Lewis Eliot first learns of larger family relationships. Mrs. Eliot, coming from a family of eleven children, a family

of higher rank than her husband's, is aware of the family as a whole. She is concerned particularly with maintaining the family ties, with remembering the past, with rejoicing in her background. All this leads to a concern for the honour of the family.

Because her father married twice, with the resulting "two-family" home, Mrs. Eliot is worried that her part of the family wealth has been given to members of the other, younger, "family!" So she does her best to put the matter in order, partly to obtain money for Lewis's education from his Aunt Za, a member of the other family, and partly to show off the son of whom she is so proud. But she has another reason: her "deep instinctive loyalties" for her family demand that she restore the family's solidarity, that none of them "die unreconciled" (TH, 72). So Lewis visits the aunt, who in her will leaves him three hundred pounds.

Mrs. Eliot's attitude towards her family is not as compulsive as her regard for her son, yet it is strong enough to indicate the kind of possessiveness that could arise within a family which is closer-knit than Mrs. Eliot's, whose members are not separated by being the children of different mothers and by some of the children marrying into another class. Lewis's Aunt Za feels sufficiently bound by

family loyalty to leave him the money, but she does not feel able as a result to direct his life. The family as such does not require Lewis to surrender himself.[1] This is suitable to Lewis's nature. When he goes to London, however, he becomes involved with those who have to face a family relationship which threatens to prevent them from leading a useful, rewarding life.

II

The Conscience of the Rich is the story of the Marches, a wealthy Anglo-Jewish family in London. It is with Charles March that Lewis is first concerned, but he soon meets other members of the family and is gradually absorbed in the affairs of all the March uncles, aunts, and cousins.[2]

Particularly with [illegible] Leonard March, Charles's father, the possessiveness seen in the March family is like that of Mrs. Eliot for Lewis. There is the added dimension of the possessiveness of the family over one of

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[1]His father's sister, Milly Riddington, tries for a time to guide Lewis's life, but he holds her off.

[2]In the first chapter we were concerned with the relationship between Charles and Lewis; now it is Charles and his family that are of importance, as Lewis takes the role of narrator.

its members. Mr. March is the focus for this possessiveness, but the family appears in important roles.

Charles is acutely aware of his Jewishness and inhibited by it. Lewis, in his earliest acquaintance with him, can learn nothing of Charles's family and home; he does not even realize Charles is Jewish. Then Charles suddenly invites him to the March home:

> At last he asked me. . . . He spoke in a tone different from any I had heard him use: not diffident or anxious, but cold, as though angry that I was there to receive the invitation.
>
> "I wonder if you would care to dine at my father's house next week?"
>
> I looked at him. Neither of us spoke for a moment. Then he said: "It might interest you to see the inside of a Jewish family."
>
> (CR, 13)

The chapter closes with these words; Lewis does not discuss this new revelation with Charles until after he has seen the March family for himself.

At the house, Lewis meets Charles's sister Katherine, and their father, Leonard, "Mr. L.," as he is called by his family. He is a happy, vital man, full of stories and possessed of what Lewis terms "total recall" (CR, 18). His chief amusement is to recount stream-of-consciousness stories of his past, in which his large family of relatives figure prominently. Mr. March is very much aware of the family and its traditions, deeply devoted to it, and deter-

mined to keep his children within it and under its authority and traditions. This concern is seen when Mr. March insists on Katherine's going to what Lewis describes as

> one of the regular dances arranged for the young men and girls of Jewish society in London; a means, as Mr. March accepted with his usual realism, of helping to marry them off within their proper circle.
>
> (CR, 23).

Katherine refuses to go; like Charles, she is rebelling against having to stay within traditional boundaries and under the guidance of an authoritative family. Mr. March's reaction is to insist even more that she go: "I'm not pressing you. Except that there are certain actions I require of my daughter . . ." (CR, 23).

The resentment of Charles and Katherine towards their family affects Lewis's relations with them:

> I had already seen the meaning which being Jews had for both Charles and Katherine. They had not spoken of it. I dared not hurt them by saying a word. I could not forget Charles's invitation to 'see the inside of a Jewish family' nor Katherine's face as they quarrelled about the dance.
>
> (CR, 28)

Soon after this, Charles's first case, in which he is successful, comes to him through his family connections. This he feels is not good enough. He sees (CR, 40) that he will be set in a Jewish mold, that he will eventually

be unable to escape from the world of Jews. Because of his "social guilt" and his "sick conscience" (CR, 114), he gives up the Bar.

A combination of influences--racial, cultural, and family--are at work in Charles, but they are all focussed in the family. It is the family who strive most to make him conscious of his Jewishness, to keep him separate, and it is to his family, as represented by his father, that Charles must answer. Mr. March's first reaction to Charles's intention is typical. "I don't believe a word of it," he says. "You ought to have chosen a more suitable time to tell me. You might have known that hearing this would put me out of step for the day. . . . In any case, I don't believe a word of it" (CR, 42). At a family dinner, Charles faces the combined wrath of his relatives. They are disturbed deeply, but it is Mr. March who expresses their feelings:

> "I am not prepared to tolerate your attitude that you can dissociate yourself from me in all your concerns. Even if I survive criticism from the family on your account, that isn't to admit that you've separated yourself from me. . . . I do not propose to let you abandon yourself to your own devices. . . . I want something for you. I wish I could know that you'll get something that I've always wanted for you."
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> (CR, 59-60)

The special cause of Mr. March's disappointment is his desire, like Mrs. Eliot's,[3] to realize his hopes in his son. Having retired from business at thirty-two, Mr. March considers himself not completely successful and so has "invested all those rejected hopes in Charles" (CR, 86).[4]

To keep Charles under his control, Mr. March refuses to give him his inheritance once he decides to study medicine. After that, the two maintain a surface relationship, but they are estranged where ties of mutual understanding and sympathy are concerned. To add to Mr. March's despair, Katherine marries Francis Getliffe, a Gentile. Now his despair is of a different nature, on the level, as Lewis says, of "self-respect and his external face to the world" (CR, 163).

Once Charles is married and settled in his medical career, his relations with his father take on a cordiality which lasts until a new crisis arises, one in which Charles's actions have a direct effect on the head of the family, Sir Philip March, a parliamentary secretary.

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[3]As described in Chapter I.

[4]The same theme recurs when Charles marries (CR, 128).

Charles's wife, Ann Simon, like her husband, feels that she is the victim of her family's wealth and Jewishness. In her revolt, she turns to the political left and in the course of her activities, finds evidence of political misdeeds which could ruin Sir Philip's career. Herbert Getliffe, Lewis's master at the Bar, has at one time been in a position to know of government plans to place certain contracts. Several people, including Getliffe's relatives, have bought shares in the company benefitting by the contracts. Among some junior ministers included is Sir Philip March.

Ann has gathered her information while working for Humphrey Seymour, editor of the Note, a left-wing newspaper which delights in publishing such information to discredit and harass its political opponents. She has turned up the information about Sir Philip in trying to embarrass others. Now she is the only one who can prevent the publishing of the information. Sir Philip cannot believe that Charles will not make Ann repress the information, either out of regard for the family or out of a sense of duty to his father. Before the issue is settled, Ann is stricken with pneumonia, and leaves the decision to Charles. He argues that the integrity of his own marriage will not let him do what his father wishes, but Katherine sees the real reasons:

> "You've never forgiven Mr. L. for being in power over you. You've never forgiven him for trying to stop your marriage. And he was absolutely right. Since you married this woman you've never cared for the rest of us. You've been ready to destroy everything in the family because of her."
>
> (CR, 308)

It is not that Charles is unaware of the claims of his family over him, nor that he is unconcerned about them. He talks earlier with Lewis about Eliot's lack of ties, speaking longingly of his "incomparably greater privacy," of the fact that what Lewis does affects no one but himself (CR, 119). He is also eager to maintain good relations with his father. But Charles has another tie, that with his wife, and so he rejects that claim of the family. His reply is final: he will not stop the publication of the information.

The news is published, the scandal is revealed, and Sir Philip is removed from his position. Katherine and her husband refuse to meet Ann, and Mr. March prepares to live estranged from his son. Charles, in his revolt against the possessiveness of his father, takes a harsher course than necessary; he lets his marriage both shut him off from his family and severely hurt it. He has rejected any claim of the family to control an individual member. He asserts the right of the individual to reject not only the family tradition, but also his responsibility towards

his family if either threatens his integrity.

Just as Lewis felt it necessary to protect himself from his mother's demands, so Charles rejects his father and the family he represents. But in Charles's case, C.P. Snow has entered a new area of human relations. The question is no longer a person's relations with one other person--that has been established as a basis of society--but the relationship of the individual to a larger part of society. Has the family, as a group, any claim to the direction of an individual's life? Have family tradition and honour a duty to be paid them? Charles rejects both possibilities, but that is not Snow's answer. As Lewis Eliot watches the struggle within the March family, as he moves into a world where men are brothers, out of choice or necessity, he sees that man, tragic and alone, must organize himself into groups, into smaller societies, before he can overcome his isolation entirely. Certainly Charles has the right to follow his conscience; certainly Mr. March cannot expect to retain absolute control over Charles's life. Nevertheless, no man exists in isolation; an individual is influenced by his family and owes something to it. The family provides the milieu for his upbringing; it offers encouragement, support, and love; it is an essential part of his life and for that reason demands that he

concern himself with it and, to some extent at least, be subject to its traditions and authority.

