An Abstract of M. Phil Dissertation

BRITISH WOMEN CHARACTERS IN

PAUL SCOTT'S THE RAJ QUARTET

ANURADHA BHATTARAY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

THESIS SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN
ENGLISH OF NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY
SHILLONG-793014
2004

British interaction with India began in the seventeenth century when they visited the courts of the Mughals as ambassadors and gradually strengthened their commercial ties in the eighteenth century and finally established the Empire by the middle of the nineteenth century. When India got its Independence in 1947 it had a distinct colonial history. A whole lot of Anglo-Indian literature on the Raj has been written. While Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster write from within the Imperial Age, Paul Scott writes in a reflective vein, depicting and critically examining the British life in pre-Independence days from a post-Imperial space.

The Anglo-Indian literature written in this Imperial period reflects the socio-historical milieu of the times. The early novels were mostly based on the grossly exaggerated reports of the atrocities inflicted on the British women and children by the natives during the Sepoy Mutiny. These novels propagated different myths which were aimed at creating racial distance between the white/ruler and the

natives/ruled and the most popular was the rape myth. Further, these texts upheld the civilizing mission of the British and glorified the Empire. In the latter half of the nineteenth century there was a spurt of novels called 'Anglo-Indian domestic novel' and the 'station romance.' These novels were personal in tone and featured the domestic and social life in the Anglo-Indian stations. Such fictions were mostly written by men and women who had the first hand knowledge and experience of the Raj. These novels flourished up to the war. While the glorification of the Empire found its staunchest champion in Kipling, the war ushered in a period of serious doubts which affected the Raj. This phenomenon is prominently incorporated in the later Anglo-Indian writings. The decline of the Empire gave rise to the question of the position of the British in India and the pro-Raj and anti-Raj novels can be seen as a debate on this issue.

What intrigues one is the position of the womenfolk of the colonizers or the women of the Raj-the memsahibs (both married and unmarried). Historically, critics and writers alike have projected them as racist, idle, materialistic, emotional also and as imperialists. But for

many of them the Raj often meant tears, tragic separation from children and husbands and the constant fear of disease and death in an unfavourable climate. The figure of 'the white woman as tragic exile' (Sen, p.28) is often ignored.

A British woman undertook the passage to British India under different compulsions. Apparently, India was an ideal ground for seeking suitable husbands who would provide lavish aristocratic lives to their wives. In this context, the white woman is ambiguously located in the colonial space. She enters the colony as the 'fishing-fleet' in search of priviledges enjoyed by the ruling race but suffers because of her gender disadvantages inherent in that social set-up. The Anglo-Indian narratives also project India as a means of escaping Britain and its repressive social mores particularly for the young middle-class girls. As E.M. Forster writes in **A Passage to India**, India constantly invites – 'come.' It seemed to promise greater independence and also scope for realization of her desire to participate in public sphere where she could use her time and talent. Unfortunately, in most cases she is disillusioned in the end and

realizes that all her notions of escape from such a society and finding a new milieu for herself were just a dream. Yet another reason for women's emigration from the lower rung of the English society was due to compelling circumstances back home. Many women opted for missionary work as it was considered more dignified than becoming a maid-servant or governess; the only options open to a woman from this class.

Against this social and historical perspective of the memsahibs this dissertation will examine the British women characters in Paul Scott's **The Raj Quartet** which includes four novels : **The Jewel in the Crown** (1966), **The Day of the Scorpion** (1968), **The Towers of Silence** (1971) and **A Division of the Spoils** (1975). Scott weaves fiction out of the history of India ranging from the socio-political upheaval of 1942 to the eve of Independence in 1947. He captures the effect the loss of India has on the Anglo-Indian community, especially the pukka sort. Even more than the historical complexity, **The Raj Quartet** interests one primarily because it is a woman-centered narrative. It has women as dominant figures in each of the books.

These are the British women trapped in the socio-political impasse. They include the young, old and middle-aged; either married or unmarried. Paul Scott is an insider as he was a wartime cadet officer in India from 1942 to 1945 which enabled him to closely observe the lives of the British women during these turbulent years of the Raj. At the same time he is also an outsider when he recreates their situation after a distance of twenty years or so. The balanced perspective with which he has portrayed his women characters in the **Quartet** can be attributed to this.

'...your sex is made, Miss Crane, for marriage or for God ...,' says Mr.Cleghorn to Miss Crane in **The Jewel in the Crown**. The proposed study will attempt to examine Paul Scott's women characters in his **The Raj Quartet** in the light of such patriarchal pronouncements. Some important questions emerge from this. Such as: How do these British women in India behave in such restrictive domain? Do they project any defiance of it, if so, to what extent? How are Scott's women projected as being intellectual/anti-imperialist as opposed to the widely accepted notion of being

emotional/imperialists? In what ways do Scott's memsahibs differ from the conventional image of the memsahib in India? These questions form the bases of analysis of the British women in **The Raj Quartet**. The following are the chapter-wise division of the dissertation:

Introduction

Chapter 1. Marriage and Memsahib

Chapter 2. British Women and Missionary Life

Chapter 3. British Women in their 'expanded world'

Conclusion

The Introduction very briefly traces the coming of the British to India as traders and finally setting up the Empire. An overview of the Anglo-Indian fiction since the Sepoy Mutiny and the subsequent transfer of power from the East India Company to the Crown is done. The early Anglo-Indian fiction is mainly based on the Mutiny which worked as an effective medium of propagating certain myths complementing the colonialist agenda. Indira Ghose marks:

> ...one of the main myths of colonialism for which the signifier woman (white) was instrumentalized, the rape myth. This myth – grounded on no evidence – was

> deployed in the service of colonial punitive measures and gained authoritative status in colonial historiography. (Ghose, Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of Female Gaze, p.12)

After the 1880s most of the educated men in the Imperial Service and their wives also wrote a considerable amount of fiction featuring the Anglo–Indian domestic and social life. This can be seen as '...an act of self-definition, an articulation of self-identity as well as a prescription of this society's codes of conduct.' (Sen, Women and Empire: Representations in the Writings of British India, p.73) The dominant mood of the fiction produced in the declining years of the Empire was one of doubts and the sense of loss experienced by these members of the Raj. The mode of portraying the memsahibs in these Anglo-Indian texts is questioned by Paul Scott's **The Raj Quartet** when he portrays his women characters against the conventional mode of representation.

Chapter 1 will be an attempt to study marriage and its effect on the memsahibs in the Anglo-Indian society by examining the narratives of the **Quartet**. Marriage in the British India followed the

broader Victorian ideology. Marriage is the central point of a girl's life and accordingly her life and education since childhood is directed to achieve an ideal marriage. Further, the women who married the men in the Imperial Service were considered to be contributing towards the consolidation of the Empire by producing future empire-builders.

Scott's memsahibs belong to the last phase of the Imperial rule in India. Life in India in these last decades of the British rule was never the same as it used to be. 'The war had disrupted the ideal pattern.'(The Day of the Scorpion, p.136) The stations were flooded with men but very few were of the pukka sort. The eligible girls were even fewer. The 'fishing fleet' had stopped arriving. The behavioural practice of courtship and eventual marriage prescribed for the young girl, termed as the 'making of the memsahib' is still followed but dissenting members like Sarah Layton and Daphne Manners also emerge. They are critical of the dull façade of the colonizing men and reject the bland marriage arrangements of the Anglo-Indian society. Class distinctions operate in marriage and love as well in the Anglo-

Indian society but with gender discrimination. Miss Crane, the governess has to hide her feelings for Lieutanant Orme who is above her class and therefore beyond her reach. While Ronald Merrick, a lower class police officer in India uses marriage as a means to rise above his class in the society and achieve status. Colour consciousness is even more imposing. It categorically rules out the prospect of marriage or romance between the English and the natives as it was necessary to uphold '...an imperial culture that was rooted in defensive racial aloofness and simultaneous cultivation of an 'English' colonial identity.'(Indrani Sen, p. 10)

Marriage also encompasses motherhood. The mother-role of the memsahib is the most pitiable aspect of her married life. She has to part with her child very early when they are sent to England for their education and this creates a break in the close emotional bond between the mother and child. Sarah Layton attributes the cause of her strenuous relationship with her mother to this prolonged separation since childhood. Further, the British woman in India was expected to respond more urgently to imperial duty than to her maternal instincts.

This is described as 'the saddest, yet inevitable result of Indian life'(Sen. p.10)

The colonial society gives little scope for the personal development of their women. The memsahibs basically play the mother-housewife role with total economic dependence on their men. They accept that their place is in the home. This confined space becomes even more stressful in an alien environment and their social isolation appears more severe. They suffer from monotony with no meaningful activities in the excessive time they have. They try to cope by partying, gossiping and the like. Their boredom is however somewhat relieved when after the war they begin to participate in social work. Even here, Sarah Layton's view is that for them in India there is no private life; there is only a public life. The ladies who form the social group in the station are bonded rather by location than by friendship. Such bonds hardly lead to any real intimacy because they have to move house to follow their husbands' careers frequently. The psychological stress on the grass-widows is even more. Some are even on the verge of nervous breakdown. Yet despite all this their colonial

responsibility lay in putting up a brave-front without capitulating to the trying circumstances. Scott shows how the decline of the Empire markedly affects the marriage of its serving men and women. The degeneration and loss of moral spirit in the subsequent batch of Englishmen is reflected not only in their attitude and work but also in their personal lives. Their women are also unable to cope with the changing situation as some of their predecessors had done.

Marriage therefore is projected as the centre point in a memsahib's life in India. If it lures her to India with its promise of comfort, wealth and status it also demands compromises. It demands sacrifice of her individual self. A memsahib in India was expected to adapt herself to fit into her husband's career.

Chapter 2 will study the plight of the women from the lower rung of the British society who join the Mission in India either with evangelical ardour or under compelling circumstances back home. However, they end up disillusioned because they realize that neither their proselytization nor teaching is relevant in the given

circumstances. They are unable to fulfill their missionary aspirations. Besides, they have to cope with social discrimination among their own kind because of their status in the society. In their predicament in an alien situation they seek company, love and sympathy but are denied. Eventually they not only loose their respect for the Raj but faith in mankind itself. God, for whose service they had ventured out too seems to be alienated from them. They are under tremendous pressure from all sides. In the process they loose their mental balance and die pathetic deaths. This study acknowledges Jenny Sharpe's contention that the missionaries are the 'invisible women of the Empire' whose life experiences and good work has been ignored in the discourse of the 'civilising mission' and therefore tries to do justice in that regard by attempting extensive textual analysis focusing on the lives of two such missionary women working in India.

Chapter 3 will analyse Scott's woman-centered narrative and disprove the prevailing notion that 'Almost without exception these women are shown to be totally lacking in sensitivity and intelligence. They are concerned only with the achievement of their own

comfort'.(p.104, Allen J. Greenberger) The British women portrayed in **The Raj Quartet** are liberal women who discover the 'expanded world' and try to reach out beyond racial barriers. They belong to different backgrounds and are of different age groups but their experience is more or less the same. They negate the patriarchal construct of memsahibs as racist, frivolous, stupid and idle. Nor are they merely emotional beings or imperializing agents as are generally shown to be. Rather they emerge as intellectuals and anti-imperialists. Unlike the other complacent memsahibs they are very sensitive to the situation around them and they do not conform to the Imperial system operating in India as a 'working robot.' They are disillusioned with the degeneration of the Anglo-Indian society. They have their original thinking and are liberal enough to voice it and at times even behave in keeping with their own convictions.

The Conclusion sums up the findings of the previous chapters and attempts to analyse the change in the position of the memsahib in the **Quartet** . The image of the memsahib in India as projected in most of the Anglo-Indian fiction particularly in Kipling's earlier

works like **Plain Tales from the Hills** was quite negative. This view was reinforced in the imagination of the reading public in Britain because of the fact that Kipling was the most widely read author at that time. Such a perception of the memsahib failed to present her in the reality of her circumstances in India.

In contrast, Scott has been able to give a more variegated and therefore a more realistic portrayal of the British women in the last decades of the Raj. Perhaps the change in the mode of portrayal of these women in Scott's fiction can be attributed to change taking place in the socio-political scenario after the war. The characters evolve as they try to cope with the changed reality of their life in India. What Scott has been able to achieve in the portrayal of the British women in India in **The Raj Quartet** can be best summed up in the following remark of V.R. Badiger on Paul Scott's definition of the novel:

> The literary artist, on the other hand, recreates imaginatively his version of "human reality" in terms of images. In a way, he implies that the novel is, in a general sense, "an image of human reality". Finding his own definition a bit unsatisfactory, he tends to agree with Walter

Allen who defines it as "an extended metaphor of the author's view of life."(Paul Scott: His Art and Vision, p.6)

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Books:

Scott, Paul. The Jewel in the Crown. London: Heinemann, 1967.

_____. The Day of the Scorpion. London: Arrow Books Ltd., 1998.

_____. The Towers of Silence. London: Mandarin Paperbacks, 1997.

_____. A Division of the Spoils. London: Mandarin Paperbacks, 1975.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books:

Badiger, V.R. Paul Scott: His Art and Vision. London: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1994.

Blaimers, H. Twentieth Century English Literature. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982.

Bose, S. Attitudes to Imperialism: Kipling, Forster and Paul Scott. New Delhi: Amar Prakashan, 1990.

Carrington, Charles. Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Work. London: Macmillan, 1995.

Chakraborty, D.K. A Passage to the Orient. Delhi: Amar Prakashan, 1998.

Chaudhuri, N . and Strobel, Margaret . (Eds.) Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Cohn, B.S. Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Cowasjee, Saros. (ed.) Women Writers of the Raj: Short Fiction from Kipling to Independence. London: Grafton Books/Collins, 1990.

Diver, Maud. The Englishwoman in India. London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1909.

Ghose, I. Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Female Gaze. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Greenberger, A.J. The British Image of India: A Study in the Literature of Imperialism,1880-1960. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Kipling, Rudyard. Plain Tales from the Hills. London: Macmillan, 1960.

Krishnamurthy, J. (ed.) Women in Colonial India: Essays on Survival, Work and the State. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Loomba, Annia. Colonialism/Postcolonialism. London: Routledge, 1998.

Mackenzie, John M. Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.

Mc Clintock, Anne. Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Misra, Udayon. The Raj in fiction: A Study of Nineteenth-Century British Attitudes towards India. Delhi: B.R. Publishing, 1987.

Moore-Gilbert, B.J. (ed.) Writing India (1757-1990): The Literature of British India. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Moore, R. Paul Scott's Raj. London: William Heinemann Ltd.,1990.

Nandy, Ashis. The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of the Self Under Colonialism. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Nicholson, K. A Presentation of Social Problems in the Indo-Anglian and Anglo-Indian Novel. Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1972.

