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Metamorfosi urbane e familiari. La drammatica rottura degli equilibri in Arctic Summer di E. M. Forster

Abstract – According to Virginia Woolf, around 1910 human character changed. E.M. Forster, after the publication of *Howards End* in 1910, agrees with her and begins to think that a change has also occurred within himself. If on the one hand he was accustomed to write about the old-fashioned world, on the other he now takes the view that people and attitudes have deeply changed. Alterations brought about by modernity convey a sense of frustration in Forster's view to the point of urging him to retire from writing. Since he realises that he cannot halt progress or modify the course of history, he apparently stops writing fiction after the great success of *Howards End*. He views modernity not as a fortune, but as an ontological phenomenon he's not able to grab and describe. In this sense, *Arctic Summer*, started in 1911 but published posthumously, represents an original experiment in Forster's literary production whereby he describes all social upheaval. Here, he raises a number of thorny questions about the new society whose meaning he cannot grasp. What is the world coming to? This is one of life's great unanswerable questions that eventually forces Forster to give up his story. In light of what I have said, starting from a plot description, my paper aims to analyse this "fragmented" story, trying to explain the Forster's artistic silence following the interrupted writing of *Arctic Summer* and the reason why he finally decides not to complete his novella. As with his first two works, Forster divides *Arctic Summer* into two sections: the first has an Italian setting and the second an English one, in which the most expressive evolution of the protagonists are highlighted.

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