What Charles lacks in loyalty and concern can be seen in Mr. March's attitude to Ann's illness. She is taken ill in his house and because of the danger of moving her, Mr. March insists she remain there. By doing so he is protecting his worst enemy, the person who threatens the well-being of his entire family. And although he wishes that she would die and thereby avoid a scandal, he hires the best doctors and does more than his duty towards her. He recognizes the claim of family; Charles refuses to do so.

III

The relationship between an individual and his fellows once they have voluntarily banded themselves together is examined in the story of George Passant and his "group," of which Lewis Eliot is a member for a time. This story is told at length in Strangers and Brothers and briefly in Time of Hope. George appears in a less important role in Homecomings and is alluded to in The Light and the Dark and The Masters.

George Passant is a native of Lewis's home town, a solicitor who is a member of Eden and Martineau, the town's most reputable law firm, and a teacher of night

classes in law at the local technical college. A liberal, George has seen the need for encouraging the young people in their radical, youthful views, and so has established a group, with himself as centre. Complete frankness is maintained in the group at all times, in both its lighter and its more serious moments.

To George Passant, the group is the most effective aspect of his existence. In his career, in his relations with the people of the town, even in his teaching, he feels bound and inhibited by convention, kept from performing really useful services. He writes in his diary of his hopes for the group:

> And what else lies in my powers? The gift of creation, worse luck, was not bestowed on me: except, I dare sometimes think, in the chance to help my protégés, besides whom all the artistic masterpieces of the world seem like bloodless artifices of men who have never discovered what it is to live. I must concentrate on the little world: I shall not get esteem, except the esteem which I value more than any public praise; I shall get no fame, except some gratitude which will soon be forgotten; I shall get no power at all. . . . . I shall enjoy every moment of every day, and I shall gain my own soul.
>
> (SB, 72)

George has a particular interest in Lewis: he takes him into the group's fellowship, tutors him, loans him money, and helps him come out of his isolation. Another member of the group, Jack Cotery, brings about George's downfall and the collapse of the group. George

is particularly devoted to Jack, helping him when he loses his job and is therefore unable to finish his training at the school. Because of his argument in Jack's behalf before the Board of Education (SB, Chapter 5), George establishes his reputation in the eyes of the conservative townspeople as the morally and traditionally irresponsible leader of a radical, free-thinking, loose-living group of young people.

Gradually, Jack comes to dominate George, causing him to go against his principles by drawing him into business ventures that are, if not dishonest, at least suspiciously underhanded. First, George gives Jack money for one business, but Jack is soon in debt and George has to rescue him. Then Jack admits that he has deceived George in the matter of the school and that he had been dealt with more fairly than he had first made out (SB, Chapter 12). In spite of this, George continues in his devotion to Jack.

Finally, this intimate friendship brings the group to disaster, along with George's dreams. George, Jack, and Oliver Calvert, another member of the group, enter on two financial ventures, the conduct of which brings them before the law. One is the purchase and operation of an advertising paper, a bulletin with a doubtful circulation

but, they believe, a promising future. Because of the erroneous information given them about the paper's circulation by Martineau, one of George's former employers, the claims they make about the future of the paper in order to borrow money bring them into court. When it is established that Martineau's vagueness and his resulting misinterpretation of the facts of the circulation are to blame and that the three are innocent, the charge is dropped. Another charge is left, however.

Because George's group wish to be as self-sufficient as possible, they must have a place where they will be undisturbed. For many years they gather in a rented farm house, but Jack, George and Oliver decide to buy it, to rent it out when they are not using it, providing a private place to meet. For these activities, the second charge is laid. Once more they are accused of falsifying the facts about the prospects for the financial success of the farm. This, combined with the hostility of the town and the emphasis put by the Crown on alleged sexual immorality of the members, puts an end to the activities of George's group. As Lewis studies the history of George's group and the charges brought against them, he comes on indications of the gradual breakdown of the group as George had originally conceived of it (SB, 251-252). He finds that George has been a legitimate idealist,

as we have seen, a leader destined, he believed, to guide his friends to a fuller and more meaningful life. But he has gradually become less of a leader, to a great degree subordinate to Jack, who takes advantage of him and uses the club as a screen for his own eroticism. He continually mocks George's aspirations because he sees through them and puts up with them because he realizes that George is deceiving himself and will eventually give way to his baser desires.

Actually, George has long since given way to his erotic impulses, but has managed for a time to keep them separate from the group. As early as the sixth chapter of Strangers and Brothers, Lewis goes with George to Nottingham and sees him delighting in the sensuality he finds there. For a time, George succeeds in keeping any open immorality out of the group's activities. He allows no sexual activity and he even disguises his fondness for alcohol, going to the public house under the pretense of taking a "constitutional" (TH, 197).

Gradually, however, George permits the group to be reduced to a convenient means of satisfying physical desires. At one point, Lewis returns from London to be shocked by the new atmosphere of indulgence (SB, Chapter 23). Soon George takes up openly with members of the

group--Freda, Mona, and Daphne, in particular. He lets slip his high idealism, choosing to ignore the danger, which he has seen from the beginning, of the group's being ruined by gossip of immorality within it (SB, 53-54). By this surrender he prevents the group from achieving the high ideals he once had. Throughout the group's existence, one fault has been that the members do not really share George's idealism, nor do they really concern themselves with the threat from outside. For them, the group is a convenience, a means to an end.[5]

George Passant is a brother; he needs companionship. He is not, like Lewis, willing to observe a self-protecting, non-involving friendship, but wants to give all of himself for his friends, to risk his career and his social position for the good of others and in order to be drawn close to them. For this reason he gives himself to tutoring Lewis for the Bar and to backing Jack in his business ventures.

The person who, like George Passant, is willing to give so much of himself, must be prepared, if he is realistic, to be "used" by someone. He must be aware of the dangers. In his idealism, George at first does not see

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[5]This will be dealt with more fully in the following chapter, in connection with the attitude of another group -- the fellows of the college.

Jack's underhanded methods and when he does, discovers that he has so come under Jack's power that he is unable to do anything about it.

Still clinging to his hopes and illusions, George testifies at his trial. His final answer rings with hope, with the desire to do so much for his group. But he deceives only himself. Lewis tells of George at this point:

> As he spoke, George had a helpless and suffering look. This last answer scarcely anyone understood, even those of us who knew something of his language, and the barrier between his appetite for living and his picture of his own soul. He was alone . . . more than he had ever been. For a moment, I found myself angry with him. Despite the situation, I was swept with anger . . . For all his eagerness for life . . . for all the warmth of his heart and his "vision of God," he was less honest than his attackers . . . . He was less honest than those who saw in his aspirations only the devices of a carnally obsessed and self-indulgent man. He was corrupt within himself . . . .
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> (SB, 285-86)

George is a man of ideals, even delusions, but he achieves something of which Lewis is not as yet capable: he sees the value of the group and gives himself to it. He tries to forget himself, although the need to satisfy his ambitions is in him at all times. If disaster comes to George as a result of the special nature of his character, it is not because when one gives oneself it leads necessarily to disaster. At least George goes a step further than Lewis: he learns to trust others as individuals and as a community. And whereas Lewis, when he

is mistreated by Sheila, whom he gives himself to, retreats into himself, George is willing to go on, to trust once more. George Passant's world is not made up solely of individuals, strangers. Rather, he sees and accepts that men must learn to be brothers.

IV

As we follow Lewis Eliot's development as a brother and a member of society, the next level of community, of society, that we encounter is that of the town, of that group of people into which he is placed by birth, by forces beyond his control. As individuals band themselves together, they must arrive at organizations into units and at some form of government. The first attempt at government that Lewis experiences is in the town. There men watch over their fellows and concern themselves with their actions and their fate. In Time of Hope Lewis is aware of the town, but is not especially influenced by it. He sees the power of the town over the individual only when he is involved with George Passant.

The reaction of the unnamed town and its inhabitants to George and his group varies in degree but not in kind. On the whole, the group is regarded suspiciously and unfavourably. With the exception of Dr. Arthur Morcum, who is slightly older than most members of the group, and

old Martineau, there is no one who sympathizes with the group and its aspirations. Only the young people, at their traditional age of rebellion, are attracted to the group.

One of the most frequent objections is that the group is nothing more than a convenient means of covering up promiscuity. As we have seen, George is aware of the threat from such an outlook, but in his idealism he believes that he can prevent these suspicions from becoming facts. Gradually, the group is reduced to the hypocritical screen it has been accused of being.

But the town's suspicions are not justified by what happens. Its attitude is based not so much on a genuine concern for moral values as on a dislike of anything new and radical. The time of the action, 1925-1933, is one of radical, left-wing causes, supported by youths as they sense their new liberty and are disgusted with the times in which they live. The discussions in the group--about politics, about literature, about sex--go against the conservatism of the town. The people feel that the group is composed of misguided young people who are to be at once pitied and despised.

In the end, it is the established community that stifles the aspirations of the individual and his group. Is the community right? Or should George and his friends

be allowed their freedom? Snow's answer here is the same as when the individual and his family are involved. There must be a partial surrender on both sides. The individual and his group have a responsibility towards society; society must be careful with its judgments on the rebel. Had the town been more constructive in its attitude, had it not plagued the group with its rumours about the members' supposed misbehaviour, had it provided encouragement for the young people to take part in the town's life--better encouragement than the haphazard "evenings" at Martineau's or the formal ones at Harry Eden's--something happier might have been the result. But the group, too, and George in particular, could also have been more tolerant. They never really try to understand their elders. They, too, think in stereotypes: the school under the control of the "establishment," presided over by a principal incapable of administration (mostly because he is part of the establishment), bowing to the will of the local "bell-weathers" whose aim in life is to mistreat their employees. (SB, 49).