Paxton, N.L. Writing Under Raj: Gender, Race and Rape in British Colonial Imagination,1830-1947. London: Rutgers University Press, 1999.

Rubin, D. After the Raj: British Novels of India since 1947. London: University Press of New England, 1986.

Said, Edward. Culture and Imperialism. New York : Knopf, 1993.

Sainsbury, Alison. "Married to the Empire : The Anglo-Indian Domestic Novel". In Writing India, 1757-1990 : The Literature of British India, ed. B.J. Moore-Gilbert, 163-87. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Sandison, Alan. The Wheel of Empire: A Study of the Imperial Idea in Some Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century Fiction. London: Macmillan, 1967.

Sen, Indrani. Woman and Empire: Representations in the Writings of British India (1858-1900). New Delhi: Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., 2002.

Shamsul, Islam. Chronicles of the Raj: A Study of Literary Reactions to the Imperial Idea Towards the End of the Raj. London: Macmillan, 1979.

Sharpe, J. Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Texts. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

Swinden, P. Paul Scott: Images of India. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980.

Vicinus, M. The Perfect Victorian Lady. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972.

Ward, Sir A.W. and Waller, A.R.(eds.) In The Cambridge History of English Literature. 14 : 331-42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.

Kipling, R. Plain Tales from the Hills. London: Macmillan, 1960.

Forster, E.M. A Passage to India. New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, 1999.

Articles :

Ali, T. "Fiction as History, History as Fiction." The Illustrated Weekly of India.(8 July, 1 1984): 33-35.

Banerjee, J. "A Living Legacy: An India View of Paul Scott's India. London Magazine, 20 (April/May 1980): 97-98.

Beloff, M. "The End of the Raj: Paul Scott's Novels as History". London: Encounter1 (May, 1976) 65-66.

Lister, R. Review of "The Jewel in the Crown". London: Evening Standard, 19 July, 1976.

Nye, R. Review of "The Day of the Scorpion". London: Guardian, 20 September,1968.

Levin, M. Review of "The Towers of Silence". New York Times Book Review, 20 February, 1972.

BRITISH WOMEN CHARACTERS IN

PAUL SCOTT'S THE RAJ QUARTET

ANURADHA BHATTARAY
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

THESIS SUBMITTED IN
PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT
OF THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN
ENGLISH OF NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY
SHILLONG-793014
2004

English

NORTH EASTERN HILL UNIVERSITY

APRIL, 2004

I, **Anuradha Bhattaray,** hereby declare that the subject matter of the dissertation is the record of work done by me, that the contents of this dissertation did not form basis of the award of any previous degree to me or to the best of my knowledge to anybody else, and that the dissertation has not been submitted by me for any research degree in any other University/Institute.

This is being submitted in the North Eastern Hill University for the degree of Master of Philosophy in English.

Anuradha Bhattaray
(Candidate)

30.4.04.
(Supervisor)

(Head)

Dated Shillong
The 30th April,2004.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I wish to thank Prof. T. Ao, my supervisor for her wonderful patience with me and her invaluable guidance. She inspires me as a teacher.

I also express my gratitude to Prof. K.C. Baral for helping me to identify the specific topic. I am deeply indebted to my Uncle who has always encouraged and helped me and my Aunty for making my stay in Shillong so comfortable. Also, I thank my cousin, Anand for helping me with the computer. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude to my friends as well as colleagues – Swapnalee, Anjali, Prof. K.N. Sarma and my sister Rupa but for whose constant reminders I would not have completed this work. My parents' quiet support has always been my strength. I must also place on record, my gratitude to the UGC for granting me the Teacher Fellowship and leave for doing this M.Phil Course and the following libraries from where I got invaluable materials for my research work.

i) Sahitya Academy Library, New Delhi.
ii) J.N.U. Library, New Delhi.
iii) N.E.H.U. Library, Shillong.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my husband for his constant support and his untiring diligence and ability in doing all the typing and printing work at home. I would like to present this work as a token of love to my grand-mother who is the mentor of my life. I thank God for her. Above all, I remain eternally indebted to GOD for giving me strength and aspiration.

Anuradha Bhattaray

Dated Shillong,
The 30th April,2004.

(Anuradha Bhattaray)

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

The British first came to India for purely commercial reasons and established the East India Company in 1600 for setting up their trade. But by the eighteenth century the British commercial power in India became a force to reckon with. The foot-hold thus gained through the commercial enterprise soon transformed itself into a strong political power, given the constant conflicts among the various Indian kingdoms aspiring to stake their own claims over the disintegrating Mughal Empire. The indiscriminate annexation policy of the British East India Company along with other social upheavals brought about by the Abolition of Suttee, introduction of English education which the people thought would undermine their own culture and traditions led to the outbreak of the Sepoy Mutiny in 1857. After the suppression of the Revolt an Act for the Better Government of India was passed by the British Parliament in 1858. The Act transferred the

Government of India from the Company to the Crown and hence India became a colony of the British Empire. David Rubin marks, 'No land has ever equaled India for the fascination it has exerted over the British Imagination'[1] and to borrow Paul Scott's own phrase, eventually India became 'The Jewel in the Crown'. With the extension of the Empire civil administrators and military men accompanied by their womenfolk came to India in large numbers in pursuance of their careers in the Imperial Service.

A whole lot of Anglo-Indian literature has been written in this Imperial period reflecting the socio-historical milieu of the times. The early novels were mostly based on the grossly exaggerated reports of the atrocities on the English women and children during the Mutiny. These novels propagated different myths which were aimed at creating racial distance between the white/ruler and the natives/ruled. Jenny Sharpe notes that the 'Anglo-Indian literature thus

found its mythic brown-skinned rapist in the rebellion of 1857'[2] and Indira Ghose points out :

> ... one of the main myths of colonialism for which the signifier woman(white) was instrumentalized : the rape myth. This myth- grounded on no evidence – was deployed in the service of colonial punitive measures and gained authoritative status in colonial historiography.'[3]

Besides, these texts upheld the civilizing mission of the British and glorified the Empire.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century other different kinds of fiction became popular. These were called the 'Anglo-Indian domestic novel'(Alison Sainsbury) and the 'station romance'(Indrani Sen). The former featured the domestic life in the Anglo-Indian households while touching upon private issues such as courtship, marriage, children and other relationships. The station romance dealt with the social life of the station particularly the hill-station stories. These novels were mostly written by the men and women who had

the first hand knowledge and experience of the Raj. Indrani Sen remarks:

> Clearly, this preoccupation with encoding the life of the community was rooted in a need to make the writing of the fiction in the post -1857 context an act of self-definition, an articulation of self-identity, as well as a prescription of this society's codes of conduct [4].

These novels flourished up to the war. While the glorification of the Empire found its staunchest champion in Kipling, the war ushered in a period of serious doubts which affected the Raj. This phenomenon is prominently incorporated in the later Anglo-Indian writings. The decline of the Empire gave rise to the question of the position of the British in India.

> The old problem of the British in India – where was Home- became one of the leading themes. Unlike the predecessors, the more recent writers were not concerned with British isolation from England, but rather with their isolation from both England and India...the British found that they could not remain there. At the same time they did not want to go back to England.[5]

During this phase one finds both the pro-Raj as well as the anti-Raj fictions respectively voicing for and against the

British Imperialism in India. Such fiction usually resonates with some historical references for making their point and the most conspicuous being the Mutiny of 1857.

When India got its Independence in 1947 it had a distinct colonial history. Therefore there is so much of the Anglo-Indian literature based on the Raj. While Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster write from within the Imperial Age, Paul Scott writes in a reflective vein, depicting and critically examining the English life in pre- Independence days from a post-Imperial space. His works are categorized under the Raj Nostalgia Literature.[6]

Paul Scott is a distinct anti-Raj novelist. His stay in India as a wartime officer from 1942 to 1945 left him fascinated by the country. He had 'An Obsession with India' so much so that a chapter is titled thus by Robin Moore in his book, **Paul Scott's Raj**.[7] Scott did extensive research on the history of British India and this (lead) him to produce thirteen

novels touching on the various aspects of the Indo-British encounter. So he is often called a historical novelist. He made a mark in the field of fiction-writing with his earlier novels and subsequently **The Raj Quartet** in early 1970s but the ultimate recognition came with the publication of his comic masterpiece **Staying On** , which won the Booker Prize in 1977. He died on March 1st,1978 . The first book of the **Quartet** , **The Jewel in the Crown** [8] was adapted to a television serial and shown from January 3rd to April 3rd in 1984. With this, Robin Moore notes, 'Scott's admirers increased a thousand fold...For fourteen weeks Tuesday was a stay-at-home evening. It was said that the streets of London were as quiet as they had been during the Blitz.'(Moore, p.1) He further adds that the world, to a large extent has learnt the history of the Raj from the works of Paul Scott. But Scott himself had always affirmed that his novels were not historical pieces. He wrote in his notebook on October 25th 1965 : 'well it is my obsession to tell stories. Does it matter whether they are true? History is always being re-written.

Once done with a fiction is inviolable. So.'(in Moore,p.172) Yet while examining Scott's novels one cannot help reading the sociological and historical sub-text underlying his fiction.

What intrigues one is the position of the womenfolk of these colonizers or the women of the Raj- the memsahibs(both married and unmarried). Historically, critics and writers alike have concentrated mainly on the negative qualities in painting her. She is described as racist, idle, materialistic, arrogant and the like. But for many of them the Raj often meant tears, tragic separation from children and husbands and the constant fear of disease and death in an unfavourable climate. The figure of the 'the white woman as tragic exile' is often ignored.(Sen, p.28)

The Anglo-Indian narratives also project India as a means of escaping Britain and its repressive social mores particularly for the young middle-class girls. As E.M. Forster writes in **A Passage To India** , India constantly invites -

'come'. It seemed to promise greater independence and also scope for realization of her desire to participate in public sphere where she could use her time and talent. Unfortunately, in most cases she is disillusioned in the end as she realizes that all her notions of escape from such a society and finding a new milieu for herself were just a dream. Apparently, India was assumed an ideal ground for seeking suitable husbands who would provide lavish aristocratic lives to their wives. In this context, the white woman is ambiguously located in the colonial space. She enters the colony as the 'fishing fleet' in search of privileges enjoyed by the ruling race but suffers because of her gender disadvantages inherent in that social set-up.

The British women entered India either through family ties or by marriage. Another reason for womens'emigration from the lower rung of the English society was due to compelling circumstances back home. Many women opted for missionary work as it was considered a more dignified

position than becoming a maid-servant or governess; the only options open to a woman from this class. Another reason for the emigration of British women to India was what Indrani Sen defines as 'cultural redundancy' which meant that women became 'superfluous, surplus or redundant' because by mid-nineteenth century there were 1050 women to every 1000 men in England as large number of men were away employed in the colonies of the Empire.(Sen, p.4)

Against this social and historical perspective of the memsahib this dissertation will attempt to examine the British women characters in Paul Scott's **The Raj Quartet** which includes four novels: **The Jewel in the Crown** (1966), **The Day of the Scorpion** [9] (1968), **The Towers of Silence** [10] (1971) and **A Division of the Spoils** [11](1975). Scott weaves fiction out of the history of India ranging from the socio-political upheaval of 1942 to the eve of Independence in 1947. In the last phase of their rule in India, the British were aware that theirs day in this colonial out-post were coming to

an end yet clung on to power till the inevitable happened. The moral spirit and the civilizing zeal had vanished and life for them in India became a vacuity. Scott captures the effect the loss of India has on the Anglo-Indian community, especially the pukka sort. Even more than the historical complexity, **The Raj Quartet** interests one primarily because it is a woman-centered narrative. It has women as the dominant figures in each of the books. These are the British women trapped in the socio-political impasse. Paul Scott is an insider as he was a wartime cadet officer in India from 1942-1945 which enabled him to closely observe the lives of these British women during these turbulent years of the Raj. At the same time he is also an outsider when he recreates their situation after a distance of twenty years or so. The balanced perspective with which he has portrayed his women characters in the **Quartet** can be attributed to this.

In the vast canvas of **The Raj Quartet**, the emphasis is on the female characters particularly the British women.

They include the young, old and middle-aged, either married or unmarried. Almost all these women are fully developed characters irrespective of the space they occupy in the text.

'...your sex is made, Miss Crane, for marriage or for God...' says Mr. Cleghorn to Miss Crane in **The Jewel in the Crown**. The proposed study will attempt to examine Paul Scott's women characters in the light of such patriarchal pronouncements. Some important questions emerge from this. Such as : How do these British women in India behave in such restrictive domain? Do they project any defiance of it, if so, to what extent? How are Scott's women projected as being intellectual/anti-imperialists as opposed to the widely accepted notion of being emotional/imperialists? In what ways do Scott's memsahibs differ from the conventional image of the memsahibs in India? These questions will form the bases of analysis of the British women in **The Raj Quartet**. The following are the chapter-wise divisions of the dissertation :

The **Introduction** very briefly traces the history of the coming of the British to India as traders and finally setting up the Empire. An overview of the Anglo-Indian fiction since the Sepoy Mutiny and the subsequent transfer of power from the East India Company to the Crown is done. The focus all through is on the memsahibs as portrayed in these texts because the proposed study will examine the memsahibs in Paul Scott's **The Raj Quartet** and attempt to show how they seem to differ from the conventional mode of portrayal.

Chapter 1, entitled **Marriage and Memsahibs will** focus on the marriage in the Anglo-Indian society which followed the broader Victorian ideology. Marriage is the central point of a girl's life and accordingly her life and education since childhood is directed to achieve an ideal marriage. Further, the women who married the men in the Imperial Service were considered to be contributing towards

the consolidation of the Empire by producing future empire–builders. A memsahib in India was expected to adapt herself to fit into her husband's career. The focus of this chapter will be to examine how the British women in India negotiate the public and private concerns relating to marriage.

Chapter 2, entitled **British Women and Missionary Life** will study the plight of the women from the lower rung of the British society who join the Mission in India either with evangelical ardour or under compelling circumstances back home. However, they end up disillusioned because they realize that neither their proselytization nor teaching is relevant in the given circumstances. These women find that they are marginalized by their own people and eventually they not only loose their respect for the Raj but faith in mankind and God too. In the process they also loose their mental balance and die pathetic deaths.

Chapter 3, entitled **British Women in their 'expanded world'** (Rubin, p. 24) will focus on those British women of the Raj who discover the 'expanded world' and try to reach beyond racial barriers. They negate the patriarchal construct of memsahibs as racist, frivolous, stupid and idle. Nor are they merely emotional beings or imperializing agents as are generally shown to be. Rather they emerge as intellectuals and anti-imperialists.

The **Conclusion** which sums up the findings of the previous chapters and attempts to analyse the change in the position of the memsahibs in **The Raj Quartet**.

Studied under the various headings Paul Scott gives us a clearer understanding of the lives of the British women in pre-Independent India.

