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REASON AND VALUES IN BLOOMSBURY FICTION

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"From these primary qualities, Reasonableness and a Sense of Values, may spring a host of secondaries: a taste for truth and beauty, tolerance, intellectual honesty, fastidiousness, a sense of humour, good manners, curiosity, a dislike of vulgarity, brutality, and over-emphasis, freedom from superstition and prudery, a fearless acceptance of the good things of life, a desire for complete self-expression and for a liberal education, a contempt for utilitarianism and philistinism, in two words - sweetness and light."

(Clive Bell.)

PREFACE

When I first began looking at the fiction of the Bloomsbury Group I had little idea of what my final argument would be. Now, I find myself measuring the values implicit in the novels against the beliefs of Bloomsbury as enumerated by outside commentators and by members of Bloomsbury itself, and reaffirming not only the independence of mind which individual members retained but the faulty judgments of which some outsiders have been guilty. This thesis makes no claim to be an exhaustive coverage of Bloomsbury ideas in fiction. In a short study this is simply not possible. As a result, I may be guilty of having left out some things which are important in themselves but which were not strictly relevant to my purpose. I have for example, concentrated on the novels of E.M. Forster and Virginia Woolf rather than the short stories, as presenting their points of view in a more fully-developed form, and I have avoided too much involvement with Forster's and Virginia Woolf's theories of the novel and the extent to which they have successfully implemented them. I may also have done some aspects less than justice through condensing them into short statements - Moore's philosophy, Forster's doctrine of the 'freed' heart, or the complex relationship of Virginia Woolf's mind with the visual world around her. If I have set running a far greater number of hares than I have subsequently chased and caught, at least some of those I have caught may be deemed to have been worthy of study, and some of those I have not, to be deserving of further pursuit.

The bibliography is not in any way a complete list of material by or about Bloomsbury. It is only a 'list of sources', and I have included in it nothing which has not in some way influenced my thinking on the subject. One glaring omission, of which I am uncomfortably conscious, is Leonard

Woolf's second novel, The Wise Virgins (1914), a copy of which could not be found in the time available for this thesis. Leonard Woolf himself is an interesting person and an able writer, and the book might well repay study for whoever can find it.

My thanks are due to a number of people without whom this thesis may have been started, but would certainly never have been completed.

First and foremost, Professor R.G. Freen, who originally suggested the fiction of Bloomsbury as a possible area of study. All faults in the way the subject has been treated are entirely my own. For his patience and understanding in trying circumstances I shall always be deeply grateful.

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I am grateful to those who have alternately patted me on the back and applied the whip; to my parents, whose help, as ever, has been given generously and unquestioningly; to Ray, who is always there in spirit; and

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