In seeking to be brothers, George and his fellow strangers are really looking for some basis on which to build their lives, for some society which will serve as a unifying force for their individuality. So George, rebel that he is, still wants to maintain his position in the

firm. Lewis sees the reasons behind this:

> It seemed strange to notice George identifying himself with a solid firm of solicitors in a provincial town--but of course it is not the Georges, the rebels of the world, who are indifferent to authority and institutions. The Georges cannot be indifferent easily; if they are in an institution, it may have to be changed, but it becomes part of themselves. George in the firm was . . . vehement, fighting for his rights, yet proud to be there and excessively attached.
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> (SB, 88-89)

In the world of Lewis Eliot, the successful person is the one who does not stand outside society and the class structure that he sees in it. Rather, he moves within it, accepts it, and mounts from level to level as he becomes more successful.[6] The brother is one who accepts society but does not let it dominate him.

V

Individual and society must come to terms, for if either is dominant, the community Snow envisages cannot be attained. The family, friends, and the town must not be allowed to rule the individual to the extent that he is deprived of the opportunity to make his life as meaningful and as satisfying as possible. But neither must the

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[6]This point was made by the Reverend C.P. Crowley in his talk, "The Closed Universe of C.P. Snow," given on the Trans-Canada Network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, March 4, 1962.

individual carry his separateness to the extreme where he is not concerned with any obligation to his family, group, or town.

Lewis Eliot sees the truth of this as he observes Charles March and George Passant. Society cannot be achieved if the individual insists on rejecting all claims upon him. No wall can be allowed between the individual and the group. As the individual learns to maintain his integrity and at the same time arrive at a sense of community, then the stranger will more quickly become the brother.

CHAPTER III

THE COLLEGE: COMMUNITY ACHIEVED

Lewis Eliot's next experience with individuals who have formed a group comes when he enters a Cambridge college.[1] College activities are the subject for two books in the "Strangers and Brothers" series, The Masters and The Affair; the setting for The Light and the Dark; and the background for The New Men and Homecomings. Lewis never explains fully how he has come to be at the college, but it seems that Francis Getliffe, whom he meets through the Marches, has been instrumental in obtaining his election (LD, 14; M, 197). At any rate, he now teaches part time at the college, while maintaining his legal career in London.[2]

Some critics do not rate The Masters especially high among Snow's novels; others class it among the best two or three; still others regard it as outstanding. On the one hand it has been condemned for describing a subject that is "esoteric and remote," for picturing the struggle for power

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[1]The college is never given a name.

[2]By the time of The Affair, he has resigned his fellowship.

within the college as "on the level of addle-pated women jostling for the chairmanship of the society bazaar."[3] But it has also been hailed for giving "the impression of being the product of a single pulsation of energy."[4]

But it is a novel of sustained action and a single theme: men who are striving to maintain their society. Snow's writing rises above the obscure phrasing and unusual mannerisms found in some of his other works. Who can forget Mrs. Jago, the tormented hypochondriac who sees injury and insult in every word spoken to her? Or Arthur Brown, the smooth, satisfied manipulator of men? Or Professor Gay, that Victorian figure for whom the past fifty years at the college have blended into one whole, with different people and events taking on the attributes of others?

There are memorable scenes as well: Chrystal's political tour de force, as he persuades both factions to act against their will in forcing the candidates to vote for each other; Despard-Smith, turning to alcohol in

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[3]Marghanita Laski, Review of The Masters, in The Spectator, CLXXXVII (July 20, 1951), 106.

[4]J.D. Scott, Review of The Masters, in The New Statesman and Nation, XLII (August 4, 1951), 134.

his solitariness, regretting his failures and making up for them by supporting Crawford, the certain success; the scenes at High Table and in the Combination Room, where the crimson of the wine, the red of the carpets and draperies, and the warm glow of the fire combine to produce a backdrop of safety and comfort against which the often bitter drama unfolds.

If the action seems to move too slowly at times, if the characters seem to talk endlessly and aimlessly, if there are allusions , disturbing by their vagueness, to Lewis's wife, to Francis Getliffe's wife's family, to a mysterious George Passant, if the college seems to have no student body, the novel as a whole compensates for these shortcomings by its insights into political motives, by its evocation of character, and by its portrait of a college torn between the humanities and the sciences. The Masters reflects the wider world in which it is set and gives an understanding of it precisely because it brings to life the portrait of a college.

I

The Masters is a study of the workings of a community, the tensions felt by its members, the points at which they feel at one, and the periods of crisis, when it is in danger

of flying apart. The opening has been described as being "as quiet as the perimeter of a whirlpool, and like a whirlpool it proceeds gently to fasten upon the intention."[5] It presents Lewis Eliot, who once again is both narrator and participant, in his cozy room, the curtains drawn, the fire piled with coal and ready to burn for hours. Lewis is seated within a circle of light from the fire, while the rest of the room is cold and dark (M, 3). The picture is also of the atmosphere within the college. The group of men--teachers and students--exist in a world of learning whose traditions have been established centuries before, whose life is one of custom and regularity, who share in the warmth of the fellowship and in the light of knowledge and understanding that come to them through the college. The safe intimacy of the college is about to be shattered as is the calm of Lewis's life.

No sooner is the picture set than there comes the forewarning of disaster: Paul Jago, the Senior Tutor, arrives to tell Lewis of the certainty of the approaching death of the Master, Vernon Royce, who has just been found to have incurable cancer. And just as Royce's body is to

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[5]Scott, op. cit., 134.

be ravished and ultimately destroyed, so there is at work within the college a sort of cancer that is to tear it from within and threaten it with death.

For the college is now called upon to choose a new master, a task which promises to produce difficulties. Jago can see nothing more certain than the inevitability of a great disruption (M, 9). He himself becomes one of the candidates; the other is Thomas Crawford.

Jago is a teacher of English, whose academic achievement has not been great, out of whom "sympathy and emotion [flow] too easily (M, 4), a man of "deep feeling" and "passionate pride" (M, 5). To those who support him, such as Lewis Eliot and Arthur Brown, he is a human being, full of life and feeling, with a concern for others that could be beneficial to the college. To his enemies, such as Francis Getliffe and Arthur Winslow, he is an undistinguished scholar whose election would be a disaster.

The formal objection to him is his lack of scholarship. "What has he done?" is the reaction of Francis Getliffe (M, 76). Lewis's recital of Jago's accomplishments is not very impressive:

> It was a harsh question, and difficult to answer. Jago was an English scholar, and had published articles on the first writings produced by the Puritan settlers in New England. The articles were sound enough: he was interesting on William Bradford's dialogue; but

> it was no use pretending to Francis Getliffe.
> "I know as well as you that he's not a specially distinguished scholar," I said.
>
> (M, 76-77)

Crawford is a biologist, trained in medicine and now engaged in research. He is distinguished academically (M, 46, 78), a Fellow of the Royal Society and a member of its Council (M, 150), and a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (M, 128). The scientists are confident that he will increase their influence in the college, probably at the expense of the humanities. His opponents are certain of the dangers in electing him. Arthur Brown expresses their feelings, "I should regard him as a disaster. He wouldn't lift a finger for any of us" (M, 36).

Lewis lists the objections to Crawford. He sees him as "conceited," "shallow," "third-rate," "inconceivably self-satisfied," a man with "no feeling," "no glow," and "not a scrap of imagination" (M, 78, 79). The reply is that Crawford is an excellent scholar, a fact that Lewis cannot deny.

It is not merely academic excellence and usefulness to the college that are factors in the election dispute, but politics as well. Getliffe and most of his scientific colleagues are left-wing in politics and object to Jago's conservatism. Conservatives to them are "absurd," "fools,"

men who are either "figureheads" or who are only "trying to behave like responsible men" (M, 78). Crawford suits them because his beliefs and practices are left-wing. He supports the Republicans in the Spanish Civil War, trying to influence men in the Foreign Office and in Parliament on their behalf (M, 96).

Beyond the academic and political factors there is another--the personal--which is not openly admitted and therefore harder to fight. But while it is natural that certain fellows might not like one another--that is to be expected in any community of individuals--personal prejudice is extended beyond the faculty. The character of Jago's wife, Alice, is a major drawback in getting her husband elected. Described by Lewis as a "hypochondriac" with the "venom of a shrew" (M, 279), she aspires to the grace and manner of the Master's wife, Lady Muriel, but tries so hard that she is unable to achieve them (M, 61). As a result, according to Lewis, "she [has] embarrassed Jago's friends ever since he married her. She [becomes] assertive in any conversation. She [is] determined not to be overlooked. She [seizes] on insults, [tracks] them down, [recounts] them with a masochistic gusto that never [flags]. . She [has] cost her husband great suffering" (M, 61-62).

Much of the opposition's attack is centred on Mrs. Jago. One of the fellows, Nightingale, begins by telling that she is already assuming that the Lodge (the Master's home) is hers, by jeering at her accent and social origin,[6] by describing what Lewis calls her "absurd flirtations," those "of a woman with not a shred of confidence in her attractions, trying to prove them" (M, 172). Eventually, Nightingale produces a fly-sheet, praising Mrs. Crawford and implicitly damning Mrs. Jago. He sends it to the fellows, and, it is believed, to Mrs. Jago herself (M, Chapter XXXIV).

Soon Eustace Pilbrow, who has been a supporter of Jago (although a wavery one), changes sides because of political considerations. He believes Jago and his fellow conservatives are destroying the country and so decides to vote for Crawford, who is on the "right side" (M, 266).