NOTES

1. Rubin, David. After the Raj : British Novels of India since 1947. London : University Press of New England, 1986. p.25 Hereafter quoted as Rubin.

2. Sharpe, Jenny. Allegories of the Empire : The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Texts. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press. p.86. Hereafter quoted as Sharpe.

3. Ghose, Indira. Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Female Gaze. Delhi: OUP, 1998. p.12. Hereafter quoted as Ghose.

4. Sen, Indrani. Woman and Empire: Representations in the Writings of British India (1858-1900). New Delhi: Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., 2002. p. 73. Hereafter quoted as Sen.

5. Greenberger, Allen J. The British Image of India: A Study in the Literature of Imperialism 1880-1960. London: Oxford University Press, 1969. p. 180. Hereafter quoted as Greenberger.

6. Barucha, Nilufer E. 'Raj Nostalgia Writing: Time for a Break,' The Afternoon Dispatch Courier. 1992. Hereafter quoted as Barucha.

7. Moore, Robin. Paul Scott's Raj. London : William Heinemann Ltd., 1990. Hereafter quoted as Moore.

8. Scott, Paul. The Jewel in the Crown. London: Heinemann, 1967. Hereafter quoted as JC.

9. Scott, Paul. The Day of the Scorpion. London: Arrow Books Ltd. 1998. Hereafter quoted as DSP.

10. Scott, Paul. The Towers of Silence. London: Mandarin Paperbacks.,1997. Hereafter quoted as TS.

11. Scott, Paul. A Division of the Spoils. London: Mandarin Paperbacks.,1997. Hereafter quoted as DSP.

Marriage and Memsahibs

Marriage in the British society in India followed the broader Victorian ideology. Marriage is the central point of a girl's life and accordingly her life and education since childhood is directed to achieve an ideal marriage. It is the final fulfillment of her life beyond which she does not have much to look forward to. In the Victorian society women were made to believe that their 'sole function was marriage and procreation.'[1] Anyone who questioned this diktat was ostracized and as for those unfortunate ones who were unable to catch a husband were seen as unworthy. In the Anglo-Indian context the colonial wives' service to the empire was to produce future generations of empire-builders. This chapter will be an attempt to study marriage and its effect on the memsahibs in the Anglo-Indian society by examining the narrative of Paul Scott's **Quartet**. Scott's memsahibs belong to the last phase of the Imperial rule in India.

Colonial India was an ideal ground for young girls seeking husbands among the young bachelors employed in the Imperial Services. They were called the 'fishing fleet'. Some were able to catch a husband, few sensitive ones refused to compromise and take the plunge into marital life with a sahib and therefore went back and those comparatively lower beer girls who were unable to get a husband either joined the mission or found employment as governesses. But 'The war had disrupted this ideal pattern.'(DSC, p.136) Life in India in the last decades of the British rule was never the same as it used to be earlier. There were very few pukka sahibs among the men who flocked to the stations after the war. There were even fewer eligible girls because those who now came were mostly professional nurses. Therefore 'On any station there were never enough girls to go round.'(DSC, p.136)

The prevalent practice with the colonial parents was to send their children away to England at the early age of

four or five to give '...a necessary scraping to detach the barnacles gathered while becalmed in the sea of Anglo-Indian childhood; a ruinous experience if not corrected by school in England...' (TS, p.29) they firmly believed. These children reunite with their parents in India as young men and women after their long years of English education. The men well groomed in public schools are expected to join either the military or civil services and thereafter become eligible bachelors. While the young girls on the cusp of womanhood, fresh and pretty are '...ready for a romantic encounter in an outpost of empire...' (DSC, p.91). Sarah Layton and her sister Susan are the daughters of Colonel John Layton and Mildred Layton. They belong to the pukka Anglo-Indian family of the ruling class in India. Their grand-parents on both sides, the Laytons and the Muirs have lived in India and dedicated their lives for the Raj. These Layton girls are however among the last eligible girls to come to India to marry the men employed in the Imperial Service. The

prescribed behavioural practice of courtship and eventual marriage for them is distinctly laid down for them:

> ... The first year was the one to watch out for. A girl needed her parents then. Wise parents stood by and let a girl enjoy the illusion of having her head in the first six months. One might expect anything up to six announcements that she had met the one man in the world for her. In the second six months one had to shorten the rein because this was the when having found and discarded six Prince Charmings she could be expected to select as a seventh a man who had shown no interest in her at all, probably because he was already spoken for and had dropped out of the game of romantic musical chairs. When the year was up and a girl had been through a complete cycle of seasons, it was time for her parents to take a hand. It was remarkable how docile the girls became, how easily they could now be led into the right sort of match. The second year was the year of engagements and marriages; the third year was devoted to maternity. With the grandson or grand-daughter one could sit back with a sigh of relief that one's duty had been properly done.(DSC, p.136)

The guardians of this traditional ritual are the mainly the women of the station. Any attempt to defection is sharply criticized by them. Indrani Sen's comment on this practice is worth quoting: "The focus is clearly on the process of shaping and educating the heroine for 'memsahib-hood' and

marriage in the colonial context; in other words, it deals with the 'making of the memsahib'." (Sen, p.74)

The ladies of the Pankot station are mostly the wives of military men serving in India. There is Nicky Paynton whose husband, Bunny Paynton is the commanding officer of the 1st Ranpurs now on active service in the Arkan; Maisie Trehearne, wife of Colonel Trehearne of Pankot Rifles; Clara Fosdick is the widow of the civil surgeon, Freddie Fosdick. She is now sharing Nicky Paynton's bungalow as her children and husband are away. Clarrissa Peplow is the wife of Reverend Arthur Peplow, the chaplain of the Pankot station; Lucy Smalley is Major Smalley's wife. The couple is placed in the bottom of the social hierarchy of the station and therefore somewhat snubbed and deprived of the privileges enjoyed by others in the society. Isobel Rankin is the most respected lady because she is the wife of the Area Commander and she heads all the social gatherings of the ladies in the station. Mildred Layton commands no less

respect because her husband, Colonel John Layton is commandant of the prestigious 1st Pankot Rifles overseas. Mildred's family history accords her an edge over the others. Above all these ladies is Mabel Layton who is still the doyenne of the Pankot society. Unfortunately she has retreated from this society and is living a withdrawn life in Rose Cottage with her paying-guest, Barbie Batchelor.

These Pankot ladies agree that Teddy Bingham belonging to a good regiment and a pukka background is an ideal suitor for Colonel Layton's elder daughter, Sarah Layton. They even anticipate a wedding which is always a much awaited social event adding glitter to an otherwise routine life of the station. But young Sarah is unlike her younger sister Susan or for that matter any other miss-sahibs because her sensitivity '...absorbed nothing without first subjecting it to scrutiny.'(DSC, p.91) She thinks '...something about Teddy Bingham that didn't wear well. He was not a man who grew on you...' (DSC, p.146). She is

unable to accept Teddy just because he is the most eligible bachelor in the station. She observes the white women around and speculates on Aunt Lydia's saying she had often heard as a child that India was an unnatural place for a white woman. Now she understands why. She agrees that 'They did not transplant well. Temperate plants, in the hot-house they were brought on too quickly and faded fast, and the life they lived, when the heat had dried them out and only the aggressive husk, was artificial.'(DSC, p.147) Sarah's rejection of Teddy Bingham comes as a sad disappointment to the Pankot ladies. Mrs. Smalley the most vocal of the group voices the general disapproval of the girl in her barbed comment: '...the trouble is she doesn't really take it seriously...' (DSC, p.139). Mrs. Paynton suggests that once Sarah settled down all would be alright then.

Daphne Manners, the niece of Lady Manners and Sarah Layton have markedly similar attitude to marriage. They are critical of the dull façade of the colonizing men and reject the

bland marriage arrangements of the society. Daphne can only see the strained 'pink male faces' pretending and conforming all the time to the charade of white superiority. She is unable to establish any relationship with any of them. Sarah's critique of the system is even sharper:

> we all have the same sort of history. Birth in India, of civil or military parents, school in England, holidays spent with aunts, and uncles, then back to India. It was a ritual. A dead hand lay on the whole enterprise. But it still continued: back and forth, the constant flow, girls like herself and Susan, boys like Teddy Bingham: so many white well-bred mares brought out to stud for the purpose of coupling with so many young white well-bred stallions, to ensure the inheritance and keep it pukka.(DSC, p.147)

Class distinctions operate in marriage and love as well within the white community. Mrs. Nesbitt-Smith chaffs her governess, Miss Crane with the assistant chaplain while Miss Crane is hopelessly in love with the handsome Lieutanant Orme, who is above her class and therefore far beyond her reach. Therefore, she is constrained to take pains to hide her feelings for him. Marriage is also used as a means to rise above one's own class and achieve status in society. Ronald

Merrick, a board school product is a lower class police officer in India. He attempts to become close to Daphne Manners and then to Sarah Layton simply because they belong to impeccable pukka English families of the Raj. While maintaining perfect social decorum these girls are sensible enough to maintain their distance from him. However, he finally succeeds in marrying Sarah's younger sister, Susan who is more vulnerable. He manipulates the neurotic condition she is in after her husband's sudden death. He befriends her fatherless child and lures Susan into marrying him for the sake of the child.

Colour-consciousness is an even more imposing issue. It categorically rules out the prospect of marriage or romance between the English and the natives. Such inter-racial relationships can never flourish. The Daphne Manners- Hari Kumar affair ends tragically because Daphne outrages "...an imperial culture that was rooted in defensive racial aloofness and simultaneous cultivation of an 'English' colonial

identity".(Sen, p.10) She fails to uphold the memsahibs' 'aloofness' and restraint, the principal markers of racial superiority. She is ostracized because she dishonoured the racial purity by associating with Hari Kumar. Another character, Miss Crane suppresses her finer feelings for Mr.Choudhuri, her assistant teacher just because of "...this little matter of the skin..." (JC, p.61) However, she realizes the strength of their love when Mr.Choudhuri dies defending her and she laments his death by saying '...I am sorry it was too late.' In the end when she puts on the white sari and sets herself to flames she seems to be enacting the ritual of suttee for Mr.Choudhuri. Sarah Layton is also attracted to Ahmed Kasim but being the child of Anglo-Indian society knows how to exercise restraint and therefore their friendship does not flower 'into the intimacy of a consciously shared relationship'[2]

Marriage also encompasses motherhood. The mother-role of the memsahib is the most pitiable aspect of her married life.

She has to part with her child very early when they are sent to England for their education and this creates a break in the close emotional bond between mother and child. Further, she is expected to respond more urgently to imperial duty than to her *maternal instincts. This is described as 'the saddest, yet* inevitable result of Indian life'(Sen, p.30) Brigadier Reid's memoir tells us how his wife bade him farewell with a smile when they parted even though she was lying in the hospital suffering from cancer. At this critical moment the orders had come for him to go to Mayapore from Rawalpindi. He had to leave her on her own at the moment when they were already heavy of heart hoping for the news of their only son Alan missing in the Burma Front. Brigadier Reid recalls, 'Seeing how ill and pale she looked I wished that it had been in my power to call Alan into the room...and so bring the roses back to her cheeks.'(JC, p.264) Under the trying circumstances even the news of Alan being taken a prisoner-of-war by the Japanese comforts her '...to think of him in the present rather than the past tense.'(JC, p.274) She raises her glass of champagne and says,

'To Alan', perhaps toasting for his safe return. Reid is compelled to leave her shrinking and could not manage to be by her side even at the end. Reid recalls the plight of another mother, Mrs. White whose children had gone to school in England the year the war began. The separation in such circumstances must have been very painful but he says, 'She never showed any sign of self-pity at the prospect of not seeing her sons again until the war was won, but I knew how much this must weigh on her mind.'(JC, p.286) Similarly, one can attribute Nicky Paynton's talkativeness as her way of sublimating her longings for her far-away children and husband, Bunny. Her two boys are at school in Wiltshire whom she has not seen for a few years and her husband is fighting in the Arkan. She mentions them in her talks so often that even in meetings she has to be restrained. 'But the references were all light-hearted, in keeping with the discipline, the station expected such a woman to impose on herself.'(TS, p.55)

Mildred Layton's elder daughter Sarah analyses her strenuous relationship with her mother to be the result of the

psychological disturbance owing to prolonged separation from her from a very tender age. Unlike her sister Susan, she is sensitive and yearns for her mother's affection but is unable to communicate these feelings to her. She is never easy with her mother when her own problems are concerned. Mildred herself says, 'Sarah's never taken me in to her confidence...'(DSC, p.354) Mildred appears indifferent to her daughter Sarah, because her concern is not expressed openly. For instance, she notes Sarah miss her periods and instantly calls her sister Fenny for questioning and instructs her to take Sarah back to Calcutta for an abortion. She grudgingly approves of Susan's choice of Teddy Bingham as her husband and her care and support to her during her pre-mature delivery and subsequent insanity is in with keeping with her role as the mother.

The colonial society gives little scope for the personal development of their women. The mem-sahibs basically play the mother-housewife role with total economic dependence

on their men. They accept that their place is in the home. This confined space becomes even more stressful in an alien environment so far away from their natural surroundings of England. This makes their social isolation appear more severe. They suffer from monotony with no meaningful activities and are burdened with the pressure of excessive time in their hands. They endeavor to cope with this stress by meeting frequently at the club, partying, gossiping and keeping a watchful eye on the personal lives of their members. The monotony and boredom of their isolated lives is somewhat relieved when after the war they begin to participate in different committees to direct voluntary work for social welfare. Even here, Sarah's view is that for them in India there is no private life; there is only a public life. The members of these groups are bonded rather by their location than by friendship. Such bonds hardly lead to any real intimacy because they have to move house to follow their husbands' careers frequently. Clarrissa Peplow says to Barbie: "And Heaven knows that those of us who serve in

India soon learn how transient our experience of home and hearth is, don't we?'(TS, p.281)

On the other hand, there are memsahibs who are isolated long enough from England in pursuance of their colonial husbands' careers. Their ties with England have weakened and they have adapted to the little society of British India. However, a blow of fate like the sudden death of a serving husband throws them in a completely distressful situation. Some are lucky enough to stay on at some friend's or kin's mercy while some get relocated back to England as aliens. Mrs.Paynton's behaviour before leaving India after Bunny Paynton's sudden death is pitiable even though it was apparent that she was only trying to put up a brave front :

> Everybody agreed that it was an astonishing performance; the best ever put up in a society that prided itself on being able to do exactly what Nicky Panyton was doing if the need arose...With one stroke India was finished for her although she would probably assure her friends that she'd be back, this was one of those crystal clear cases of a woman leaving and knowing that her chances of seeing India were slim enough to be non-existent. (TS, p.330)

The prevalent condition of the Empire markedly affects the marriage of its serving men and women. Lady Manners and Mabel Layton are the resident wives of the earlier batch of Englishmen who came to India with moralizing and civilizing zeal. These ladies stood firmly by their husbands in their endeavours. There was trust and sincerity in their relationship and its positive effect was reflected in their work and relation with the natives. Therefore, even as widows they continue their stay in India as burra-memsahibs commanding respect from the whites as well as the natives. The degeneration and loss of moral spirit in the subsequent batch of Englishmen is reflected not only in their attitude and work but also in their personal lives. Mildred's adulterous relation with Kelvin Coley when her husband is away, Susan's marriage to scheming Merrick, Sarah's loss of maidenhood to a war-time subaltern are some examples. Unlike Mabel and Lady Manners 'in whom the sap still ran'(DSC, p.147) the other women 'did not transplant

well'(DSC, p.147) The widows of the later generation are unable to stay on as their predecessors had done.

The grass-widows are those women who are left behind to stay on their own in different stations of British India while their husbands serve in the fronts or overseas. The lives of such women are no better. While some are left to shoulder filial responsibilities single-handedly, some spend their lonely days pining for their far-away children and husbands. The psychological stress on these women is so immense that they are often on the verge of nervous breakdown. Mildred is left with two marriageable daughters just back in India from school in England. Her husband, John Layton who is serving overseas is taken prisoner in Germany. Besides, she is forced to live in a congested 'grace and favour bungalow' with her daughters when she had a right to live in a better place like Rose Cottage. Even under such circumstances, her obligation to colonial responsibility subsumed her personal feelings and she:

> ...showed not a tremor of the concern she would feel for her husband away on active service in North Africa ...that expression of constantly and perfectly controlled dedication to her duty to withstand the countless irritations to which English women in India were naturally subjected. (TS, p.34)

On receiving the news of the capture of her husband and his brigade, Mildred acts with exemplary fortitude. She extends sympathy and assurances to the families of the soldiers through letters and personally as well. But Mildred is unable to maintain this façade and eventually she looses her controlled appearance and indulges in excessive drinking and even commits adultery. Sarah is conscious of her mother's degenerating habits but understands the pressure. Susan's condition is even worse than her mother's. Her husband Captain Teddy Bingham leaves her for the Front just after marriage. Almost immediately she becomes a grass-widow left to bear Teddy's child growing within her. The blow of Teddy's death in the Front induces a pre-mature delivery and she gives birth to a son. Thereafter she falls into a serious post-natal depression almost verging on insanity. She even

attempts to burn her baby alive. Her sense of insecurity and helplessness is acute.

Marriage therefore is projected as the central point in a memsahib's life in India. If it lures her to India with its promise of comfort, wealth and status it also demands compromises, as Fenny Grace tells her niece Sarah Layton: 'Ninety-percent of my life is compromise. It's part of the contract. I've been perfectly happy. I won't say content. Contentment's different thing.'(DSC, p.445) It demands sacrifice of her individual preferences. She has to mould herself to fit into her husband's career. She makes adjustments, conforms to the societal code defined for her and accepts the roles she has to play as a sahib's wife .

NOTES

1. Vicinus, Martha. The Victorian Lady. Bloomington: Indiana University Press,1972. p10

2. Swinden, Patrick Paul Sott: Images of India. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980. p.76

BRITISH WOMEN AND MISSIONARY LIFE

The missionaries are appropriately called 'those invisible women of the Empire' by Jenny Sharpe (Sharpe, p.93) She goes on to remark that 'The effort to demonstrate that women contributed a nurturing, sympathetic and maternal alternative to the masculine ethos of Empire ignores the centrality of such feminine values to the discourse of civilizing mission.'(Sharpe p.93) It is the missionaries and teachers in particular who get closer to the real India than any other English women coming to India. Their work aligns them with the natives amongst whom they struggle to carry out their mission work. These missionary women come mostly from the lower rungs of British society. Some join it fired by evangelical fervour while still some others enter it under compelling circumstances. Whatever their motives in joining the Mission, their dedication and the hardship they encounter is the same. They have to adapt themselves to a

new way of life in a country which is physically, socially as well as spiritually alien. Jenny Sharpe is justified in pointing out the exclusion of the life experiences and good work of these women in the discourse of the civilizing mission. It has indeed been very much neglected. My study in this chapter will attempt to highlight the heart rending plight of these missionary women. Paul Scott's **The Raj Quartet** presents penetrating insight into the lives of two such dedicated missionaries working in India whose lives will be the focus of this chapter.

Miss Crane served in India for about thirty-five years mainly in the capacity of a missionary. But she had not come to India initially with any missionary zeal. Tracing her life history we can see how circumstances led her into the mission field. She was born in London in 1885 in a moderately well-to-do middle-class family. Her mother died early; thereafter her father took to heavy drinking, neglected his private school and isolated himself from his friends and

pupils. Her youth was spent bearing her father's drunken outbursts, accusations and even misbehaviour. When she was twenty-one he died leaving her penniless. She hardly had any other qualification and the only job she was fit to take up was either that of a governess or a house-keeper.

Accordingly she takes up the job of a governess to a spoilt little boy. She thinks she was unhappy in her father's house due to poverty and his drunkenness but in that wealthy household too she is unhappy. The little boy calls her Storky and indulges in '...a precocious show of sexuality in the night nursery.'(JC, p.5) According to Indrani Sen, '...women of subordinate classes came to be equated with easy sexual accessibility...'(Sen, p.2) as reflected in this young boy's behaviour towards her. Placed in such a vulnerable situation she wants to '...find a place in an unknown world that would come at her as a new and fresh and, if not joyful, then at least adventurous and worth-while...' (JC, p.6) So she immediately applies to an

advertisement for the post of a travelling nurse-companion to a lady taking a journey to India with two small children. The provision was if the service of the appointee was satisfactory, she could stay in India as a governess and if not she could easily find a similar job with another family journeying back home.

The voyage is pleasant, she is treated like a family member and the children too become fond of her. But once they reach India she notices that she is treated if not exactly like a servant but certainly like a poor unwanted relation the family is burdened with. For the first time she experiences a kind of social snobbery quite different from that of England, '...it was complicated by the demands, sometimes conflicting, of white solidarity and white supremacy.'(JC, p.6) Her employers treat her better than any high-born Indian but marginalize her in their own social circle. She is placed in the lowest rung of the hierarchal ladder. Here too life becomes difficult for her because she is confused as to what

is expected of her and what her standing is in that society. She spends three years with the Nesbitt-Smiths adapting fairly well to the adverse Indian climate. But despite such mixed feelings and loneliness she has one assurance that she belongs to a community strongly bonded by their white colour. She may be marginalized within that class-conscious society but she feels that because of the colour of her skin, she is safe from any external harm.

At this stage she secretly falls in love with Lieutanant Orme, a man with the appeal of a hero of a romantic novel. Hers is a hopeless case because he would never notice her plain looks with so many eligible pretty girls around. The class segregation also denies her that privilege. She tells herself, 'And he...was a fancy, a mere illusion that never stood a chance of becoming real for me'. (JC, p.8) When the Nesbitt-Smiths talk of sailing back she thinks over her future. She does not want to return home and end her life being just 'Crane, Miss Crane' in different households. She wants to be

called just Edwina but with '...slender hopes of marriage' (JC, p.5) she does not know how. Unable to decide, she thinks of religion as the only way out for women like her though she never really believed in religion. She goes to the local Protestant Church seeking God '...as a comforter but not as a redeemer'(JC, p.10) It is touching to see her sitting alone in that Church and wondering '...whether she would be Crane to Him, or Miss Crane, or Edwina.'(JC, p.10) There she takes a decision which she says is the moment of certainty of her spinsterhood. Later, Mr.Cleghorn, an assistant teacher in the Mission School articulates this situation faced by women like her. He says, "'...your sex is made, Miss Crane, for marriage or for God,'...took her hand and patted it, as if to comfort her for the fact that the first, the temporal of these blessings, was certainly denied her."(JC,p.20)

Edwina Crane tells the senior chaplain of that Protestant Church that she would like to stay on and train for

the Mission. She honestly tells him, 'no, not to carry the Word. I am not a truly religious woman...But there are schools, aren't there? ...I meant train to teach at the mission schools.' (JC, p.11) He agrees to arrange it for her but warns that more than the education it is 'the chapattis' for which the Indian children attended school. Mrs. Nesbitt-Smiths is shocked by her intention. She exclaims, 'Good Heavens, Crane! What on earth has possessed you...You'd be with blacks and half-castes, cut off from your own kind.' (JC, p.12) Edwina sticks to her decision. Mr. Grant takes her to a humble school in the out-skirts where she is welcomed by the children as Miss Crane Mem. The Indian children sing a common hymn but she feels:

> ...an incongruity, a curious resistance to the idea of subverting these children from worship of one she herself had sung to when young but now had no strong faith in. But she had, too, a sudden passionate regard for them. Hungry, poor, deprived, hopelessly at a disadvantage, they yet conveyed to her an overwhelming impression of somewhere-and it could only be there, in the Black Town-being loved. But love as their parents knew, was not enough. Hunger and poverty could never be reduced by love alone. There were, to begin with, free chappatis.(JC, p.16)

Amidst this wretchedness, she sees the dire need of service from people like her '...to promote the cause of human dignity and happiness.'(JC, p.16) She is no more conscious of her white superiority. An impulse to shed off the façade and to achieve a sense of personal dignity by doing as much in her power to work for uplifting them and making a difference overtakes her. She wants to bring hope in their lives. Thus starts her '...long and lonely, difficult and sometimes dangerous road that led her, many years later, to Mayapore, where she was superintendent of the district's Protestant mission schools.'(JC, p.16)

After some basic training in Lahore she joins the Muzzafirabad Mission School. She is appreciated for her unique method in imparting learning as well as loyalty to the Indian children with the aid of the picture of Queen Victoria with her subjects. Yet another incident there distinguishes her even more. During a civil disturbance a group of rioters come to burn down the Mission school while Edwina is

teaching the children in the class-room. She valiantly stands in the doorway, with the frightened children cowering behind her and speaks to the rioters so forcefully that eventually she succeeds in making the charged-up mob to retreat without causing any harm to the school. This exemplifies Jenny Sharpe's remark, '...women express their reliance upon a language of colonial authority, claiming to have scared off hostile villagers by speaking to them authoritatively...'(Sharpe, p.70) Then she returns to the dais and continues her lessons. She is applauded for this heroic act by the missionary, the civil as well as the military authorities of the Raj. Since then to those children she becomes a heroine. They can hardly be attentive to what she teaches but looked towards the doorway for yet another mob to appear which their teacher would quell. Edwina has to apply for transfer and chooses to work in even more difficult and dangerous outposts. Barbie Batchelor who succeeds her in Muzzafirabad says she had a tremendous gap to fill in. There was a kind of challenge for her to do half as well.

What strikes Barbie when she meets Edwina for the first time in a missionary conference is her extreme humility. Edwina seems to be at unease when Barbie mentions her courageous act in Muzzafirabad. Edwina feels she did what was to be done or maybe it was a cowardly mob. She is uncomfortable with the adoration given to her.

Edwina is then posted as the supervisor of the district's Protestant Mission Schools in Mayapore. Her circle in Mayapore is very small. She sometimes dines with the chaplain and his wife and attends an annual invitation to the Deputy Commissioner's garden party at his bungalow. She hardly has any intimate contact with anyone where she can just drop in and say hello. So she invites the Indian ladies to tea at her bungalow on Tuesdays. But Gandhi's declaration in 1942 that the British should leave India 'to God or to anarchy' (JC, p.34) baffles her because she thinks he is inviting the Japanese against the Raj. Relations get strained, she takes down his portrait from the wall and the Indian

ladies too stop coming probably seeing her now no more as a friendly Englishwoman but a representative of the other side. The inevitable estrangement between Edwina and the Indian ladies is not so much the result of personal antipathies as arising out of political misunderstanding. As Steele wrote in 1894 '...racial feelings enter into the picture no matter what anyone tries to do about it and make real social intercourse between...two races an impossibility.'(in Greenberger, p.152) In another effort to fill the vacuum in her life after this she arranges tea-parties for the lonely young British soldiers of lower ranks on Wednesdays. Such invitations indicate how much she yearns for company to lessen her loneliness.

After Mary de Silva's death '...there was not a man or a woman in Mayapore, in India, anywhere, British or Indian, she could point to as a friend of the sort to whom she could have talked long and intimately.'(JC, p.34) Mary de Silva was the teacher in the Dibrapur Mission School. For six long

years Edwina paid weekly visit to her bungalow not only because she was the supervisor but also because she always got the feel of home on reaching there. They drank rum together and talked for hours about their lives.

Miss Crane has certain traits for which she is well known in Mayapore, such as her outspokenness, her ability to ignore condescending behaviour of those above her in rank and her habit of going to sleep during sermons. The people think of her '...as a woman whose work for the missionaries had broadened rather than narrowed her.'(JC, p.29) She never really cares to project herself as solely religious. Therefore during the war when different committees are being formed to direct voluntary work she is called in by Mrs. White, the Deputy Commissioner's wife to help in a number of such committees for social welfare. Her assertive role in these committees earns her recognition and individual respect from the English ladies even if for them '...Miss Crane was only a mission school teacher and as

many rungs below them...'(JC, p.29) Her life is described by Mrs.White as one who:

> ... has obviously missed her vocation. Instead of wasting her time in the missions and thumping the old tub about the iniquities of the British Raj and the intolerable burdens borne by what her church calls our dark brethren, she should have been head-mistress of a good school for girls, back in the old home counties. (JC, p.29).

Her circle gradually widens, the ladies now stop to talk to her in the cantonment bazaar and invite her to tea. She is often invited to dinners in the Deputy Commissioner's bungalow. However, through Lili Chatterjee we come to know that Mrs.White invited Edwina only when she needed '...an extra-woman to make up her table and balance the bachelors'(JC, p.65). But for poor Edwina these are the occasions she enjoys, drinks plentifully and has the feeling of a memsahib despite her humble job.