The day before the election, Chrystal, Brown's close companion in college politics and an early supporter of Jago, goes over to Crawford because he sees that he would be unable to guide Jago, that his own policies would not be put into effect, that he would lose his power in the college. So the election goes to Crawford.

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[6]She comes from Birmingham.

II

The division that causes the men in the college to put up barriers between themselves in their professional relationships also causes those who are friends to set themselves apart. This is true of Lewis Eliot and his friends, Francis and Katherine Getliffe, in whose lives he has at one time played a major role.[7] Now, because he and Francis support opposing candidates, a sense of separation arises between them which is distressing to both, although they seem unable to do anything about it.

When they first discuss the election, Francis is horrified to find Lewis supporting Jago. "It's bloody foolish," he says: "We can't have him as Master. I don't know what you can be thinking about. . . . . Nonsense. Sheer bloody nonsense" (M, 75-76). He condemns Jago's lack of scholarship: "We can't have a man who's done nothing" (M, 77). Getliffe expresses his scorn of Lewis's choice in harsh words: "It's sheer utter irresponsibility. It's the first time I've seen you lose your balance. You must have gone quite mad" (M, 77).

As the quarrel heightens and the college becomes increasingly divided, Francis and Katherine invite Lewis to dinner. Their purpose is to persuade him to switch

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[7]In The Conscience of the Rich.

his allegiance. They try to talk him into another position (M, 197), appealing to his reputation as a liberal by accusing him of supporting a reactionary; to his ego by telling him how much influence he has in the affair; to his friendship for them by reminding him of past times and by emphasizing his duty not to desert "our side"; to his sense of duty and gratitude by making him recall that it has been through Francis that he obtained his fellowship (LD, 14; M, 197). They argue about the personalities of the candidates, but they cannot agree. Lewis realizes the hopelessness of it all: "They were profoundly out of sympathy with me," he says, "and I with them" (M, 198). He leaves them, parting, as he says "without the glow and ease of friendship," "with no intimacy at all" (M, 200).

What happens to the relationship between Lewis and Francis is a reflection of what happens to the relationships among the men who make up the college. Generally, the relations between the fellows are not deep. Some, like Lewis and Roy Calvert or like Arthur Brown and Chrystal achieve something more profound, but on the whole the chief bond between these men is membership in a community and their devotion to it. Each has his link with the central source of affection and loyalty, the college. As a result they achieve a meaningful fellowship, the kind towards which Lewis's previous experiences have led him.

In each individual there is a concern for the college, its well-being, and its continued existence. True, each person's loyalty is coloured by his interest and outlook, so that Jago the teacher of English and Crawford the research scientist would each have a different effect on the college, if elected. But there does exist a community of scholars joined together in a common concern.

What Lewis has been learning all along is that somehow men must find an object of loyalty that will lift them out of their isolation as strangers and bring them together as brothers with a common concern. George Passant and Harry Eden, Mrs. Eliot and Lewis, Leonard and Charles March, Roy Calvert and Arthur Brown, Thomas Crawford and Paul Jago, must not merely be brought into contact, but must learn a sense of brotherhood. This process begins with the family, continues with the small group and in the town, and is realized to the fullest degree yet in the college. It is important that the fellows hold their community together.

At one point during the discord, neither side is able to gather a majority. Then the desire to maintain the community suddenly comes to the fore. The possibility arises that because of the stalemate, the Visitor to the college, a bishop, will have to select a Master, probably from outside it. Six of the fellows meet to consider the possibility and are soon drawn into acting, partly because

of Chrystal's manoeuvering, but mostly out of a concern for the college. They decide to direct the candidates to vote for each other, bringing a majority within reach. Although there appear to be logical and tactical reasons for this choice (M, 220), Lewis sees that although they profess these reasons, they are also

> moved by some of the inexplicable currents that sweep through any intricate politics. . . . [We] suddenly panicked at the idea of an outsider for Master. It was as though our privacy were threatened: magic was being taken from us: this intimate world would not be so much in our power.
>
> (M, 221)

"This intimate world would not be so much in our power." Three aspects of the psychology of the group may be seen here. The community is intimate--a private world whose inhabitants know one another, accept one another, exist together and set up a pattern of life acceptable to them. The outside world becomes an intruder. These men also have control of their world; they have it in their power. The teaching fellows are also the executive of the college, directing its finances as well as its academic life. An outsider as master would mean the reduction of this power. The fellows must possess power and wield it in order to maintain the nature and very existence of their community. So Lewis, who once rejected one individual's power over another, now accepts the necessity to preserve

the even greater power of the college.

The fellows' concern reaches beyond intimacy and power to security. Whatever radical tendencies they possess, whatever dissatisfactions they may have with the college, they are provided by the community with a secure basis on which to build their lives. Roy Calvert experiences fits of deep depression but still has the college and his friends in it, particularly Lewis, to whom he can turn. In his difficulties with his wife and his legal career, Lewis sees the college as a "refuge to hide in" (M, 197). Nightingale tries endlessly and hopelessly to become a Fellow of the Royal Society: he never succeeds, but being part of the college and supporting the eminently successful Crawford make up for his disappointment. Winslow grieves over his son's failure, but finds relief in giving himself to his job as Bursar (M, 142-143).

For some, the college is a home as they go about their professional activities. Crawford goes to London to attend meetings of the Council of the Royal Society. Francis Getliffe does his secret governmental research on radar while carrying out his college duties.

What is threatened is the one thing that gives a common steady basis to the lives of the various individuals. So they act to preserve the institution. Their concern for its welfare is shown in their worries over the college's

future; the manoeuvering over Sir Horace Timberlake's gift of money is one indication of this. The difference between humanists and scientists is not merely one of superiority of discipline--a matter of glory. Rather it is a difference over what direction the college must take in a fast-changing society. Which Master will be the better choice: Jago or Crawford, humanist or scientist, reactionary or radical?

III

By the time of The Masters, the college is the highest development of society yet experienced by Lewis. The differences between the fellow's attitude to the college and George's friends' attitude to their group point up the superiority of the college community. In both, the members are there partly to satisfy their personal needs: the fellows search for security; the group seeks freedom. As we have seen, the concern of the fellows goes beyond self-satisfaction. This is in contrast to the group.

With the exception of George, none of the members of the group is concerned with it as a meaningful entity. Jack Cotery is there because he likes George, because he sees an opportunity to engage in shady business deals, because in the group women are available. Olive Calvert is there for the comfort she gets from others who feel their lives aimless and empty of meaning. Lewis joins for

much the same reasons as Olive's. All are there because the group offers them the opportunity to express their radical views without interference.

But there is no concern for the group. The members allow it to degenerate, at the conclusion of Strangers and Brothers, to a gathering whose sole purpose is sexual pleasure. And when they send George a letter of support during his trial their concern is for George himself, not for the group (SB, 250-251).

In the college, for example, a frankness and openness of discussion exist that George's group do not achieve. If the fellows disagree, they are open about it. This is partly due to the security which they have provided for themselves, a security which George's group lacks. It is not enough for the group to discuss politics, sex, or their elders, if they cannot work out their future.

Their attitude towards tradition also differentiates the two communities. The college accepts the established and the traditional without letting them inhibit thought or action. Although the majority of the fellows are liberals, they do not feel it necessary to ridicule traditions or demand their abolition. Certain men, Getliffe and Winslow for example, refuse to enter the Chapel, but apart from sniping at religious tradition, they do not

waste their time working to have it done away with.

As we have seen, George and his group have preconceived ideas of what is to them old-fashioned and useless. They want to abandon the traditional, instead of reclaiming it.

Perhaps the chief reason for the success of the college as a community, where the group fails, is that the members of the college can do something, can be successful. All of them have achieved something, in varying degrees. There are those like Arthur Brown, Paul Jago, and Charles Chrystal, who have made a beginning, have not realized their potential, but who are happy in their teaching. There are others, such as Francis Getliffe, Roy Calvert, and Walter Luke, who are still achieving success. There are still others--Thomas Crawford and M.H.L. Gay are two--who have reached the top and stayed there, still doing research and still publishing.

In contrast, George's group do nothing. Passant remains a solicitor in a small town for years.[8] Jack Cotery fails in legitimate business and even in crime. Olive Calvert is dissatisfied with her life, but never gets down to making anything of her chances. The rest

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[8]When he turns up during the Second World War, in Homecomings, he has made no progress.

of the members wander in and out, talking ceaselessly, but taking no action. Their life is wasted because their preoccupation with themselves limits their area of concern to themselves. They are idealists, like George. When he sees his faults, his disillusion prevents him from acting. If, like the fellows, they had some career, some duty, some object of devotion outside themselves, the group might have come to something.

IV

What The Masters says about the areas we have been discussing is involved with a higher level of meaning. Since the college is a microcosm of the world, Snow is dealing with matters of concern to the nation and to humanity. Within the framework of the college election he brings into play most of the issues which seem to be secondary but which are major factors in many elections--in political parties or the nation. We have seen the action of personal loyalty, of personal prejudice--the first in Lewis's relations with the Getliffes and the second in the objections raised to Mrs. Jago. Patronage is involved as well. Nightingale leaves Jago's party when Jago refuses to promise him the post of Tutor (M, 144-46). He also hopes faintly that Crawford will get him into the Royal Society (M, 162). On Crawford's side, his supporter

Nightingale tries to coerce Walter Luke into changing allegiance by threatening the permanency of his fellowship (M, 180). There are those like Brown and Chrystal whose desire is not to hold office, but to work behind the scenes, both in the campaign and after the election.