Miss Crane never compromises in her duty. On 9th August 1942 Gandhi had declared Quit India Movement and the situation all over was turbulent. Yet she decides to drive

the school children of Dibrapur back to their homes in Kotali and then proceed to Mayapore. Mr. Chaudhuri, an Anglicized Bengali who is a colleague tries to dissuade her from taking the risk but she does not listen to him. Instead she suspects him when he tells her that the telephone is not working. Though she tries to overcome the colour barrier still subconsciously the racial segregation works in her also and she hates it. She says, 'And I am ashamed, and am always ashamed, because my suspicions this time first over the telephone, and now over the Gladstone bag.' (JC, p.47) In Kotali, Mr. Chaudhari and the children's parents insist that the situation is not good enough for her to drive to Mayapore. But she is adamant. It is only when Mr. Chaudhuri says that he too will accompany her in that case that she confesses to him, 'Thank you, Mr. Chaudhuri...I should have been afraid alone.'(JC, p.50) This shows she was suppressing her personal fear for the sake of maintaining the façade of white indomitability. Infact, Mr.Chaudhuri's presence has always affected her. She feels uncomfortable to deal with him in the

manner she generally deals with other Indians. The racist assumption of superiority in her is unsettled by his personality. As she drives with him along the Dibrapur road she tries to communicate with him in a different plane but a 'hump' '...was always there, disrupting the purity of that flow, the purity of thoughts' (JC, p.53) just because his skin was of different colour. She wishes she could express how she feels for him but she is not the kind of woman '...who would defy...' (DSP, p.572). She is always bothered by the colour barrier. Unfortunately they are accosted in the journey by a violent mob. Mr. Chaudhuri is accused of being a traitor by those rioters for they said, 'No self-respecting Indian male would ride a dried-up virgin memsahib who needed to feel the strength of a man...'(JC, p.55) He is murdered and she is knocked senseless. When she regains consciousness she sits by the roadside holding his hand in the rain lamenting, 'I am sorry it was too late.'(JC, p.58) She realizes his love and loyalty to her only after he dies while struggling to defend her but it is too late for her to make amends.

Miss Crane catches pneumonia due to that exposure in the rain. She is admitted in the public wing of Mayapore General Hospital. Initially, she is sympathized a lot for she epitomized the racial victimization of an Englishwoman by the natives. But when she refuses to help identify the culprits she loses all the sympathy and becomes unpopular in the Hospital too. Lili Chatterjee having met her earlier in White's bungalow had ignored her as a mediocre missionary but regrets her view after the incident. Lili goes to visit her in the Hospital. She notes that the few white friends Miss Crane had did not come to visit her on the excuse of time while her Indian friends dared not to. The soldiers together sent her flowers while poor Indians like Mr. Narayan sent some humble gift. But it is doubtful if the Hospital staff bothered to deliver these to her. Crane probably never knew about these caring gestures. As for Mrs. White and Mavis Poulson, Lili says, she knew they had always 'meant to go' and see her but could not do so due to lack of 'proper opportunity.'

Miss Crane feels terribly lonely and uncared for. After her release from the Hospital she resumes her tea parties for the young soldiers in her bungalow but notes the difference in them. The lads try to cheer her up but they have changed from what they were before the riots. Even Clancy, her favourite, who earlier shared jokes with Joseph, her Indian servant now ignores him totally. She sees the wound in the old man's pride and self-respect but all she can do is go to her room and remove the picture of the old Queen and lock it away. The picture is now insignificant because the sense of protectiveness, love and loyalty it embodies exists no more. Besides, she now

> ...found herself too tired, too easily weighed down by the sheer pressure of the climate and the land and the hordes of brown faces and the sprinkling of stiff-lipped white ones, to channel any of her remaining pneumonia sapped energy into solving moral and dialectical problems.'(JC, p.60-61)

Lili Chatterjee goes to visit Miss Crane again in her bungalow when she learns about her resignation from the Mission. She sees the two blank spaces on the wall and asks

her if she had started her packing. Miss Crane replies, 'Oh I shan't need to pack...' (p.81,**JC**) and smiles at her. The implication is known only when she dons a white sari and sets herself on fire and thus kills herself. Lili's comment on her act is very appropriate:

> ... I suppose what I'm saying is that she made friendships in her head most of the time and seldom in her heart...I think at the end the reason for her madness was that she had the courage to see the truth if not to live with it, see how all her good works and noble thoughts had been going on in a vacuum. I have a theory that she saw clearly but too late how she had never got grubby for the sake of the cause she'd always believed she held dear, and that this explains why Mr.Poulson found her like that, sitting in the rain by the roadside, holding the hand of that dead schoolteacher, Mr.Chaudhuri. (JC, p.104)

Miss Crane must have realized this irony of her life and work. Thus ends her lonely life in India.

Barbie Batchelor retired from the post of the Superintendent of Protestant Mission. Apparently, she derives a sense of freedom and contentment with her pension but she is very insecure because she has no clear idea where

to go and what to do. She hoped that the Mission would absorb her but no such offer came.

Barbie is a good teacher especially of small children, they bring out her maternal instincts and she enjoys the affection and esteem they and their parents give her. But to her the three R's are never as important as the teaching of Christianity. She has a firm belief in God, in Christ the Redeemer and in the existence of Heaven. She is also concerned about the fate of those who are unbelievers. She wants to redeem them. So after her parents' death she gives up her job in a Church School in London, joins the Mission and comes to India. Her dream is to bring hundreds into the fold here. It would be the most satisfactory experience for her. However, once in India she is disappointed to find that the Mission put more emphasis in helping the Indian children learn the language. Very few among them got baptized. She has to control her missionary zeal and work in a secular manner. Slowly she gets inured to the system. The Bishop

Barnard Schools to which she belongs does attract Indian boys and girls but those whose parents want their wards to acquire the standard education needed for entrance into government colleges and Indian universities. One question that constantly nags her is, '...What gifts our mission has brought to the children of India, and if – among them – has ever been the gift of love.' (TS, p.212)

In her Indian experience, Barbie bears a 'secret sorrow'. With time she feels her faith loosing its initial ardour. She still firmly believes in God but has a sense that God did not approve of the way she has spent her life. As she confesses towards the end to Sarah Layton, 'One may carry the Word, yes, but the Word without the act is an abstraction. The Word gets through the mesh but the act doesn't. So God does not follow...'(TS, p.363) She partly blames the Mission for this and hopes that there might be a chance of regaining the joyful sense of contact with God now that she was

retiring. However, below her cheerful expression another fear of lonely old age also grips her.

Mabel Layton's advertisement for a single woman to share accommodation with her in Ranpur Gazette just a week before Barbie's retirement is an opportunity for her. At once she applies sending an account of herself and the amount she could afford to pay. Barbie deduces from the name of the house, Rose Cottage, that the other woman, perhaps a gentlewoman, may be of as limited means as herself. By now, she herself has long lost the tell-tale signs of a poverty stricken lower middle-class person and has learned to carry herself as a gentlewoman. But she still has some fear and awe of those women of higher rank especially those with sufficient money to support their position.

Mabel chooses her as the most suitable of applicants and invites her for a vacation to Pankot where she could decide on permanent accommodation. Barbie is extremely

happy and grateful to Mabel. Actually, Mabel invites Barbie to stay with her in Rose Cottage ignoring her step-son's wife, Mildred and her two daughters who have the right to stay there. They are compelled to live in a rather congested grace and favour bungalow in the lines of the Pankot Rifles regimental depot. Mildred can not question Mabel so Barbie becomes her target. Apparently Mildred and Mabel seem perfectly amiable because

> There was something unpalatable about a family quarrel because it could undermine the foundation of a larger and essential solidarity. There was no known quarrel between Mabel and Mildred but family feeling had not been conspicuously shown...(taking in Barbie Batchelor) confirmed the impression that Mabel and Mildred had never hit it off...(TS, p.36)

So every time Mildred comes to Rose Cottage, Barbie is made to feel like an intruder who is enjoying something she has no right to. Poor Barbie is in constant conflict whether to make herself pleasant or scarce. But whatever she does, the effect on Mildred is the same. Barbie feels so insecure that she cannot help being frightened and nervous even in the presence of visitors if Mildred is there. Besides,

she is in constant fear that the proximity of Mildred and her daughters will remind Mabel of her duty towards them which will mean she would have to leave the place. However, gradually she starts feeling at home as a co-hostess. She directs Aziz, the servant in running the house, takes the responsibility of the dog and to the girls she becomes affectionate and caring like an aunt. And 'Indeed she seemed to acquire something of the thick skin such a woman had to cultivate if her feelings were not to be constantly hurt by inattention to her questions, opinions, and fund of boring anecdotes.'(TS, p.35)

In Rose Cottage she gets shelter, a home and more than that a chance to fulfill her sense of unaccomplished mission. When Mabel dies she says, '...I loved her so much and it seemed she was my chance, my gift from God to serve Him through her...'(TS, p.256) She pleads with Mildred to carry out Mabel's wish to be buried beside her husband, John Layton at St. Luke's in Ranpur. Mildred gives no heed to her

appeal and instead humiliates her, 'You were born with the soul of a parlour-maid and a parlour-maid is what you've remained. India has been very bad for you and Rose Cottage has been a disaster.'(TS, p.255) Barbie is shocked by the callousness with which Mabel is buried in St. John's, Pankot. She feels helpless and another guilt of not fulfilling a wish is heavy on her. She is so badly affected by it that she laughs and her laughter is nothing but an alternative to shrieks of wild and lonely despair.

On the very night of Mabel's death, Barbie is hastily shifted from Rose Cottage to the rectory bungalow of Arthur and Clarissa Peplow. This too is a temporary refuge for her. Clarissa makes herself clear: '...the most practical way out of an unhappy situation and a Christian duty but not to be thought of by anyone as a preliminary to a permanent arrangement being come to. The room was too small.'(TS, p.271) Barbie has to search for shelter. She writes to the Mission offering her voluntary service in a capacity however

menial in return for a roof but that too is turned down. She is at the point of breaking down. She says, 'Nowadays tears came unexpectedly.'(TS, p.280) But what shatters her completely is Mildred's accusation against her of harbouring unnatural feelings for her young daughters, Sarah and Susan. This is how Mildred explains to the station the hasty removal of Barbie from Rose Cottage. When Clarissa asks Barbie about it she pathetically replies:

> But what can I say? If it were true I should probably deny it because at the moment I've nowhere else to go and if this is going to be said about me I should find it difficult to go anywhere in Pankot. It's a difficult thing for an elderly spinster to refute. But for what it's worth, Clarissa, so far as I know my affection for Sarah and Susan is not of an unnatural kind, unless it is unnatural to feel maternally to them, to take pleasure in their company and care what happens to them. (TS, p.283)

Mabel had left a provision for Barbie's annuity in her Will. Mildred suspects that this idea of annuity must have been Barbie's because she believes that it is a typical lower middle-class idea of acquiring upper-class security and respectability. This is not the end of Barbie's humiliation.

Mildred even goes to extent of returning the set of Apostle Spoons to Barbie which she had lovingly presented to Susan in her wedding. Unable to keep it Barbie decides to present it to the Regiment for use in the Officers Mess, in memory of Mabel Layton. Therefore she goes to deliver it to Captain Coley in his bungalow. There she is shocked to witness Mildred and Kevin Coley in an adulterous act. Aghast at the sight she rushes back in the rain and contracts bronco-pneumonia. After four days in fever she is admitted to the General Hospital under the care of Doctor Travers. The doctor tells Clarissa Peplow, 'People don't die only of disease, you know.'(TS, p.329) Barbie physically recuperates but what still ails her is whether Clarissa will take her back or not in her bungalow. She says to Sarah who goes to visit her, '...Clarissa's had me...the mission's had me too' (TS, p.357) She is weak, homeless and knows not where to go. Gradually, she shows signs of madness particularly when she has those intermittent bouts of some kind of mental derangement. Inexplicably, during these

uncertain times, she develops a highly intuitive power, and sees the truth of things like that of a seeress about certain persons and incidents around her. For instance, she guesses by some extraordinary imaginative power that Sarah has visited Lady Manners and the infant Parvati, which is not known to anyone other than Sarah's immediate family. Similarly, she sympathizes for Daphne and Hari Kumar and suspects that the official version of the Bibighar rape case is incorrect.

The accident which completely shatters her is when she is riding downhill to Pankot from Rose Cottage in a tonga overloaded with her possessions and the tonga collapses. She never really recovers from that accident and eventually looses her voice as well as her memory. She spends the last days of her life in the Samaritan Hospital in Ranpur. Her only visitor there is Sarah Layton. Sarah describes her condition, 'Her memory had gone, and so had her voice – she wrote everything down - but they said that

was psychological. They assured me she was perfectly happy but it was such a depressing place I found that hard to believe. (DSP, p.157)

Barbie was greatly inspired by her fellow missionary, Edwina Crane. She always felt that unlike herself, Edwina was close to God. Her way of teaching the children with the picture of the Queen, her quelling the mob, working in sensitive outposts and her guarding the body of her Indian colleague in the rain by the roadside, Barbie feels, were acts directed by the love of God. In fact in performing the last act '...it sum up the meaning of her life in India...this guarding of dead Indian's body, it seemed to Barbie that Edwina had achieved her apotheosis.'(TS, p.71) Edwina was her idol. She often wrote to her though no reply came. Actually Barbie and Edwina are only fellow missionaries hardly known to each other. Therefore, when Edwina is attacked by the rioters on 8th of August, Barbie's reaction is surprising. She appears shocked and extremely concerned about her. One would

think that she was very close to Edwina. Mabel consoles her and gives her support in her moment of anxiety over her friend. She even advises Barbie to invite her friend over to Rose Cottage so that she could be well looked after. The Pankot ladies too inquire about her friend's condition and request for their wishes to be conveyed. Barbie's reaction can be interpreted as the externalization of her own urge to belong, to feel closely to someone dear. We can also read it as an opportunity Barbie avails of in receiving sympathy and concern from her own people for which she is craving.

When Edwina commits suicide a few months later Barbie is utterly devastated because her idol's earlier gesture which seemed so sublime now revealed someone who was overwhelmed by despair and not purified by love. This revelation heightens her own despair. Edwina had seemed so strong and sure in God's service that being associated with her itself had given Barbie the hope of redemption but now through this act Edwina's deep despair has been revealed.

This sense of lost mission and displacement is appropriately shown through Barbie's consciousness:

> ...my life here had indeed been wasted because I have lived it as a transferred appendage, as a parlour maid, the first in line for morning prayers while the mistress of the house kneels like myself in piety for a purpose. But we have no purpose that God would recognize as such... (TS, p.258)

Therefore, Barbie feels that like Edwina's, her life in India too has come to nothing. Where Barbie says, 'I've always been useless, useless to everybody, how many of those little Indian children really loved God and came to Jesus?'(DSC, p.354), and '...God has not followed us here' (TS, p.229) Edwina writes in her suicide note, 'There is no God. Not even on the road from Dibrapur.'(TS, p.411) Both these missionaries disintegrate physically and mentally. They loose their faith too. Their Indian experience devastates them in a heart-rending manner.

Barbie's insecure feelings, her loneliness, her desperation to belong can be read from her traits, gestures as well as her actions. She talks excessively. She admits it

herself, '...I've always been a great talker.'(DSC, p.387) She talks with people, with herself, with God and with anyone who is there to listen or not. 'For years she had had real and imaginary conversations...' (TS, p.182) Besides, she also writes lengthy letters even if no replies come. Actually, these are the means through which she reveals her feelings of loneliness. She constantly seeks to communicate with others, to develop intimacy. Hardly anyone responds to her except Sarah and occasionally Mabel, so these two people are closest to her. Barbie also realizes that her talkativeness is a drawback socially. Therefore she decides, 'I shall have to learn, have to learn, yes, to be quiet as a mouse. Which wont be easy.' (TS, p.297). She then develops an alternative habit of 'imaginary silence' (TS, p.192) This will not bother anyone. Later, when she looses her voice, she writes and tries to communicate but then the complexity of her feelings have become so intense that they can only be expressed metaphorically which becomes difficult to interpret.

Barbie's obsession with her luggage is another symptom about her state of mind. After her retirement the only sense of belonging she could have is with her luggage. It '... was merely luggage she knew, but without it she did not seem to have a shadow'(TS, p.7) She is interested by Emerson's theory, 'Man is explicable by nothing less than all his history'.(TS, p.74) She identifies her own history with her trunk. She tells Sarah, 'The trunk is packed with relics of my work in the mission. It is my life in India. My shadow as you might say.'(TS, p.296)

Barbie is often nostalgic of her early life in London with her parents. These are the moments when she feels terribly homesick. The instance when she recollects her Christmas days at home and talks of it to Mabel is perhaps the most affectionate and peaceful moment she shares with Mabel. Even though a missionary at times her voluptuous nature gets the better of her. She sings loudly in her bath tub,

not any hymn but old love songs her father used to sing. Another notable thing is her indulgence in coats and skirts, eau-de-cologne and lawn hanker-chiefs. These are her '...harmless escapes into personal vanities.'(TS, p.230) Another rare happy moment in her life is in May Brick's bungalow mending his Bach.

Such is the fate of these two missionary women who were so optimistic in their venture. They end up disillusioned because they realize that neither their proselytization nor teaching is relevant. They are unable to fulfill their missionary aspirations. Besides, they have to cope with social discriminations among their own kind because of their status in society. In their predicament in an alien situation they seek company, love and sympathy but are denied. Eventually, they not only loose their respect for the Raj but faith in mankind itself. God, for whose service they had ventured out too seems to be alienated from them. They are under tremendous pressure from all sides. Eventually, they

loose their mental balance and perish. One can agree with David Rubin's remark on them: 'Both through their sacrifices have become seeress of sort. Their labours had embodied the highest ideals of the British mission, but neither can fulfill those ideals because, as both come to realize, it is nurtured on the usual colonialist self-delusion and upheld by unrelenting racial prejudice.'(Rubin, p.140)

BRITISH WOMEN IN THEIR 'EXPANDED WORLD'

According to Allen J. Greenberger, 'The British authors of this period were deeply concerned with the position of the Englishwoman in India. Kipling, of course, is well-known for his sharp criticism of female Anglo-Indian society in his stories of hill-stations where the women are concerned only with having a good time.'(Greenberger, p.24) He further says, 'Almost without exception these women are shown to be totally lacking in sensitivity and intelligence. They are concerned only with the achievement of their own comfort.'(Greenberger, p.104) In contrast to this view Paul Scott's British women portrayed in **The Raj Quartet** do not conform to the socially and politically constructed definition of the memsahib in the Raj. Nor are they active participants in perpetuating colonialism. They are instead portrayed as liberal women who discover the 'expanded world' and try to

reach out beyond racial barriers. They belong to different backgrounds and are of different age groups but their experience is more or less the same. They are disillusioned with the shallowness and degeneration of the Anglo-Indian society. Many of their views are expressed through dialogue, interior monologue, journals, letters, confidential reports and the like. Not only that, their actions bear testimony to their convictions. This chapter will study the British women of the Raj who explore this 'expanded world' and try to reach out beyond racial barriers.

Lady Manners is the widow of Sir Henry Manners, ex-governor of Ranpur. They were liberals who could overcome their racial consciousness and have intimate friendship with the Indians. Their friendship with Sir Nello Chatterjee and his wife Lili is exemplary. As a widow Lady Manners is seen being constantly received by her Indian friends when she is forsaken by her own society. In the very beginning one is touched by the faith she shows on an Indian

doctor to handle her niece's complicated delivery. Daphne, her niece considers herself fortunate to be with her rather than the Swinsons 'her first colonials' who would have surely dismissed her as a 'mess' after the Hari Kumar case. That Lady Manners sent Daphne to stay with her close friend Lili Chatterjee in the Mac Gregor House is itself something very unexpected and unconventional in the English society then.

Daphne understands her aunt's silent disapproval of her relationship with Hari Kumar, an Indian. Her aunt protests because the outcome of such affairs was well known. Daphne herself confesses that her affair never stood a chance. When Daphne decides to keep the child and give birth to it, it was the most outrageous thing because the child was fathered by an Indian. She is shunned and rejected by the whole society but is still given support and shelter by her Aunt Ethel. Reading through Daphne's journal one can see the magnanimity of Lady

Manners' decision on those circumstances. Daphne seeks apology from her aunt for the exile that the two were subjected to solely because of her actions. She says that it was no small burden for her to be the aunt of 'that Manners girl'. To stand by an English girl with an Indian child growing in the womb was a complete violation of the British society in India. Their exile was in Kashmir but before that back home in Rawalpindi itself Lady Manners was beginning to be shunned by her old friends and the Anglo-Indian society. Daphne regrets how fast people seemed to forget '...all the marvelous things you and Uncle Henry did to make things seem right in India, for English people...'(JC p.349) Lady Manners calls it a 'dismay' rather than 'disapproval' of her people for her supporting Daphne and later taking care of her child and giving the name Parvati Manners instead of '...bundling it off as unwanted to some orphanage.'(DSC, p.52)

In her letter to Lady Chatterjee, Lady Manners talks at length about Daphne's child. She says she is quite sure that the child is Hari's as her niece had believed despite all speculations. It did not disturb her to see that the child did not have the same colour as its mother when taken out of Daphne's womb as she witnessed the delivery. If at that critical moment she had refused to accept it, it was because she was seeing her niece collapsing. But later on it was its Indian-ness which in fact roused her sympathy for it, she says. She is glad that the child's skin is not pale enough to be called a white. That way she will not have the temptation to wear a false face but more than that she would be free from the misery and humiliation experienced by Eurasian girls. Lady Manners says she had looked upon the unfortunate baby as a human 'she' and shuddering to think about her future she had decided to accept her. She would give love and affection to the child not just for her niece's sake but 'for its own'. Such attitude of Lady Manners shows that she is above the hollow façade of white superiority. Knowing that

she may not live long enough to care for the child she requests Lili Chatterjee to take custody after her. She even alters her will to make provision for Parvati's decent upbringing and sets a part of her money for the endowment of a children's home, thus carrying out the wish of her niece, Daphne. Lili would be one of the trustees and the home would be named The Manners Memorial Home for Indian Boys and Girls.

Lady Manners' letter dated 5th August 1947 to Lili Chatterjee is a clear demonstration of her distinct pro-Indian views and her disillusionment with the British policy towards the end of the British Raj. She tells Lili that she has decided to leave Rawalpindi, so long her home because of the rampant anti-India feeling prevailing there on the eve of the Partition. She strongly believes that it is the British rule's 'crowning failure' that India was being split. She points out the irony of the English stance. Before the Partition the justification of two hundred years of British rule in India was

unification of it. Now the very British are morally responsible for dividing one composite nation into two, *viz.* India and Pakistan. She is critical of her people back home for appreciating the Viceroy for having settled the problem of India so 'amicably'. A very pointed observation she makes is that England may be in the 20th Century but her people were leaving India far back in the 19th Century. She is critical of the pathetic state that the English had led the nation into '...that awful savagery- that Hindu-Muslim bloodbath last year that marked the end of our unifying and civilizing years of power and influence.' (JC, p.446). Lady Manners is deeply moved by the prevailing scenario. She feels the end of the British rule in India is not worthy of her late husband's long and distinguished service for the Crown.

Lady Manners is disillusioned with the pretentiousness and degeneration of the Anglo-Indian society. When she visits Pankot, a British military station she stays on the Indian side of the town and in this way she too

rejects the Anglo-Indian society. She makes her presence felt only through the visitors' signature book in Flagstaff House.

Daphne's lover Hari Kumar was arrested in the Bibighar rape case and when nothing could be proved against him in that regard he was held in the prison as a political detenu. After a year of her niece's death, Lady Manners appeals for a re-examination of Kumar's case. After witnessing Kumar's confession this is the comment she sends to the Governor: 'I know my niece did not lie, that he never harmed her and is very wrongfully imprisoned'(DSP p.346) She is convinced of Kumar's innocence and accordingly helps in affecting his release. She has absolutely no ill-feelings against him nor any wish for vengeance. Neither will she burden him with the responsibility of the child, Parvati. As Rowan says: 'It's a subject she does not discuss... I think she feels she did what she had to do and that anything else would be an invasion of his privacy and would smack of condescension.'(DSP, p.595)

Daphne Manners is the niece of Lady Manners who had just come to India from England to stay with her aunt after her parents death. For a time she lives in Rawalpindi with her aunt and then she comes to Mayapore to stay with her aunt's Indian friend Lili Chatterjee in the Mac Gregor House. Her stay there becomes a very uncomfortable issue among the English. But Daphne finds it good and from here her journey of "expansion" begins. She is good natured and intelligent but unexposed to the rigid social code of Anglo-Indian society. She works on a voluntary basis at the Mayapore General Hospital.

Daphne meets Hari Kumar, a Chillinborough educated Indian and is attracted towards him. With racial prejudices running high she knows how hard a friendship it would be yet initiates it herself in a fully conscious frame of mind. She goes out and meets him in the maidan and invites him. Her aunt, Lady Manners silently objects to it and Lili

also expresses her reservations but Daphne goes ahead saying whatever the implications to her it was a 'good deed' on her part. She talks to Hari Kumar as the English would talk to another as his upbringing commanded, ignoring the colour of his skin. Daphne's growing intimacy with Hari gave her 'a growing sense of joy, whatever there was for the people who watched' (JC, p.378). Geographically also her associative domain extends to '...the other side of the river... Mayapore had got bigger, and so had made me smaller, had sort of split my life into three parts.' (JC, p.378-379) Daphne says her life had split into three parts. There is her life in the hospital and the club in the company of her race. She thinks this as the easiest as well as the least admirable part of her nature. Her life in Mac Gregor House with Lili Chatterjee is an effort to work together 'But this mixing was just as self-conscious as the segregation.'(JC, p.379) The club marked a committed ground and the Mac Gregor House a neutral space. It is her association with Hari which she considers the truly personal ground, where she could have her own voice.

Therefore she feels Mayapore growing bigger with three distinct domains co-existing in her life. But the third domain which comprises her true self is spatially limited. Her association with Hari has to thrive on extremely restricted space. Yet she says, '...but not diminished from the inside' (JC, p.379) and it is her source of joy. Their meeting place is extremely restricted- either Lili's place or Aunt Shalini's and later the Bibighar Gardens. Once when they are in the museum in the Mac Gregor House she presumes that she and Hari too are like the exhibits there. They together would represent something rare. 'We could stand here on a little plinth, with a card saying. Types of Opposites. Indo-British circa 1942. Do not Touch.'(JC, p.382) Perhaps that way people who slyly stared at them could stare to their hearts' content.

After their visit to the temple Hari is arrested on some trumpted up charges by Ronald Merrick who is prejudiced against Hari Kumar who is a Chillinborough educated Indian

courting a white girl. On the other hand, Daphne is openly cold-shouldered in the club. It becomes imperative for Daphne to avoid being seen with Hari at least for his sake. As for herself she cared little about what people said or did but she takes a thoughtful decision to keep to her circle 'played the game', she says. (JC, p.400) Following the rigid social code of Anglo-India to her was playing the game. It was to act at conforming, 'Because all the time there was nothing to conform with, except an idea, a charade played round a phrase: white superiority', she says. (JC, p.400) Situated thus, she hates the Raj even more because she realizes that it depends so much on pretence. While Hari was constantly in her heart and mind she could objectively read the 'pink male faces' (JC, p.400). She could see the strain in their faces of trying to pretend and conform to the idea of 'white superiority'. She exclaims, "God knows what happens. What will happen."(JC, p.400)

Daphne Manners voices something very similar to that of her aunt on the existing scenario in British India. She questions the validity of English rule in India which is far from what it used to be. Initially the British may have come on a 'civilising mission' with lots of moral fervour but now things were reversed. She pointedly marks out that it now worked solely on the basis of that primitive instinct to destroy and suppress anything different. The Indians were different because of the colour of their skin. The English were obsessed with this negative instinct and now their presence was completely sustained by this. The moralising mission she says has gone 'sour' and the faces of her fellow men reflected that sourness. Daphne observes,

> The woman look worse than the men because consciousness because of physical superiority is unnatural to us. A white man in India can feel physically superior without unsexing himself. But what happens to a woman if she tells herself that ninety-nine per cent of the men she sees are not men at all, but creatures of an inferior species whose colour is their main distinguishing mark? What happens when you unsex a nation of enuchs?" (p.400,**JC**).

Further, her conviction is that if the Indo-British relation has come to such a pitiable condition it is because the English have never matched their words with deeds.

Another telling point which Daphne makes is that she sees the whole Imperial system working in India as a 'working robot'. The people working for it are geared to feel and believe in what is right by its standards. Such people allowed no 'originating passion' in them that would contradict the prescribed norms of the system. Therefore, they were always right as long as they adhered to it. Daphne calls them 'predictable people'. Predictable they were, as they worked for the robot. At times even individuals like her unconsciously fell back to it. Like after the rape incident in Bibighar this collective consciousness of racial superiority works in her too. She recounts in her letter how she never gave Hari a chance to console her after the assault. Had he been an Englishman she would have allowed him to take precedence in that circumstance. She says:

> ...in my panic there was this assumption of superiority, of privilege, of believing what was best for both of us because the colour of my skin automatically put me on the side of those who never told a lie... We have created a blundering judicial robot. We can't stop it working. It works for us even when we least want it to. We have created it to prove how fair, how civilised we are? (JC, p.425).

Daphne sees a parallel between what happened to her and what her race has done to Lili's country – rape. She says people like the Swinsons, Merricks and other malicious ones are responsible for it. But at the same time she is also critical of Indian people like Lili Chatterjee who she says seem to lie back and enjoy what they have done to her country. The old disreputable saying 'When rape is inevitable, lie back and enjoy it' (JC, p.434) unfortunately seemed to be happening.