In all of this, power is a prominent force, and the study of it is important to Snow. The Masters is to a large extent the story of how power is used by individuals and by society. Power is of different varieties: the power of ideas--scientist versus humanist; the power of position and prestige--Gay's delight in his eighteen honorary degrees and in his position as Senior Fellow; the power of friendship--Lewis's misgivings over "betraying" Getliffe; the power of prejudice--the blindness of Getliffe and his colleagues, because of politics, to Jago's capabilities; the power of national politics over college affairs--political considerations master Pilbrow's regard for Jago; the opposite power of the college over national politics--Lewis, a liberal, is joined with Jago's conservative supporters.

As Lewis has been acutely aware, power on the part of an institution can be used to stifle individuality. But if any community is to be achieved, if men are to leave their tragic isolation and become brothers, they must face the danger of losing their privacy, pride, and self-sufficiency. In The Masters each individual gives

more of himself than we have previously seen Snow's characters doing, in order that community might exist. They succeed; the college survives because its members are concerned that it should, because they are willing to work to make it succeed. Each looks forward; each overcomes his tendency to remain a stranger, in order to become a brother.

V

The community of the college leads its members to a wider concern. This will be dealt with in the following chapter, but the basis for it is in the college. The members are concerned politically and therefore have a vital interest in justice,[9] but their chief concern is for the continuation and effectiveness of the college. They are not prepared to sacrifice the college for their politics or prejudices: they compromise when they are threatened. In The Affair, which takes place in 1953 and 1954, they are less concerned for the college than for scientific truth and human justice.

One of the fellows, Donald Howard, has been found guilty of falsifying scientific proofs in his thesis. A photograph, given him by his professor, C.J.B. Palairet,

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[9]One issue is the Spanish Civil War (LD, 160; M, 96, 356), which is certainly a matter of justice; another is the need felt by many in the college to have Mr. Winston Churchill in the cabinet (M, 209).

and used as the starting-point of the thesis, has been proven a fraud, an enlargement of a smaller photograph. Howard claims that he accepted the photograph innocently and without question. The Court of Seniors--the Master, Brown, Nightingale, and Winslow--have found him guilty and have removed him from his fellowship. Now he is teaching in a school in Cambridge. As the novel begins, his wife, Laura, is agitating to have the case reopened, that justice might be done.

In removing Howard, the college has held its position intact: it has removed a trouble-maker, a man objectionable for his rudeness and for his virtual communism, and generally disliked within the college. It seems at first as if the college will maintain its attitude, but gradually the fellows are drawn to Howard's defence. Despite his dislike of him, Martin Eliot, Lewis's brother, supports Howard once he becomes convinced of his innocence. Julian Skeffington, who as Palairet's niece's husband would suffer from the publicity following an acquittal of Howard, finds reason to believe his story (A, 68-76). Lewis himself, although no longer a fellow, is also persuaded of Howard's innocence and works in his support. Soon the Court of Seniors decide to re-examine the facts, but conclude that there is no need for further investigation.

Howard's supporters threaten to take the case outside the college. This moves the Court, because of their desire to maintain the privacy of the college, to hold a legal trial. In it, Lewis defends Howard. With the testimony of Getliffe, who has put concern for scientific integrity and justice before personal ambition, and the suspicions he arouses as to Nightingale's possibly having destroyed the evidence out of jealousy, wins an acquittal. The college reinstates Howard as a fellow, but dating from the time of his removal, so that his term is nearly expired. But the demands of justice have been met and the college has been protected. Howard is cleared of guilt and no scandal has been revealed.

Worth noting is the concern on the part of the college for scientific truth and, beyond that, justice. The fellows could play it safe, but they decide to risk scandal and injury to the college. Their concern for justice overcomes personal, political, and professional prejudices. What is important to them is the right of the individual to receive from society the assurance that his integrity and individuality will be protected.

The Affair is the latest of C.P. Snow's novels,[10] and is in a sense, a picture of the fullest development

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[10]It appeared in 1960.

of stranger into brother, the fullest integration of individual and society. Lewis Eliot, again by observation and by experience, has gained new insights into what the community of man should be. The narrow self-interest we saw in his early experience has been replaced by a realization of the need for human justice. But the last steps in the development of this realization appear elsewhere; the college is the setting for its beginning, in The Masters, and its being put into effect, in The Affair. To trace its development we must look at another novel, The New Men.

CHAPTER IV

SCIENCE AND GOVERNMENT: THE WIDER VISION OF COMMUNITY

The college is Lewis Eliot's first encounter with a community whose concern reaches beyond the individual, at the same time enabling each member to retain his integrity. The value of such a brotherhood of men and its working out is seen in The Masters, and in The Affair, where there are intimations of a wider fellowship. These intimations are developed in the world of science and government, a world seen to a certain extent in The Light and the Dark and Homecomings, but examined at length in The Search and The New Men. The components of society that are examined in previous novels, the levels of brotherhood in which they consist, and the restricted loyalties which they produce are no longer the ultimate source of brotherhood. Loyalty to one's family, one's friends, the small group, the town, or the college, is swallowed up in a greater loyalty--to the nation and, beyond that, to universal brotherhood and justice.

Scientific truth, human brotherhood, and justice constitute C.P. Snow's concern in these two novels. They

bring the individual nearer brotherhood in that they expand his outlook and concern, but even at this advanced stage of fraternal development they are beset by his tendency to isolation. The New Men illustrates both the progress and the regression, but for background we must go to The Search.

I

Published in 1934, The Search,[1] although not a part of the "Strangers and Brothers" series, previews the scientific and ideological problems that Snow discusses in The New Men. It is the story of a young scientist, Arthur Miles, and his search for scientific, human, and moral truth and justice. Born in a Midland town, his parents much like Lewis Eliot's and, most probably, like Snow's, Miles wins a scholarship to King's College, London. There he does experiments in molecular structure, has a paper on that subject read to the Royal Society, and as a result becomes well known in the field of scientific research.

According to Snow, Miles represents "the pure idealist in science, less involved in either politics or

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[1]This novel has been termed a "better novel about scientists than [Sinclair] Lewis's Arrowsmith" by Mr. Henry Curtis Webster, in "The Sacrifices of Success," Saturday Review, XLI (July 12, 1958), 8.

applied science" (S, v-vi).[2] Miles states his views himself:

> I'm not so passionately concerned with practical benefits to the human race. They don't seem to me the most important things. . . . if I were, I shouldn't do science at all: I should have a shot at jobs which are really urgent. If anyone wants to help the human race just now, he'll be more useful doing politics or economics than science.
>
> (S, 65)

Eventually Miles goes to Cambridge to continue his research. There he rejoices in his acquaintance with great scientists (S, 87-89) and is present at Sir Ernest Rutherford's first important steps in splitting the atom (S, 88). Continuing to publish papers, he is soon elected Fellow of his College, and is also chosen to address the Royal Society.

After his successes at Cambridge, Miles returns to the University of London and seems certain of being appointed director of a new scientific institute, so certain in fact that he promises a position to Sheriff, one of his friends (S, 251-254). Thus Miles is nearing the height of his ambition: he has achieved a reputation; he is about to be placed in a position of authority and responsibility; he looks forward to a life devoted to his beloved science.

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[2]We will see that Martin Eliot, Miles's counterpart in The New Men, has much the same outlook.

Suddenly, disaster strikes.

When he arrives for the meeting of the committee at which he expects to be appointed, he is told that his latest work contains errors. On investigating, he finds that Jepp, his assistant, to whom he has left the work of performing the experiments, has made a mistake. Miles had not checked Jepp's results closely enough. Because of the error, he is not given the new appointment.

As he ponders his future, Miles rejects various possibilities (S, 277-278). He refuses to regain his place by "patience and penitence and effort." He will not go without money and leisure. He will not enter scientific industry, because salaries are too low. He will not teach, for academic teaching is only "instructing people in unimportant subjects by a method in which one does not believe." The field of scientific journalism is uncertain. Rejecting these possibilities, he has another thought. He says, "It occurred to me I had no devotion to science" (S, 278). He gradually realizes that it has never really been a pure devotion to science in the abstract that has pushed him in his career, but rather, as he himself explains it, "that human interest of mine, that had grown into a passion." Again he says, "My absorbing interest had been the human conflict, the motives and the difference between those

motives and their conscious shape" (S, 279).[3]

Gone are his high standards of scientific devotion and his uninvolvement in the affairs of his fellow humans. Accepting his devotion to those human beings, Miles gives himself to it, financing his new life by working "fiercely" at science but "without any delight in it" (S, 283), and by writing political essays (S, 322). Making up for the job he was unable to obtain for his friend Sheriff, he also manages the latter's scientific career (S, 322).

All the time, he gradually abandons his love for science and his devotion to scientific truth. His regard for science is tested finally when he receives an article in which Sheriff describes an experiment which covers much the same ground as one which Miles had once abandoned because the results would not fall into any sort of order. But whereas his own results were sufficient to stop his efforts, Sheriff's have "simplified themselves down to just those facts which led to a solution of spectacular clarity" but which is deceiving (S, 338). Miles decides that this has been a deliberate mistake on Sheriff's part, the setting down of some false facts and the omission of some true ones. Like Miles's own mistake, this is the "major scientific

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[3]This could well be a statement of Snow's own purpose in the "Strangers and Brothers" series.

crime" (S, 338).

Miles must decide what action to take. If he holds to his sense of scientific integrity, he must publicly point out the error. There can be no excuse--either Sheriff's motive or their personal friendship. So he prepares his letter reporting the error, but never sends it. Miles's concern for humanity overcomes his allegiance to scientific truth. He decides that on the grounds of humanity he must not act. For one thing, Sheriff's wife, Audrey, had once been in love with Miles and so he wonders if jealousy is his motive. Moreover, to send the letter would mean the ruin of Sheriff's scientific career, just as he is reaching a permanent and important position.[4] These considerations persuade him not to expose his friend's mistake.

For Arthur Miles there is something higher than scientific truth. That truth becomes for him not an absolute, an end to be served, but something valuable only in relation to the service it can render. The rules of scientific investigation and integrity become too confining and Miles sets up for himself a new table of values, which are to be judged in their relation to his interest in humanity. "I was liberated," he says, "from all the

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[4]He is an older man, having had false starts in his career.

faiths and superstitions, and at last there was only the honesty I should try to keep within myself" (S, 342).

Is Miles's decision honest? It seems that his abandonment of scientific integrity is a desperate reaction, a final, almost petty, hit at the rules of scientific investigation which have caused the ruin of his own career. His concern for humanity is too narrow; it is limited to individuals, without the breadth of outlook that can balance the individual and the common good. To allow the fraud to remain unchecked is to let stand an offence against science, truth and justice. Brotherhood--the concern for the welfare of one's fellows which Miles professes--demands justice, both individual and corporate. Miles's action is selfish and sentimental. To fly in the face of the common good in order to satisfy a feeling for an individual is to place the common good in jeopardy. If society is to function, its members must be honest as well as compassionate. In his self-concern disguised as feeling for humanity, Miles is much like Martin Eliot, whom we shall discuss later.

II

Arthur Miles's conclusions, particularly his denial of the absolute importance of scientific integrity in the

face of human brotherhood, are a foretaste of Martin Eliot's. He is Lewis's brother and the major character in The New Men. But while their final actions are parallel, the motives that move Miles and Martin are vastly dissimilar. Conditions are very different in the two novels: Martin works in the production of the atom bomb, the beginnings of which Miles had observed. England is at war, and scientists must decide on the extent of their involvement and responsibility. Science and government work together out of necessity. Their goals are one: to win the war. But they are divided by the scientists' concern for scientific truth and human justice. The dilemma is focussed in five men: three scientists--Martin Eliot, Walter Luke,[5] and Eric Sawbridge; and two members of government--Thomas Bevill and Sir Hector Rose.[6]

Walter Luke is seen in a dilemma quite different from that of The Masters. Instead of the survival of the college or the position of individuals in that limited area of society, the fate of mankind is now the issue. No longer

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[5]Who appears in The Masters.

[6]Who appear in Homecomings.

are scientists engaged in experiments merely for the sake of discovering all they can in the realm of pure science. Whether they choose it or not, their experiments must, in order to win the war, lead to the development of nuclear weapons.

The contrast between the old attitude and the new is seen in Martin Eliot. Bogged down in a job that will almost certainly not lead to fame for him, Martin allows Lewis to manoeuvre him on to the staff of Barford, the experimental station where the atomic bomb is being built.[7] His view of science and Luke's differ greatly. Each loves science, gives himself to it wholeheartedly, and is bent on doing his best to win the war. But they differ in the satisfaction that science gives them. For Martin science provides meaning and pleasure when it is "pure"; the happiness it gives him comes from, as Lewis describes it, "seeing how nature worked; it would not have lost its strength if nothing he had done added sixpence to practical human betterment" (NM, 84).[8] He is a "contemplative". Elsewhere, Lewis describes his brother, in his attitude towards

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[7]Martin's motives, and Lewis's, will be discussed later.

[8]Martin shares this feeling with a colleague, Arthur Mounteney, whose outlook Lewis is here describing, as well as with Arthur Miles.

science, as holding the "world in the palm of his hand; as though he had, in his moment of insight, seen the trick by which he could toss it about" (NM, 51).

Luke's attitude is different. As Lewis says, contemplation for him is a "means, not a joy in itself; his happiness was to 'make Mother Nature sit up and beg.' He wanted power over nature so that human beings should have a better time" (NM, 84).

But whatever their difference, the scientists share a universal understanding of a brotherhood of man that surpasses national boundaries. They feel an affinity with their fellow scientists of every nation, and work together naturally and easily. So it is not difficult for Eric Pearson and Kurt Puchwein, two of the Barford scientists, to go off to the United States and to work closely with their colleagues there. But this blurring of international dividing lines has consequences which we shall discuss later.

In a time of war, Martin is disturbed that his science is abstract. Like his fellows, he claims that it must do "more practical good than harm to human lives" (NM, 84). The war forces scientists (and non-scientists) to examine the basis of their values, to search for the best expression of their human brotherhood.

As the war begins and they start their experiments, the scientists in general are remarkably naïve about the possibility of the weapons they are developing being used to destroy human beings; indeed they seem unable to recognize the possibility. When they first discuss the matter with Lewis, he says that "it did not catch hold of us as something real" (NM, 18). One of the scientists, Francis Getliffe, speaks of the possibility of the use of the new secret "as if it were a danger of the future" as Lewis puts it, "a piece of science-fiction, like the earth running into a comet's path" (NM, 18).

And when Martin and Mounteney talk with Lewis of the likelihood of using the bomb, they are certain that it "won't happen," that it "mustn't happen" (NM, 85). They insist that scientists have a duty to warn about the consequences of using atomic power, but as such a thing seems "far in the future," the "shadow of horror" passes away, and they do nothing (NM, 87). So they continue work on the bomb, considering it unbelievable that it should be used.

Once the bomb has been developed, rumours spread in England that it will first be tested in the United States and then used in combat. Shocked out of their naïveté, the scientists meet to plan their campaign against

the use of the bomb (NM, Chapter XXV). Mounteney describes their purpose as a "meeting of scientists to find ways of stopping a misuse of science. . . . the greatest perversion of science that we've ever been threatened with" (NM, 177). He suggests they issue a public statement of their objections. Largely through Martin's efforts, this proposal is rejected, and instead a team of English scientists is sent to the United States to present a plan much like one of Francis Getliffe's: tell the enemy of the bomb's existence; demonstrate it where no one will be killed; then, only as a last resort, use it on an enemy town (NM, 179). But as the team argues its case, the first atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima.[9]

The scientists are horrified. Martin, who has stopped Mounteney from acting dramatically before, comes to see Lewis. Deeply disturbed, talking in clipped phrases, they discuss the question weighing on Martin: "What is a man to do?" (NM, 190). What can the concerned person do to work out his belief in human brotherhood? Martin is determined to write a letter to the paper, basing his argument on

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[9] In an interview with Mr. Lister Sinclair on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation programme "Close-Up," Sir Charles recalled that the American atomic scientist, Professor Frank, and his colleagues wrote a letter at this same time to the American Government, urging that the bomb be not used in war. This is another example of the scientists' brotherhood and common concern.

what he calls a "minimum respect for humanity" (NM, 193), asking why such a step should be taken in the face of peace moves already under way, and without a warning of the bomb's availability and its capacity to destroy. Lewis dissuades him from sending the letter, but Martin's original intention indicates the depth of his concern.

As they are absorbing the shock of this destruction of human life, the scientists face another dilemma. It is discovered that Eric Sawbridge, a young scientist at Barford, has been passing secrets to the Soviet Union. Thus a conflict arises between national loyalty and vows of allegiance, and the international nature of scientific investigation. As Sawbridge is still not proven a spy, it is up to the scientists to take action (NM, 212-214). Martin wishes to remove him from his position, proven guilty or not, in order to prevent any further leakage of information. Walter Luke, a kinder and less ambitious man, is concerned with Sawbridge's rights and with the disruption of Barford's progress which would result from the removal of an excellent scientist and from the disturbance over firing a man yet to be proved guilty.

Martin wins and is eventually called in to help break Sawbridge down. During the interrogation, yet another contradiction appears within the world of science.

Since Sawbridge has given secrets to the Soviet Union, his allegiance is naturally to that country: England no longer can claim his loyalty. Science, however, still does. His interrogators discover (NM, 254) that even while he is engaged in undermining all that the project is trying to achieve, Sawbridge is professionally and emotionally very much involved in the success of Barford. Lewis remembers how diligently Sawbridge has worked for the project's success and how, when the first test of the atomic pile failed, Sawbridge had stood, "his mouth open with pain like a marathon runner's." "For once," says Lewis, "I saw emotion on his face, he . . . was nearly crying" (NM, 114). Once he has confessed, Sawbridge is tried and sentenced to twelve years in prison.

So the scientists move out of the isolation of the world of their research into a world of action and involvement in society. As we have seen, Martin experiences stirrings of discontent at the lack of practical application of his research to the welfare of men. These stirrings are intensified by the possibility of the bomb's being used to destroy life, and break out into protest when his fears become facts. Finally, disgusted with what outsiders have done with science, with the political difficulties involved, he retreats to the college, to pure science.

Martin's reaction is one of the two extremes of action found in The New Men--the other is to turn to Communism, as do Sawbridge and Mounteney. But there is a middle way, a more realistic one--Luke's way. He too sees the corruption of science that has begun in the war, but he refuses to hide himself from life, from responsibility. Instead, he determines to carry on, loyal to his country, and at the same time, to try to restore the purity of science.

All three, and the other scientists they represent, move from isolation to an awareness of the need for involvement, from stranger towards accepting the need to be brothers. Martin, Luke, and Sawbridge become involved: they cannot avoid it. They are not merely concerned for science and their fellows; they grasp the wider aspects of community. Even if Martin is in retreat, he has had a vision of a new world. The process with which Snow is concerned is not constant and certain. If Martin has once reached out to his fellows, he is likely to do so again. What has emerged as a vital force is that sense of human brotherhood which reaches beyond personal, professional, and ideological boundaries. The individual in the novels of C.P. Snow is increasingly involved in creating a vital society.

III

In his progress from isolation and involvement, from stranger to brother, Lewis Eliot learns that each level to which one proceeds depends for its success on the satisfactory achievement of the previous one. So the establishment of a family relationship depends upon the ability of individual members to give to each other. Before the community of group, town, or college can be achieved, solitary individuals must learn to become friends. So it is perhaps too large a jump from the more local concern with scientific truth and kinship to the larger area of concern for humanity. An intermediate step is necessary: national loyalty, as expressed in participation in government. At each stage of his life Lewis takes the appropriate step; he understands the need for committing himself. So he becomes involved in government, and the scientists gradually follow him.

The scientists are liberal and even radical in politics. Like Lewis, they mistrust professional politicians, career civil servants, or anything that smacks even faintly of reaction. So when he hears that the Minister, Thomas Bevill, does not think it impossible that the atom bomb could be dropped, Mounteney's reaction is typical: "What else do you expect . . . of a broken down reactionary politician?" (NM, 86). At one time this would

have been Lewis's reaction as well. In Time of Hope, he is a member of George Passant's liberal, free-thinking group, and takes part in radical speech-making (98). In his relations with the Marches, Lewis's radical tendencies are repeatedly revealed in The Conscience of the Rich (96). In The Masters he declares his political affinity with the scientists (32). He admits to being prejudiced against Sir Hector Rose, the civil servant who appears in Homecomings and The New Men. Because Rose is a conservative, a traditionalist, in the liberal view a reactionary, Lewis says he would have "distrusted him when it came to a crisis" (H, 123). No reason other than the political is given. Yet, once Lewis has worked with Rose and with the Minister, he admits that he had let prejudice rule him. "I should have been dead wrong," he says. "Actually, when war came, Bevill and Rose were as whole-hearted about fighting as men could be. Compared with my friends on the irregular left, their nerves were stronger" (H, 123). Rose, he points out, is "totally immersed" in the war, "carrying responsibility without a blink" (H, 123).

Thus it is chiefly through Bevill and Rose, his Permanent Secretary, that Lewis sees government at work. Bevill is a born aristocrat, a politician, a gentle man who at the outset of his career, decides Lewis, determined "never to give away a secret, and never to allow himself the

bright remark that makes a needless enemy" (NM, 13), who makes "a profession of being unassuming" (H, 112). He is not at all like the scientists. He is prepared to use the atomic bomb if it is the only way to win the war. Besides, he asks, "Has there ever been a weapon that someone did not want to let off?" (NM, 71). He is horrified that any man could think of betraying his country (NM, 220-221). His realism is in contrast to the naïve dreamings of the scientists.

Just as the scientists think of Bevill in slanted preconceptions, so they try to make out Sir Hector Rose as the typical civil servant. In many ways he is that--immaculate in "his official black coat and striped trousers" (NM, 14), careful each day to have a vase of fresh hyacinths on his desk (NM, 122), with his "convention of politeness" (NM, 25), proud of his country (NM, 47). But when he gets to know him, Lewis sees Rose as having "no taste for show" (NM, 56), "himself formal, but . . . only [objecting] to informality in others when it interfered with his administrative power" (NM, 14). Above all, he is scrupulously fair, prejudiced in many ways, but able, as Lewis discovers, to keep that prejudice from influencing his judgment, and expecting others to be the same. For him, says Lewis, it is "easy to eliminate a personal consideration, and he

would [despise] me if I could not do the same" (NM, 123). And when in the face of Francis Getliffe's arguments, Rose changes his mind "against his preconceived opinion, against most of his prejudices," Lewis wonders "with some shame . . . whether in his place I should have been so fair" (NM, 67). So Lewis learns to judge people by what they are and do, not by what they appear to be. This is necessary if he is to become a brother, and the scientists must learn to do the same.

Gradually, those in science and those in government come to understand each other, and by the end of The New Men they are working together. The scientists finally become aware of the need for a national loyalty; they accept Sawbridge's trial for treason. The Minister and Rose begin to understand the agonizing decision the scientists must make as to the use of the bomb in war. Both want to win the war: the desire of the government to do so as quickly as possible and by whatever means necessary is balanced by the more scrupulous concern of the scientists for human lives.

In Science and Government, Snow claims with a degree of truth that professional administrators, no matter how "intelligent, honourable, tough, tolerant, and generous," lack foresight, a quality possessed to a

greater degree by the scientists, despite their inefficiency in administration (SG, 83).[10] The nature of each group limits its outlook; only by working together can they arrive at a community in which strangers can become brothers in the fullest sense.

IV

Once more in his life, Lewis Eliot sheds a prejudice, realizing that stereotyped attitudes are most often modified or proved wrong by actually getting to know people. He learns that political differences are not absolute, unalterably separating men from each other. He learns that there must be accommodations between liberal and conservative, just as between science and government. Each can contribute to the common enrichment of both.

Thus he becomes aware of a new area of concern. Far behind him is the narrow, self-interested person of his youth. He has achieved brotherhood, but the need remains to guard against falling back into his former practices.

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[10]This is anticipated in The New Men when Mounteney comments that scientists must speak out because they "can imagine the consequences" of the use of nuclear weapons (87). Luke expresses the same idea (136).

That this is especially necessary is shown in Lewis's attitude to his brother, which is much the same as Mrs. Eliot's demands on Lewis himself. As The New Men opens, we see Lewis trying to prevent Martin from marrying Irene Brunskill, who he believes will ruin Martin's life. He complains that Martin's seeming stability and detachment, his ability to avoid foolishness and to look after himself, are not really there (NM, 3). He knows better; he knows that Martin needs guidance. Just as Mrs. Eliot had wanted to live through Lewis, he wants to do the same through Martin: "I had invested much hope in him, including hopes of my own that had been frustrated" (NM, 8-9). When Lewis tries to dissuade him, Martin retreats within himself, directing the conversation instead to the atomic energy then about to be developed. Because of Lewis's intrusions, Martin begins to isolate himself, and the blood brothers begin to become strangers.

Then, because he thinks that Martin will not go far in his present war-time job, Lewis decides to get him into Barford. Because Martin is proud and secretly ambitious and would retreat even further into himself, Lewis manoeuvres him into asking for the position by having Martin present while he talks to Luke about it (NM, Chapter IV). Martin asks for Lewis's help. Although Lewis worries about his own involvement in Martin's life and his responsi-

bility for him, he rejoices that his "self-identificatory dreams" will be fulfilled (NM, 117).

As Martin progresses in his career, Lewis has his moments of despair. When things beyond Martin's control go wrong, it is Martin with whom Lewis is angry. Because his own dreams would be destroyed, Lewis stops Martin from risking his career by sending the letter to the paper (NM, 195). At this point, partly in "frustrated reaction," as one reviewer points out, Martin becomes a "ruthless success-worshipper,"[11] pursuing his career at the expense of other scientists. Of this Lewis cannot approve and he and Martin become even more estranged.

When the Sawbridge affair comes up, Martin takes advantage of Luke's good nature. When Luke rejects his plan to dismiss Sawbridge out of hand, Martin insists on having his views on record (NM, 214). Lewis sees his brother's hidden motive, which soon becomes apparent. Once the suspicions against Sawbridge are more certain, and Luke wants to dismiss him, Martin reverses himself and demands that he be kept. Again Lewis sees only too clearly his brother's desire to use the situation to gain his own

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[11]Review of The New Men, in The Times Literary Supplement, May 7, 1954, p. 296.

advantage (NM, 227). Then Luke becomes ill once again with radiation sickness, leaving Martin in virtual control of the establishment. "The luck," says Lewis, "was playing into Martin's hand. I knew that he was ready . . . to make the most of it" (NM, 241). Even as he praises Luke's ability, Martin watches for his opportunity. He persuades the Minister to let him help break Sawbridge down. He succeeds, and in the reorganization of Barford he is offered the position of superintendent, with Luke to be demoted to chief advisor (NM, 281-282).

Then, in a reversal which is mystifying and not quite successful as a literary manipulation of character, Martin refuses the position. The reasons he gives are based on his concern for personal integrity and what has been termed "scientific virtue".[12] To his wife he says, "The head of Barford is just as much a part of the machine as any of the others. . . . If I take the job, I shan't have the trouble of thinking for myself again" (NM, 293). His explanation to Lewis is that in the face of the problem of the bomb, there are two choices. One can do as Walter Luke--"struggle on . . . and take [one's] share of what

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[12] Ibid.

had been done and what might still be done, and hope that we might come out at the end of the tunnel," to accept the "burnings alive, the secrets, the fighting point of power," and to take the consequences, to live in a "power equilibrium" where the "relics of liberal humanism [have] no place" (NM, 300).

In the words of Mr. John Metcalf, this "rejection for integrity's sake doesn't ring true when sounded against the facts we are given about Martin."[13] But as another reviewer points out, Snow is concerned with the problem itself, not with any fixed solution.[14] Certainly, the problem is there. Martin Eliot, in The New Men, rejects certain success and Arthur Miles, in The Search, rejects the promise of it. Both do so from ostensibly the same reason--a concern for humanity. Both choices are a retreat disguised as a step forward. Miles says that he abandons scientific integrity out of his concern for humanity. Martin abandons humanity out of his concern for scientific integrity--although he claims to be concerned for humanity. His move is equally sentimental, but with more sinister implications.

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[13] Review of The New Men, in The Spectator, May 14, 1954, p. 600.

[14] Review of The New Men, in The Nation, CLXXX (March 5, 1955), 206.

For Miles's concern is genuine; Martin's is not. Miles genuinely feels that what he does for Sheriff is more important than the theory of scientific truth. Martin's action is a disgusted revolt against what he considers a perversion of science. But whereas Luke stays a scientist in the world, at the same time fighting for his fellows' welfare, Martin chooses to satisfy his ego by abandoning his fellow men.

The result to Martin's career is significant. Returning to the college, to pure science, he finds that he is outclassed by men junior to him, that he has no real chance of advancement (NM, 308-309). Lewis visits him in his new life, sees him subdued, accepting the decreased renown that will inevitably be his, yet with the "curious kind of happiness" that comes to those who make such renunciations (NM, 309).

Lewis begins to see the wrong of his possessive love: "Suddenly I thought that, hoping so much for him, with the fraternal concern that identified myself in him, I had worried little about his happiness" (NM, 309). He believes what Martin had told him once before, that instead of seeking his happiness, Lewis had wanted too much for himself (NM, 273). Lewis recalls his reaction to his mother's love and sees that his love for Martin is no less

possessive, that it is also "a darkness of the heart" (NM, 310). Because he recognizes this, he can do something about it.

In spite of Martin's retreat into himself and his abandonment of the wider world, in spite of Lewis's regression into the possessive love he had once rejected, there is hope at the end of the novel. The people with whom Snow is concerned in this series of novels, despite their widening vision of community, retain a narrowness of outlook which hinders their full development as brothers. In this novel, the scientists have a broader vision, and are open to the wider sense of community that is necessary if civilization is to survive. Some, like Lewis Eliot and Walter Luke accept this necessity; it only remains for them to improve their society. Some, like Martin Eliot, reject it; but there is hope for them because they have once experienced it and will probably accept it at some time. Others--and they are in the vast majority--have yet to learn about brotherhood and to accept it. But the awareness of community is abroad in the world, and for that reason there is hope that strangers will become brothers, that individual and society will achieve a balanced relationship.

V

In Chapter III we saw the role played in the college by ability and success. Snow is concerned with both of these throughout his novels. Whatever gifts a man possesses, he is expected to use them; so Lewis emphasizes the failure of Jago, Brown, and Chrystal to fulfill their promise. So in The Conscience of the Rich Mr. March feels that because he has left his career at an early age, he has failed in some way, in spite of his fortune and his generally happy life. So in Homecomings Sir Hector Rose declares that George Passant cannot be worth much or else he would not have remained a small town solicitor for so many years. He says, "A man of his ability who just rests content in a fourth-rate job must have something wrong with him" (H, 194). For the same reason, Lewis is concerned throughout the series of novels with winning success in his own career. His illness, as portrayed in Time of Hope, has its origin in his fatigue and his poor diet, but is aggravated by his fear of its becoming public knowledge. He feels that "no one would persevere with a sick young man" (TH, 316). When he recovers and is able to continue his career, the constant care he must give Sheila hampers him in his career and determines that he will never be as successful as he has wished, and so he retreats to the safety of the

college.

This same attitude to success continues in The New Men. Martin must make a harsh decision when he chooses the obscurity of the college to the fame of the scientific world. In The Affair we see him reduced to what seem to be insignificant politics, as compared with the politics of science and government, as he concerns himself with obtaining the post of Senior Tutor.

Men with high ambitions, and their friends, are concerned with the formal recognition which success brings with it. To be made a Fellow of the Royal Society is important to Nightingale, who never makes it (M, 161-162), and to Luke, who is honoured at an early age (NM, 231). Academic honours are important too: Gay's eighteen honorary doctorates mean very much to him; and Francis Getliffe, even after his distinguished scientific career, desires intensely to be Master of his college.

All pay great attention to those honours their country can give them. Luke and Getliffe are knighted for their war-time researches, and Lewis receives the K.B.E. for his government service. Drawbell watches the honours lists for a knighthood that never comes (NM, 98, 139, 221). Sir Hector Rose is especially careful to see that those who deserve honours receive them (NM, 277-278,

304-305). Crawford wears his C.B.E., Nightingale his D.S.O. and M.C., and Pilbrow his "medals of miscellaneous Balkan wars" (M, 128). And there is Houston Eggar, a junior civil servant in the foreign office who is disappointed when he receives the C.B.E., because his seniority demands a C.M.G. (LD, 127). Since he is, as Lewis describes him, "a man who gets much pleasure from small prizes," he is not content until he receives it (LD, 331).

But what about the unsuccessful, who receive no public honours, who must make the most of their failures? In his article "The Sacrifices of Success,"[15] Mr. Henry Curtis Webster maintains that it is the "relative failures" who dominate the novels. They are there to balance their "successful opposites."[16] George Passant's warmth and devotion are in contrast to the cold ruthlessness of his employer, Harry Eden, and his vigorous independence balances the unfeeling efficiency of Sir Hector Rose.[17] The agonized soul-searching of Roy Calvert is in contrast to the pompous self-assurance of Sir Oulstone Lyall, his

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[15] Saturday Review, XLI (July 12, 1958), 8-10, 34.

[16] Ibid., p. 10.

[17] George is for a time a civil servant in Homecomings.

fellow orientalist (LD, 67-68). There is the warm-hearted pure scientist, Martin Eliot, retiring to the "uneminence" of the college,[18] as opposed to the submissive engineer, Eric Pearson, and the "essential functionary," Cyril Drawbell.[19] Sheila, with her tortured soul and inability to love, is superior to George Passant's mistress, Daphne, in Strangers and Brothers, and to Rosalind Calvert, in Time of Hope, both of whom are "normal women" sensually, but incapable of fathoming the depths of love and life.[20]

The "failures" are generally more likable than the "successes," says Mr. Webster. This is true because they have examined life more closely, tasted its dark moments as well as its joys, learned to reach out to their fellows either out of their own need or in order to give help. They are closer to being brothers than are the successful strangers. To be successful costs something--in most of these cases, the awareness of a wider area of concern. Those who are most successful in their own field tend to regard that field as the end of their existence. So Crawford cannot see beyond science and Pearson does not

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[18]Webster, op. cit.

[19]Ibid.

[20]Ibid.

see the moral implications of the use of the atomic bomb (NM, 159-162). Eden is bound by the tradition of his firm and the town. Because of their narrowness of outlook these men are slow to grasp the ideal of community and so they remain strangers.

The unsuccessful and the less successful are the ones who see the need for brotherhood--George Passant, Roy Calvert, Sheila Knight, Charles March, Paul Jago, and Martin Eliot. In their careers and in their lives generally they suffer for their ideals and their vision.

Yet society cannot be composed only of people who are failures, if it is to be meaningful; practical persons are needed, persons who can carry out the vision, either their own or that of others. So Snow sees the need for scientists and humanists, idealists and realists, independents and the politically committed, strangers and brothers, to join their insights and abilities to create a new and vital society.

VI

The Reverend C.P. Crowley has declared that although it would seem that Snow's world has no theological, vertical dimension, his horizontal movement does lead to something beyond man.[21] Snow's idea of justice as some-

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[21] "The Closed Universe of C.P. Snow," given on the Trans-Canada network of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, March 4, 1962.

thing coming from beyond man leads him to a higher vision. His intuition of a world where men live according to the demands of justice is a glimpse of the ideal, of the city of God whose nature is love.

Formal religion does not play a major role in Snow's novels. The Christianity which Lewis observes is the formal, traditional, surface religion of Arthur Brown (M, 20), the "hygienic" perfunctory religion of the Reverend Ralph Udal (LD, 202), the spiritually dead religion of Despard-Smith (LD, 387-389). Roy Calvert, in his despair is unable to find God; religion is useless to him (LD, 80-82). In The Affair (32-33), the younger scientists are believers, but their religion has no force in the action of the novel. In The Conscience of the Rich, Judaism comes off no better as an effective force: in the lives of the March family, it seems to be no more than part of their tradition.

Lewis Eliot can find hope only in the brotherhood of man. Man's tragic aloneness forces him to join with his fellows. Religion says that there is a God to whom man can turn in his isolation and that therefore there is hope. For Snow, there is no such God; man is absolutely alone and hope is impossible except in maintaining a meaningful community.

Snow's plan for achieving community is not a simple blueprint, imposed on a number of lives and events. There is no series of successive levels of development, each leading directly on to the next. Man is tragic and comic, serious and ridiculous. His higher nature sees the possibility of community; his lower nature drags him back towards selfishness, as we have seen happen to Lewis. If a man is innately a stranger, as Lewis is, he will have greater difficulty in attaining brotherhood than if he were closer to it by nature, as is George Passant. If, like Lewis, either or both of his parents impose a demanding love on him, his progress will be further slowed. But even for the more self-giving person, the danger of being exploited still exists. The characters in Snow's novels are seen in varying degrees of isolation and involvement.

Justice, integrity, compassion, and involvement; these are the bases of the society Snow envisages, yet they point beyond man. Man's position is confusing and distressing in its aloneness. But in his capacity for community, man the stranger becomes man the brother. In a masterly narrative that compels and instructs, Sir Charles Percy Snow shows that when the stranger becomes the brother, when the individual discovers his proper place in a meaningful, vital society, at the same time not

abandoning his individuality entirely, then this age can be a time of hope.

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