Mabel Layton is from the background of pukka sahibs, one who belonged to the ruling class in British India: the Raj. She is the widow of a Major of the First Pankot Rifles who had died heroically in the North-West Frontier. In

1909 she married James Layton and led a devoted family life. She became very attached to his son, John Layton as her own. Therefore John Layton could mark the change in her after his father's death: 'Since his death Mabel had altered...she seemed to have lost the knack, or the will, to make people feel at home in her company.' (DSC, p.67)

Mabel's isolation in Rose Cottage, her declining of invitations and complete detachment from Pankot's public life was a matter of both disapproval as well as regret. However, due to her impeccable background and upbringing she still retained a special aura and none dared impeach her. The three men in her life – her husbands, first a military man and the second a civil servant and her step-son had dedicated their lives for the Empire. Like Lady Manners, Mabel also belonged to that group of Englishwomen whose men came to India with moralizing and civilizing zeal. They had stood by their husbands in their service for the Empire. The overwhelming decline brought about by the loss of moral

spirit with time greatly disturbed them. Both are disillusioned and detached because the distinguished service rendered by their husbands for the Empire now seemed utterly wasted.

Mabel is still the doyenne of the Pankot society despite her retreat. Her position is best understood when she tells this to Barbie Batchelor, who comes to stay with her as a paying-guest in Rose Cottage:

> I'd say I've become something of a recluse but of course that's not possible in India, for us. Even when we're alone we're on show, aren't we, representing something? That's why I can't stop people turning up. They came to make sure I'm still here and that we're all representing it together. But I go out as little as possible, in company I mean. I wonder if you'll be happy here?(TS p.24)

Accordingly one notes how the Pankot women often dropped in Rose Cottage. They had to make sure Mabel was still there and representing what had to be represented.

Mabel Layton is distinctly pro-Indian when she refuses to co-operate with the ladies of Pankot and Ranpur who

collect money for General Dyer Fund after the Jallianwallah Bagh Massacre in 1919. She not only refuses to help in collection but even to contribute. She questions the justification of Dyer's action in shooting the innocent Indian children and women. Her statement is replete with irony for the Imperial stance: 'Dyer can look after himself, but according to the rules browns can't because looking after them is what we get paid for.' (DSC, p.68) Instead she anonymously sends a cheque of hundred pounds to the Indians who were raising money for the relief of the families of the victims. She is so affected by the Jallianwallah incident that even after years she murmurs the name frequently in her sleep which Barbie hears as 'Gillian Waller'. This mysterious name is interpreted by Barbie as someone dear to Mabel.

Towards the end of her life, Mabel hesitatingly goes to attend Susan's wedding party but leaves it without a word.

Mildred and others may have tried to explain her unsociable behaviour but the point was clear:

> The truth could no longer be avoided. It had been a criticism of the foundations of the edifice, of the sense of duty which kept alive the senses of pride and loyalty and honour. It drew attention to a situation it was painful to acknowledge: that the god had left the temple, no one knew when, or how, or why. What one was left with were the rites which had once propitiated, once been obligatory, but were now meaningless because the god was no longer there to receive them. (TS, p.276)

Mabel's relation with Barbie and her Indian servant Aziz again distinguishes her from the complacent Pankot women. Just a few after days Barbie had come to stay with her in Rose Cottage, she notes: 'Mabel Layton had really little of the burra-mem in her although obviously she was one' (p.15, **TS**). Ghulam Mohammad, an old servant of the Mess is touched that she still remembers him by his name and talked so affectionately to him.

After Mabel's death Mildred is disappointed that she has left much less amount of money than she had expected. Mildred complains:

> Payments to charities. Indian charities. Orphanages, famine relief funds, child-widows, that sort of thing, and always anonymously .There are all these letters from the bank in Ranpur dating back years, acknowledging her instructions to make anonymous donations to this and that- hundreds of rupees at a time,... (TS, p.335)).

This shows how deeply Mabel was moved by Indian pathos and tried to alleviate it in her own way.

The first few pages of Scott's book, **The Jewel in the Crown** introduce us to **Edwina Crane**, a missionary. She is the supervisor of the district's Protestant Mission Schools. She is a liberal-minded Englishwoman with distinct pro-Indian sympathies. Initially she invites Indian ladies to tea on Tuesdays at her bungalow. This is her attempt '...to prove at least one Englishwoman admired and respected them.' (JC, p.3) Her admiration of the Indians is evoked through the love and affection for their children. She is critical of her people for the neglect and indifferent attitude they held towards the Indians particularly the plight of the children. But during war

time she knows she has to abide by the rules and live in close ranks to maintain white solidarity. Then the Indian ladies too stop visiting her and she decides to do her little bit for the Empire by entertaining the lonely young British soldiers of the lower ranks by throwing parties at her place on Wednesdays. On one such occasion she tells Clancy, a young soldier: 'After all these years there can't be any doubt India must be independent. When the war's over, we've got to give her up' (JC, p.23). Perhaps she is the first character in the book to voice such views concerning India.

Miss Crane has never experienced a complete love relationship though she had fancied Lieutenant Orme and later Clance, a BOR(British Other Rank). Neither is she bold enough like Daphne to overcome the racial ethos of loving an Indian. She traces her trouble to '...this little matter of the colour of the skin, which gets in the way of our seeing through each other's failings and seeing into each other's hearts.'(JC, p.61) It is only when she drives with Mr.

Chaudhuri, an Anglicized Bengali assistant along the Mayapore road, she experiences a sense of emotional satisfaction and tries to communicate with him. Unfortunately they are brutally attacked by a gang of rioters. Mr. Chaudhuri is murdered and she is assaulted while her car is set on fire. When she regains consciousness, she is shocked to see the dead body of Chaudhuri. She sits by the roadside in the rain holding his hand crying pitifully: "There's nothing I can do, nothing, nothing... I am sorry it was too late." (JC, p.57-58) She realizes the selfless love and loyalty of Mr. Chaudhuri for her then. While she had been unable to extend her liberal principles as Daphne Manners could by falling in love with him simply as a human being. So Edwina Crane manifests her own attempt to overcome the East-West divide in the manner she chooses to die. She puts on a sari and burns herself to death in the symbolic act of suttee.

Barbie Batchelor is another missionary whose sensibilities extend beyond the racial prejudices. Like the others she also experiences loss of faith in the Raj. Along with Mabel Layton she retreats from the Anglo-Indian society in Pankot. During her five years stay in Rose Cottage she meets the complacent mem-sahibs and sees through their hollow and ritualistic lives. She sees the ugly face of the Raj in the adulterous relationship of Mildred and Kelvin Coley. When she is face to face with Kelvin Coley, she mocks '...him not only for himself but for the whole condition...The word was 'dead.' Dead. Dead. It didn't matter now who said it; the office had crumpled and the façade fooled nobody.'(TS, p.241) Mabel's unarticulated disgust towards the Empire if given voice would be the same. Scott has given the most poignant image of this feeling the about the Raj through Barbie's consciousness:

> But tonight she found herself slowed down, struck by the significance of her surroundings, the reality of this ordinariness, this shabbiness, this evidence of detritus behind the screens of imperial power and magnificence. The feeling she had was not of glory departing or departed but of its original and

> continuing irrelevance to the business of being in India... (TS, p.229).

Barbie's reaction to Lady Manners's rejection of Pankot society by choosing to stay with some Indian friend in the West Hill is in fact a reflection of Barbie's inner regret at her own inability to break through the East-West divide. 'Her arrival and simultaneous disappearance serve to emphasize the stark division there is between our India and theirs. She has made herself one of them. The division is one of which I am ashamed. I have done nothing, nothing to remove it, ever,' she says (TS, p.218). Then she remembers how her friend Edwina had attempted it even if it was 'Too Late'.(TS, p.218)

Sarah Layton belongs to a traditional Anglo-Indian military family. She knows all the rules and conventions of the British society in India. She is not an outsider entering the society like Daphne, Miss Crane or Barbie. Yet she is not what a typical Anglo-Indian girl is like. She is independent

enough to ignore the smug and blind traditions and overcome the racial intolerance. Sarah does not care to conform so the Pankot ladies find something disturbing in her. Susan, her younger sister is a perfect Anglo-Indian girl. She tells Sarah, 'You're not like me. Whatever you do and wherever you go you'll always be yourself' (DSC, p.362). In Srinagar Sarah visits Lady Manners and the child Parvati in the houseboat when for others it was unthinkable. She adores Lady Manners and Mabel for being what they are. Merrick sees a likeness between her and Daphne Manners. They are similar in many ways. Sarah is also a good friend to an Indian Muslim, Ahmed though their intimacy is not alarmingly close. Like Daphne she is also disgusted by the show or pretence of British men and women in India. This is what she thinks about the traditional flow of the English life in India: 'we all have the same sort of history. Birth in England, holidays spent with uncles and aunts, then back to India. It was a ritual. A dead hand lay on the whole enterprise.'(DSC, p.147) So she sees that it has become nothing more than a

ritual without any meaning. In fact it is dead. She respects the glorious past of the Empire, but of the present she feels:

> ...a foolish contrivance for happiness in my heart against the evidence that tells me I never can be happy and can't while I live here. It's time we were gone. Gone. Every last wise, stupid, cruel, fond or foolish one of us. (DSC, p.443)

She sees the Empire in India now has come to be nothing more than 'the tragedy and comic grandeur of tin-pot roofs...',(DSC, p.443) therefore her outburst 'Its time we were gone. Gone' .The awareness of her own reality clashes with the fabricated reality of British life in India.

Thus these British women of the Raj demonstrate their expansive spirit and negate the patriarchal construct of memsahibs as racist, frivolous and emotional. Rather here they emerge as intellectual and anti-imperialists. Unlike the other complacent memsahibs they are very sensitive to the situation around them and decline to conform to the Imperial system operating in India as a 'working robot'. They have

their original thinking and are liberal enough to voice and at time even behave in keeping with their own convictions.

Hence one could conclude that the portrayal of these women in Paul Scott's text stand out in stark contradiction to Forster's views in **A Passage to India** that where an Englishman needs two years to learn to despise the Indians in India, an Englishwoman needs six months only.

CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it can be seen that Paul Scott in his **The Raj Quartet** has projected certain changes in the development of his women characters. David Rubin, making a general comment on novels about British India which he says are lacking in humour and hope comments that '...a notable exception is Paul Scott, who, here as in so many other aspects rises above the limitations of the tradition.'(Rubin, p.169) What this tradition was is best summed up in the words of Alison Sainsbury who says, '...in Anglo-India, what was private was public, and Anglo-Indian women's lives were organized and ruled by the fact that they lived as part of ruling British enclave in India.'(in Rubin, p.169)

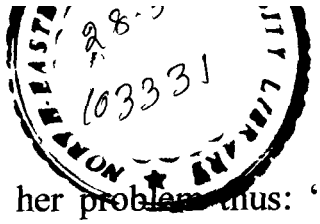
Though positioned as memsahibs in Anglo-Indian society Paul Scott's characters are however not conventional figures in the true sense of the word. One can mark the

contrast in the conventionally portrayed memsahibs like Kipling's Mrs. Hauskbee and Forster's Mrs. Turton with Scott's memsahibs like Mabel Layton, Lady Manners and others.

Lady Manners directly negates the notion of memsahibs being the agents in creating racial distance between the English and the Indians. She ignores the convention of maintaining white 'aloofness' as her liberal husband had done and continues her friendship with the Indians belonging to her class long after her husband's death. Her intimacy with Lili Chatterjee is a case in point. When her own society rejects her after her niece's thwarted love –affair with Hari Kumar she is extended hospitality by her Indian friends in the West Hill. Her letters to Lili Chatterjee discussing the prevailing political and social scenario in British India in the eve of the Partition testify her anti-imperialist statements.

Similarly, Mabel Layton acts according to her own convictions even if it contradicts colonial concerns like the idea of white solidarity. Her refusal to contribute to the General Dyer Fund and instead send a cheque of £100 to the fund for the victims of the Jallianwallah Bagh Massacre is a very daring act given the circumstances. She does not conform because her conscience does not allow her to do so. However, she is sensible enough to make her contributions anonymously to the various Indian charities for she realizes her behaviour will affect the career of her step-son, John Layton who is a Colonel in British India.

Scott presents Sarah Layton as a perfect foil to her sister, Susan who represents a pukka miss-sahib in Anglo-India. '...the difference between herself and Susan was that Susan was capable of absorbing things into her system without really thinking whether they were acceptable to her or not; whereas she herself absorbed nothing without first subjecting it to scrutiny'.(DSC, p.91) Sarah sees herself as a



misfit in that society. She analyses her problem thus: 'My trouble is...I question everything, every assumption. I'm not content to let things happen. If I don't change that I shall never be happy'.(DSC, p.131) When her Aunt Fenny tells her that she worries them, Sarah replies, 'I worry me too.'(DSC, p.225) Sarah realizes that her problem lies in that she does not belong to the generation of her parents and aunts '...who seemed to have been warmed in their formative years by the virtues of self-assurance and moral certainity...'(DSC, p.448) The self-assurance and moral certainity is missing in that turbulent phase of the Raj and it affects her as she is a sensitive girl. Barbie Batchelor comes closest in assessing Sarah's position:

> Looking at Sarah Barbie felt she understood a little of the sense the girl might have of having no clearly defined world to inhabit, but one poised between the old for which she had been prepared, but which seemed to be dying, and the new for which she had not been prepared at all. Young, fresh and intelligent, all the patterns to which she had been trained to conform were fading, and she was already conscious just from chance or casual encounter of the gulf between herself and the person she would have been if she had never come back to India: the kind of person she 'really was'.(TS, p.293-294)

If Susan fits into the role of a young girl of a traditional Anglo-Indian family, it is because every moment she is making a conscious effort to do so. Her outburst, 'Stop it ! I'm trying, trying, trying to pretend that it's a nice day. I'm trying, trying to remember that I'm being married to Teddie...'(DSC, p.223) shows how hard she is trying to fit into the role. Even a serious matter like one's own marriage becomes a part of this effort. But she does regret that she cannot have independent mind like that of her sister. She suffers inwardly due to it. She tells Sarah that she feels like a mere drawing which anyone can rub out. Infact she suffers from identity crisis. She cannot have an independent self. This is why she always needs someone to rely on. This makes her so vulnerable and easily succumb to men like Teddy Bingham and Ronald Merrick, both of whom her sister had rejected.

Sarah, on the other hand questions every standard behavioural practice prescribed for an Anglo-Indian girl. At the very initial stage, she enters India as a young girl not ready for any 'romantic encounter' but with a secretarial course which she hoped would help her utilize her time and be of some use somewhere. She and Susan, both join the Women's Auxiliary Corps and work as clerks in the Area Headquarters in Pankot. Where she impresses her colleagues with the sincerity and efficiency of her work, her sister Susan takes it as an opportunity to attract as many suitors as possible. Sarah bears the responsibility of her sister and mother while her father is taken a prisoner of war in Germany. After her sister's marriage she feels relieved of her responsibility and wants to join the war as a nurse. She is unable to go because Susan soon after her wedding becomes a widow with Teddy's child growing within her. Sarah's responsibilities increases further. Later she avails of an opportunity to work in the Women's Hospital in Mirat. Her commitment to humanitarian service was so strong that she

would have even served in the leper's colony if Count Bronowsky had given her the permission.

Sarah never once goes out of the way in an effort to attract men around her. She does not work on affecting feminine elegance pertaining to looks and mannerisms. As Rowan marks, '...that in her unusual, perhaps plain way she was beautiful...'(DSP, p.161) But still most of the sensible men are attracted to her than to her sister. Teddy Bingham and Ronald Merrick both marry Susan though their first choice was Sarah. Her quiet self-reliance and intelligence absorbs men like Nigel Rowan, Guy Perron, Count Bronowsky, Doctor Travers and Ahmed Kasim. She maintains healthy relationship with them as friends. She is generally quiet in the gossip circle of the ladies for she cannot indulge in small talk. The Pankot ladies find her behaviour '...less than admirable because it lacked either enthusiasm or spontaneity.'(TS, p.262) On the other hand, persons like Rowan, Count Bronowsky, Lady Manners,

Mabel and Barbie enjoy her company for 'she spoke well and clearly, in control of a line of argument that was undogmatically developed.'(DSC, p.166) Such independent outlook is scarcely to be found in the miss-sahibs.

Sarah admires Lady Manners and her Aunt Mabel, who she thinks have knowledge as well as experience to ennoble their personalities. In Srinagar she goes out of the way and visits Lady Manners and Daphne's child Parvati in their house-boat when for others it would have been unthinkable. She does not indulge in social snobbery. Later she goes and visits Barbie Batchelor in the Samaritan Hospital when others had ignored her due to their class consciousness.

Daphne Manners, Sarah and Susan Layton are young girls in British India on the threshold of marriage. These young miss-sahibs are somehow not so much bothered in maintaining the Victorian code of conduct. Even Susan who

appears the least resistant of them also ignores the tradition when she does not care to wait for her father's return to get his approval for her marriage with Teddy Bingham. The tradition was that after the girl's choice of the man she decides to marry, her suitor should have an audience with her father, impress him and get the final permission. Mildred Layton wants that this tradition should continue therefore she is hesitant to give her approval to Susan's decision to marry Teddy in her father's absence. '...Mrs. Layton would have preferred her husband to be on hand to approve of.'(DSC, p.132) John Layton had also followed this Victorian practice before marrying Susan's mother, Mildred. Susan is aware of it but does not care to respect the tradition. She says, 'She didn't really want me to marry anyone until Daddy comes back. She wants everything in abeyance, doesn't she? – because everything is. Everything – especially things about men and women.'(DSC, p.372)

Daphne Manners totally ignores the white society's restrictions on feminine conduct by having a love-affair with an Indian and deciding to give birth to an illegitimate child and that too fathered by a native. Sarah Layton, though not as defiant as her is still very much a rebel in her own way. She allows herself to be seduced by a wartime subaltern but is forced to have an abortion. Though she agrees to have the abortion to keep up appearances in a society where a girl is expected to be a virgin when she marries, she decides that at least in private her parents should know about it and most importantly she would tell the man who would marry her about this episode of her life. Such a man, she knows is scarcely to be found among the pukka sort in her society. Sarah is also critical of the Victorian code of chivalry practised by men around her. She feels that the men by behaving in such a protective manner induce the women to believe that their existence is dependent on them. She assesses it thus: '...so you became aware of the need to be

grateful to them for the constant proof they offered of being ready to defend you, if only from yourself.'(DSC, p.158)

Sarah rejects Teddy Bingham because he is so predictable and he would never go against the standard rules of society. Even in his subsequent courtship of Susan and marriage to her he seems to behave in a manner for which the script had been dictated by the tradition. Sarah is convinced that Susan and Teddy decide to marry not because they love each other but because it was the expected behaviour which she herself had ignored. She sees no depth or commitment in their relationship. As for herself, 'She certainly had no intention of casually accepting it and becoming thoughtlessly implicated in it, which is what she believed Susan had done.'(DSC, p.158)

Sarah will not compromise like her Aunt Fenny had done. Sarah is surprised when her Aunt Fenny says, 'Ninety-

nine percent of my life is a compromise. It's part of the contract.'(DSC, p.445) Fenny had delayed in choosing her husband among the various suitors who courted her and when time was running out for her she had panicked and said yes to the least eligible of the men who wooed her. Susan's marriage to Teddy Bingham in such a haste manner perhaps can be attributed to her apprehension that like Aunt Fenny, her time would run out too. The personal compromises that we see women characters like Mildred, Fenny and now Susan are making arise out of the fundamental truth that life in British India was no longer what it used to be.

The war had disrupted the social set-up of the Anglo-Indian society and unsettled the assurance and certainity of the men and women of the Raj. The well-ordered life they were used to was no more possible. The women had come in search of the pukka men who would provide them lavish lives. Neither the pukka men were easily available nor the

lavish bungalows and lifestyle. Men of all sorts were flooding the stations and people were being accommodated everywhere and anywhere possible. Mildred and Fenny who have spent most of their lives in the Flagstaff House now have to live in the congested grace and favour bungalow and the box-like flat in Calcutta respectively. One notes the transition in Fenny from the staunch upholder of the values and traditions of the Flagstaff House to the cosmopolitan values she acquires later in life to suit her husband's belated success in his career in Calcutta. 'She belonged, as though in default to having arrived ...to a new order of Indian authority and had apparently, as a result, absorbed and smothered a multitude of sins.'(DSC, p.334) Rather it is Fenny who had asked Sarah to put aside her inhibitions and enjoy the company of Clark, one of the wartime subalterns attending her husband's courses. She tells Sarah,

> 'Don't be too put out or standoffish if you find yourself in a gang that includes chichis... But you're not not like that pet, are you? You'll have a lovely time. Its quite a thing for them to have an English girl,...I shan't start worrying about you until long after

midnight. Jimmy Clark will look after you...'(DSC, p.451)

The same Jimmy Clark eventually seduces Sarah. She has to go for an abortion due to which she is physically, emotionally as well as psychologically affected. After it she finds that '...feelings had somewhat changed. Her capacity to feel or show affection had diminished... such a lonely and love-less experience...'(DSP, p.143). Such a change in Sarah who had shown so much care and concern to people around her like Susan, Barbie, Mabel and her mother indicates that the personal change in these women is the cause and effect of the changed ambience in British India. Young girls like Daphne and Sarah extend their friendship beyond the race because within their own circle men who share their broad-outlook are rare. They are not willing to 'compromise' as Susan or Fenny.

Other groups of English in India, like the missionaries...are rarely treated. Missionaries do

> appear as minor characters...Generally speaking, however, their characters are not highly developed. The most important point regarding them is that even when they are most optimistic regarding conversion they have little success. (Greenberger, p.31)

Such a remark throws light on the position of the missionaries in the Anglo-Indian fiction as well as in the Anglo-Indian society. In comparison to the minor missionary characters in most of the Anglo-Indian fiction, Paul Scott's missionary women in **The Raj Quartet** are highly developed characters commenting and exposing their vulnerable position in British India in the most compelling manner. Scott is one of the very few writers who have done justice to these 'invisible women of the Empire' by portraying their life experiences and good work in 'the discourse of civilizing mission'.(Sharpe, p.93)

Edwina Crane and Barbie Batchelor are the two missionary women whose life experiences in the mission is extensively dealt with. Crane is Barbie's role-model. She

derives inspiration from the exemplary work and faith shown by Edwina Crane. But when Edwina ends her life by committing suicide-the greatest sin for which there is no forgiveness Barbie is devastated by it. Her idol's earlier gestures which seemed so sublime now revealed someone who was overwhelmed by despair and not purified by love. This revelation heightens her own 'secret sorrow'. Edwina had seemed so strong and sure in God's service that being associated with her itself had given Barbie the hope of redemption but now through this act Edwina's inner despair is revealed. Barbie is also constantly guilt-stricken that she has not been able to strengthen her faith in God by her 'good work'. Her dreams of bringing hundreds into the fold in India remains unfulfilled. Edwina's teaching also becomes irrelevant in the given circumstances. The resultant disillusionment felt by both is further aggravated as they have to cope with social discriminations and isolation in an alien environment. They loose their faith in mankind, the Raj and eventually in God. In the process they loose their mental

balance also. The pathetic nature of their deaths poses a question about the imperial idea of white solidarity and fraternity.

The image of the memsahib in India as projected in most of the Anglo-Indian fiction particularly in Kipling's earlier works like **Plain Tales from the Hills** was quite negative. This view was reinforced in the imagination of the British back in England because of the fact that Kipling was the most widely read author at that time. Such a perception of the memsahib failed to present her in the reality of her circumstances in India.

In contrast, Scott has been able to give a more variegated and therefore a more realistic portrayal of the British women in the last decades of the Raj. Perhaps the change in the mode of portrayal of these women in Scott's fiction can be attributed to change taking place in the socio-

political scenario after the war. The characters evolve as they try to cope with the changed reality of their life in India. What Paul Scott has been able to achieve in the portrayal of the British Women in India in **The Raj Quartet** can be summed up in the following remark on Paul Scott's definition of the novel:

> The literary artist, on the other hand, recreates imaginatively his version of "human reality" in terms of images. In a way, he implies that the novel is, in a general sense, "an image of human reality". Finding his own definition a bit unsatisfactory, he tends to agree with Walter Allen who defines it as "an extended metaphor of the author's view of life"[1].

NOTES

1. Badiger, V. R. Paul Scott : His Art and Vision.
London: Atlantic Publishers and Distibutors,
1994. p.6

BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

Books:

Scott, Paul. The Jewel in the Crown. London: Heinemann, 1967.

_____. The Day of the Scorpion. London: Arrow Books Ltd., 1998.

_____. The Towers of Silence. London: Mandarin Paperbacks, 1997.

_____. A Division of the Spoils. London: Mandarin Paperbacks, 1975.

SECONDARY SOURCES

Books:

Badiger, V.R. Paul Scott: His Art and Vision. London: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 1994.

Blaimers, H. Twentieth Century English Literature. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1982.

Bose, S. Attitudes to Imperialism: Kipling, Forster and Paul Scott. New Delhi: Amar Prakashan, 1990.

Carrington, Charles. Rudyard Kipling: His Life and Work. London: Macmillan, 1995.

Chakraborty, D.K. A Passage to the Orient. Delhi: Amar Prakashan, 1998.

Chaudhuri, N . and Strobel, Margaret . (Eds.) Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance. Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992.

Cohn, B.S. Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1997.

Cowasjee, Saros. (ed.) Women Writers of the Raj: Short Fiction from Kipling to Independence. London: Grafton Books/Collins, 1990.

Diver, Maud. The Englishwoman in India. London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1909.

Ghose, I. Women Travellers in Colonial India: The Power of the Female Gaze. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1998.

Greenberger, A.J. The British Image of India: A Study in the Literature of Imperialism,1880-1960. London: Oxford University Press, 1969.

Kipling, Rudyard. Plain Tales from the Hills. London: Macmillan, 1960.

Krishnamurthy, J. (ed.) Women in Colonial India: Essays on Survival, Work and the State. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1989.

Loomba, Annia. Colonialism/Postcolonialism. London: Routledge, 1998.

Mackenzie, John M. Propaganda and Empire: The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1984.

Mc Clintock, Anne. Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest. New York: Routledge, 1995.

Misra, Udayon. The Raj in fiction: A Study of Nineteenth-Century British Attitudes towards India. Delhi: B.R. Publishing, 1987.

Moore-Gilbert, B.J. (ed.) Writing India (1757-1990): The Literature of British India. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Moore, R. Paul Scott's Raj. London: William Heinemann Ltd.,1990.

Nandy, Ashis. The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of the Self Under Colonialism. Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1983.

Nicholson, K. A Presentation of Social Problems in the Indo-Anglian and Anglo-Indian Novel. Bombay: Jaico Publishing House, 1972.

Paxton, N.L. Writing Under Raj: Gender, Race and Rape in British Colonial Imagination,1830-1947. London: Rutgers University Press, 1999.

Rubin, D. After the Raj: British Novels of India since 1947. London: University Press of New England, 1986.

Said, Edward. Culture and Imperialism. New York : Knopf, 1993.

Sainsbury, Alison. "Married to the Empire : The Anglo-Indian Domestic Novel". In Writing India, 1757-1990 : The Literature of British India, ed. B.J. Moore-Gilbert, 163-87. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1996.

Sandison, Alan. The Wheel of Empire: A Study of the Imperial Idea in Some Nineteenth Century and Early Twentieth Century Fiction. London: Macmillan, 1967.

Sen, Indrani. Woman and Empire: Representations in the Writings of British India (1858-1900). New Delhi: Orient Longman Pvt. Ltd., 2002.

Shamsul, Islam. Chronicles of the Raj: A Study of Literary Reactions to the Imperial Idea Towards the End of the Raj. London: Macmillan, 1979.

Sharpe, J. Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Texts. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1983.

Swinden, P. Paul Scott: Images of India. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1980.

Vicinus, M. The Perfect Victorian Lady. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1972.

Ward, Sir A.W. and Waller, A.R.(eds.) In The Cambridge History of English Literature. 14 : 331-42. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1964.

Kipling, R. Plain Tales from the Hills. London: Macmillan, 1960.

Forster, E.M. A Passage to India. New Delhi: Kalyani Publishers, 1999.

Articles :

Ali, T. "Fiction as History, History as Fiction." The Illustrated Weekly of India.(8 July, 1 1984): 33-35.

Banerjee, J. "A Living Legacy: An India View of Paul Scott's India. London Magazine, 20 (April/May 1980): 97-98.

Beloff, M. "The End of the Raj: Paul Scott's Novels as History". London: Encounter1 (May, 1976) 65-66.

Lister, R. Review of "The Jewel in the Crown". London: Evening Standard, 19 July, 1976.

Nye, R. Review of "The Day of the Scorpion". London: Guardian, 20 September,1968.

Levin, M. Review of "The Towers of Silence". New York Times Book Review, 20 February, 1972.

BIO-DATA

NAME: ANURADHA BHATTARAY

DEGREE: M.Phil

DEPARTMENT: ENGLISH

TITLE OF DISSERTATION: BRITISH WOMEN CHARACTERS IN PAUL SCOTT'S THE RAJ QUARTET

DATE OF ADMISSION: 21- 07- 01

COMMENCEMENT OF DISSERTATION: 4- 03- 02

APPROVAL OF RESEARCH PROPOSAL
1. BPGS : 2- 05- 02

2. SCHOOL BOARD REGISTRATION NO. AND DUE DATE : 232 & 19- 12- 02

DUE DATE OF SUBMISSION : 2- 05- 03

EXTENSION : TWO SEMESTERS

HEAD

DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH