PAUL SCOTT'S **THE RAJ QUARTET** : APOTHEOSIS OF AN ILLUSION

This chapter looks at Paul Scott's monumental saga **The Raj Quartet**. The Quartet consists of 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), presents the Raj in all its negative aspects. Scott's work extends that of Forster in drawing out the anti-humanist strain in the Imperial mission. William Walsh has described the Quartet thus:

Four volumes ... packed with malice, murder, cruelty, sexual perversion, racial violence and general human hatred ... [they] breathe a thirties-type intensity of colonial guilt. (174)

Walsh's comments are admirably descriptive of Scott's work. They also draw our attention to Scott's extension of Forsterian motifs of guilt and regret.

The **Jewel in the Crown** deals with the trauma of the Quit India movement. The novel is set in **Mayapore**, near **Mirat**. Certain characters and events are narrated to us,
combining to form "an aspect of truth" as Scott put it in his earlier novel The Mark of the Warrior (1958).

The novel opens with Edwina Crane's story. This pro-Indian missionary teacher is attacked by a mob following the declaration of the Quit India resolution. Her subordinate Mr. Chaudhuri dies trying to save her from the mob.

Daphne Manners, a young English girl, helps out Sr. Ludmilla at the local "Sanctuary" which is a place for the sick and dying. She befriends Hari Kumar, a Westernised Indian. Ronald Merrick, the District Superintendent of Police, hopes to marry Daphne and dissuades her from mixing with Kumar. Their friendship is unacceptable to both the Indians and the British at Mayapore. One night they make love in the Bibighar Gardens. Soon after a gang of ruffians rape Daphne and beat up Kumar.

The rape issue snowballs into a crisis. Merrick, who hates Kumar, is suspected of planting evidence - a bicycle - to implicate him. Kumar is then arrested on charges of rape. Mayapore is affected by riots and the Jail is attacked. Kumar is tortured in prison, though we are only given a third person account, through Vidyasagar's deposition (Jewel: 369 - 372). Kumar is beaten and sexually ill-treated by Merrick. The novel ends with Parvati, Daphne's daughter, staying on at Mayapore.
The second volume The Day of the *Scorpion*, begins with the arrest of the ex-Chief Minister and Congressman Mohammed Ali Kasim on 9th August 1942, i.e., the day after the "Quit India" resolution. The Governor tries to persuade him to resign from the Congress, but Mohammed Ali Kasim refuses.

The Layton family resides at Ranpur. John Layton's stepmother, Mabel, sympathises with the Indians. After **Jallianwala Bagh** she contributes to the fund raised for the Indian victims of the massacre (*Scorpion*: 69). John Layton marries Mildred Muir, and has two daughters Sarah and Susan Layton. John Layton ends up as a prisoner of war in a German concentration camp. Susan Layton is all set to marry a soldier, Teddie Bingham. Sarah Layton takes an interest in "administration ... Native customs. Local history" (*Scorpion*: 96). We are told by Lucy Smalley that she (Sarah) does not take the Raj seriously (*Scorpion*: 135). A Russian Count Bronowski at Mirat takes Mohammed Ali Kasim's son Ahmed Kasim under his wing. M.A. Kasim's other son Sayed has joined the Indian National Army. Kasim and Sarah Layton become friends.

Merrick and Teddie Bingham become friends in the army. Merrick is the best man at Bingham's wedding with Susan Layton. A stone is hurled at the marriage procession. This injures Bingham slightly. Bronowski shrewdly points out that
the stone may have been meant for Merrick, in "remembrance of things past", specifically Bibighar. This is a hint that Merrick's past may be catching up with him.

It is 1944 and the Kumar case is reopened. Nigel Rowan interrogates Kumar. At the inquiry Kumar details information about Merrick's hatred for him. He also describes his imprisonment: the torture, Merrick's sado-masochism and, more importantly, Merrick's exposition of the Raj "ideals". Rowan is convinced of Kumar's innocence. Lady Manners who is also present at this hearing feels the same. Kumar weeps at the news (thus far kept from him) of Daphne's death. However he refuses to accept that this second hearing is not part of "the situation" - of British oppression and native helplessness.

Teddie Bingham dies in battle and Ronald Merrick loses an arm. Merrick is with Bingham during his (Bingham's) last hours. Merrick describes the events leading up to Bingham's tragedy when Sarah Layton visits him in hospital. Merrick returns to Ranpur as a hero. Susan Layton tries to burn her baby during a nervous breakdown. The maid servant Minnie rescues it in time.

The Towers of Silence, part three of the Quartet, deals mainly with the story of Barbara (Barbie) Batchelor, a
superintendent of the Protestant mission schools in Ranpur. She is a friend of Edwina Crane (whose tale formed a major part of The Jewel in the Crown). After retirement she comes to live with Mabel Layton at Pankot as a tenant and companion. Barbie Batchelor has a reputation of being very talkative and slightly eccentric.

Mabel Layton and Barbie Batchelor get along well. Mildred Layton (the mother of Susan and Sarah) is however on uneasy terms with her. Mildred distrusts Mabel's reliance upon Barbie, construing it as Mabel's distrust of her (Mildred). Mildred becomes a heavy drinker.

Daphne Manners dies in childbirth a year after the Bibighar incidents (1943). Mabel Layton also dies. Mildred and Kevin Coley (who are having an extra-marital affair) hint at Barbie's hand in the "unnatural" death (Towers: 227). Mildred and Barbie disagree about Mabel's burial place. This marks the complete alienation of Barbie from the people at Ranpur. Mildred relies upon Barbie's past reputation as an eccentric to declare her mad. Susan has a baby boy who has a certain Dicky Beauvais as godfather. Dicky is in love with Sarah Layton, though there is no suggestion of reciprocity. The relationship is not developed further. The debate between the Congress party and the Muslim League regarding the formation of the Interim Government goes on. While the Nehru-
led Congress proposes joining the government, Jinnah opposes the idea. Barbie Batchelor goes mad. Ronald Merrick returns as a war hero and with an artificial arm.

A Division of the Spoils opens with the historical end of the Second World War. Wavell arrives as India's Viceroy. Mohd. Ali Kasim is released from detention.

Sarah Layton meets Guy Perron, a historian—soldier, at a party. Guy Perron meets Ronald Merrick at an interrogation of a native soldier. It is revealed that Perron was Hari Kumar's senior at an English school (Chilling—borough). Merrick is involved with prosecutions of the Indians who had enlisted with Subash Bose's Indian National Army (INA). Merrick is deliberately harsh towards the deserters due to his racism and anti-Indian attitude. Perron recognises this blind racial hatred and vindictive nature of Ronald derrick. Perron also comes to know of Merrick's unsavoury past—Bibighar and the Kumar case.

We are given the opinions of Perron, the cartoonist Halki and Mohd. Kasim on the political situation. Another instance of Merrick's sado-masochistic misuse of powers—Lance Corporal Pinker's case is given to us (the case is looked at in greater detail later in the chapter).

Merrick who knows Susan Layton's history, marries her.
He obtains this history by reading her files at Dr. Richardson, the psychiatrist's office. These files reveal her unstable mental state. Merrick capitalises on her condition to ingratiate himself with her and the Layton household. Hari Kumar is eventually freed from prison. Merrick's past finally catches up. Frequent reminders of Bibighar are left behind for Merrick. Notable among these is a bicycle, meant to recall the bicycle Merrick had planted as evidence against Kumar.

Indian independence seems imminent. The Hindu - Muslim problems continue unabated. Ronald Merrck is brutally murdered. Riots break out during the country's partition. The English try to escape by train through riot-torn areas. Ahmed Kasim is sought out by the crowd as a traitor who sided with the British. Kasim hands himself over, thus saving the other English on the train. The Quartet ends with the gruesome murder of Kasim.

II

Scott depicts the Indo - British relationship by focussing on its human element. By placing individual relationships within and against the backdrop of political events, Scott foregrounds the background. We are made to realise that these individual relations reflect
microcosmically the political liaison of India and Britain. We are alerted to this realisation at the very outset of the Quartet. In the opening sections of The Jewel in the Crown Scott writes:

This is the story of a rape, of the events that led up to it and followed it, and of the place in which it happened. There are the action, the people, and the place, all of which are interrelated.... (9, emphasis mine)

We read on to realise that the "interrelation" is the mingling of the individual with the political. The Quartet resembles a historical novel in its use of historical events. Margaret Scanlon in "The Disappearance of History: P*ul Scott's The Raj Quartet" (1986) has argued that the Quartet follows the basic conventions of a historical tract in its multiple narrators and linear narrative. But there is a constant tension between the Quartet's realistic texture and its tendency to turn history into stories or myths that seek to explain history. Scanlon adds: "The novel[s] try to establish an identity between public events and the private experiences of its characters" (Scanlon: 153-169). The rape of Daphne Manners reverberates, repeats and re-narrativises the rape of India. The political is here the personal text of the rape too.
Relationships in the Quartet may be seen in terms of promise and hope on the one hand and reneging and disappointment on the other. Relationships promise happiness and fulfilment but result only in tragedy. This becomes true for individuals and nations.

The Jewel in the Crown inaugurates the relationship of Edwina Crane and Chaudhuri. She is the official superior and he is the Indian subordinate. Crane notes that in her voice was "the voice of authority, the special note of us talking to them..." (Jewel: 57, emphasis mine). Yet she feels "there was between them an unexpected confidence..." (64). A promise of improved relations is thus held out. Scott however warns us obliquely to expect nothing. The imagery is ominous: "the sky was clouded over, but there was still no rain" (64). In the storm when all telecommunication lines are down, the Indians and British come closer, and communicate. Crane and Chaudhuri understand each other's position better. Later Chaudhuri rescues her from rioters, and himself dies in the process. Crane believes then that she had left the prospect of a friendship too late. Scott suggests that this possible rapprochement may have been delayed even at the national level: "'Its taken me a long time', she said, meaning not only Mr. Chaudhuri. 'I'm sorry it was too late' " (Jewel: 69, emphasis mine).
The Colin Lindsey - Hari Kumar relationship flourishes in England. Barriers of race, colour and nationality seem irrelevant. This relationship is important because Hari Kumar feels more Anglicised than ever. He is secure as an Englishman, being treated as an equal by Colin Lindsey. It is this feeling of security as an Englishman that Kumar takes with him to India. His troubles begin when Westernisation meets a different context and response in India. This promising relationship evaporates when Colin comes out to India. He refuses to acknowledge or recognise Kumar. The development of this tendency is revealed through the change in tone of Colin's letters. In his first letter to Kumar he suggests that their respective towns of residence seem close enough. Kumar reporting changes in Colin's letters says:

In his [Colin's] second [letter] he said he wondered if he would ever be close enough to make a meeting possible. In his third he did not mention the possibility of a meeting at all. (Jewel: 279)

The lines of communication only carry the message of incommunicability. Scott uses irony to emphasise the effect of the tragedy. Kumar becomes aware of the barriers between him and Colin on a flat "maiden" where people move freely. The description is very vivid:
On the 

maidan

the races came uncertainly together in a brief 

intermingling

pattern which from above ... looked less informal than it looked from the ground...  

(Jewel: 282)

Thus it is at a prescribed meeting place that barriers come up and people are separated.

A love affair blossoms between Daphne Manners and Hari Kumar. As Daphne admits "it was a friendship I began in a 

conscious

frame of mind" (Jewel: 393, emphasis mine). They are aware of their different backgrounds, and yet they make an effort to relate as human beings. After the friendship grows into love Daphne believes that they had attained a long awaited togetherness of races. She writes that the affair was

the logical but terrifying end of the attempt they [other Indians and English] had all made to break out of their separate little groups and learn how to live together.... (Jewel: 379)

The promise of union between the races and nations is held out.

Scott provides ominous signs to warn us of impending tragedy even for this 

relationship. We are told that Daphne
and Kumar meet in the Bibighar Gardens - which has a reputation for ghosts and evil (Jewel: 392). The Hardyesque opening passages of the novel itself suggest future evil. The passage is worth quoting:

Imagine, then, a flat landscape, dark for the moment, but even so conveying to a girl running in the still deeper shadow cast by the wall of the Bibighar Gardens an idea of immensity, of distance.... (Jewel: 9, emphasis mine)

The images of shadow, human insignificance and evil anticipate a tragedy. And it is in this Garden that the climax of the Daphne - Kumar relationship is reached. It is also the site of Daphne's rape and the epicentre of the resultant chaos.

The Sarah Layton - Ahmed Kasim relationship also promises a great deal. Sarah has had numerous loveless affairs before. Jimmy Clark (Scorpion 436-459), John Bellinger (Division: 356), and Teddie Bingham (Scorpion: 132-134). There develops a healthy respect and affection between Ahmed Kasim and Sarah. Sarah says: "Ahmed and I weren't in love. But we loved one another" (Division: 592). Though on opposite sides of the Imperial fence they share a critical humanist's view of the Raj. Sarah dislikes the Raj for what
it perpetrates on Indians and the British. She realises that the British are only playing a role of assumed responsibility and fooling themselves. The British failed in their "responsibility" for precisely this reason. The human element was missing from the civilisational mission. Merrick's brutality in solving the crime, or his attempt to quell the dissidence in the army reflects the inhuman side of Britain's "job" in India. Max Beloff in his early essay on Scott, "The End of the Raj: Paul Scott's Novels as History" (1974), suggested that the Quartet explores this murky area of responsibility and humanitarianism. Beloff writes:

> It [the Quartet] conveys the full tragic significance of the combination between a sense of duty and a sense of permanent alienation from those to whom the duty was owed (65-70, emphasis mine).

Beloff's argument points its finger at the ambiguity at the heart of the Raj enterprise. Sarah Layton who has located this ambiguity realises the English self-indulgent attitude and artificiality. Sarah therefore comments on the roleplaying nature of the British in India, suggesting that they have put on a face without relating as humans to India. The entire Raj edifice is theatrical. In The Day of the Scorpion Sarah asks: "But out here are we really ourselves?" (158). They are, in Sarah's words "always on show"
Ahmed Kasim comes from a family of nationalists. His father Mohammed Ali Kasim had been a Chief Minister. The senior Kasim had gone to jail but refused to accept the British offer: freedom if he quit the Congress (Scorpion: 25). Sarah's friendship with someone like Ahmed is thus a reaching across over barriers. She ignores the "Memsahib" role she is supposed to play and his dark skin, family and political stance. Like Daphne Manners then, Sarah hopes to bridge barriers.

Thus Ahmed Kasim and Sarah Layton possess a deeper level of understanding. Sarah herself does not take the Raj seriously, or so we are told (Towers: 104). This anticipates her criticism at the end of the Quartet. Yet the relationship ends tragically. Ahmed Kasim gives himself up to the rioters, like Chaudhuri in The Jewel in the Crown, so that the mob fury is deflected away from the English on the train (Division: 582 - 3). Sarah at this point realises how the English had betrayed their role of responsibility. She acknowledges Kasim's sacrifice: "But when it came to it he [Kasim] didn't let any of it even begin to happen to us" (Division: 592). Like Chaudhuri it is an Indian who rescues the British. This is a reversal of the protector role in the Indo-British relations. Sarah voices this betrayal: "We just
let him go. We all of us sat here and let him go" (Division: 584).

Sarah Layton’s comments at the conclusion of the Quartet rounds off the theme of reneged promises first articulated by Edwina Crane in The Jewel in the Crown. Crane in a particularly significant passage speaks of this betrayal to a British soldier:

For years ... the books that the Indians have read have been the books of our English radicals, our English liberals. There has been a seed ... planted in the Indian imagination and in the English imagination. Out of it was to come something sane and grave, full of dignity ... kindness and peace and wisdom ... For years we have been promising and for years we have been finding means of putting fulfilment of the promise off until the promise stopped looking like a promise and started looking only like a sinister prevarication.... (Jewel: 72)

A similar statement is recorded by Hari Kumar. In his letter to Colin Lindsey Kumar writes:

What they [the English dislike is a black reflection of their own white radicalism which centuries ago led to the Magna Carta. (Jewel: 276)
Kumar is arguing that the hatred was an odd perversion, since the Indians were only repeating Britain's own nationalist phase from long ago. Thus not only was India an heir to Britain's nationalist legacy, it had learnt its radicalism from Britain herself.

Robin White also notes the selfishness behind the Raj. He writes: "We were in India for what we could get out of it" (Jewel: 340). Guy Perron likewise sees the relationship as primarily exploitative where India was only a possession (Division: 105).

Scott thus identifies selfishness, cruelty or indifference (which was just as cruel) as the emotional bulwarks of the Raj. He suggests that promises of protection and care were mere blinds.

Cruelty and suffering formed an integral part of the relationships in British India. This is symbolised by the pivotal Merrick - Kumar episode in the Quartet. Ronald Merrick is the police officer who, much before the rape of Daphne Manners, has had a minor showdown with Kumar. In the Merrick - Kumar relationship Scott depicts the real basis of the Raj enterprise: cruelty, racism, contempt and hate.

When Merrick and Kumar meet for the first time Sr. Ludmilla notes:
Two such darknesses in opposition can create a blinding light. Against such a light ordinary mortals must hide their eyes.... (Jewel: 146)

This is an eerily oracular passage because the "darkness" perceived by Sr. Ludmilla soon becomes the tragedy that envelops everyone. It is also symbolically the darkness of Sr. Ludmilla's blindness.

The Merrick - Kumar relationship is unequal from the start. Kumar speaks better English than Merrick. Sr. Ludmilla notes: "And in Merrick's book this counted against him [Kumar]" (Jewel: 145). The class distinction is here intertwined with that of race. Merrick comes from a lower social class (Scorpion: 219, Division: 301). His voice, we are told, "has a different tone, a tone regulated by care and ambition rather than by upbringing" (Jewel: 145). Merrick also realises that the Indian is actually more handsome (Jewel: 143). All this put together suggests the Britisher's distrust of the educated native too. Sujit Bose in Attitudes to Imperialism (1990) has argued along similar lines. Bose notes that, for Merrick, Hari Kumar has reached the "ideal of civilisation; from which he himself is perhaps a little distant". This, says Bose, is unbearable to Merrick and as a result he tortures Kumar (Bose: 105). Cruelty is present in the sado-masochist element in Merrick's treatment of
Kumar as we shall see.

**Merrick's** lower class background was a major factor in his perverted mental make-up. Ashis Nandy has argued that it was the British middle class which produced the most ardent imperialists (Nandy: 7). The training imparted by the British schooling system reinforced concepts of English superiority, class distinctions and unquestioned obedience. Philip Mason in *The English Gentleman* has argued that the schooling system produced "just beasts" (170–174). After schooling people like Merrick were hardened in the Army or the police. Thus the system allowed them positions of power over natives. It placed the Englishman in authority in a Gramscian hegemonic wedding of education and the institution (Government).

In such positions the coloniser's inherent inferiority complex was sought to be obliterated by lording it over the natives. To adapt Mannoni's argument from *Prospero and Caliban*, people like Merrick who stood no chance of decent lives and social status in England developed severe inferiority complexes. Once in the colonies they had the natives at their mercy. Merrick, incensed by Kumar's obviously better upbringing, looks and education finds that his (Merrick's) own sense of inferiority could be alleviated by humiliating this better person. Kumar realises this
himself. What Merrick actually wanted, for his self-assurance was, Kumar notes, "a confession of my dependence on him, my inferiority to him" (Scorpion: 307 - 8). William Walsh actually suggests that in Scott it is not colour but class which finally separates people (Walsh: 175-6). Walsh's argument is well taken, especially since it explains Merrick's pathological hatred for the better cultured Kumar. But for Merrick colour also matters, and this adds an edge to his racism.

Merrick refuses to accept that an Indian could be anything other than dependent on the English. This was an essential feature of the racist discourse of the time. Merrick enunciates this clearly when he tells Daphne Manners: "That's the oldest trick in the game, to say colour doesn't matter. It does matter. It's basic. It matters like hell" (Jewell: 417). Merrick's attitude seems appropriate for the time. In the age of resurgent Imperialism (post - 1900s) racial purity was a near obsession. The Victorian emphasis on racial purity as a requirement of civilisation persisted. (In the previous chapters we have had occasion to look at this racist discourse, details of which were obtained from Christine Bolt's Victorian Attitudes to Race).

It may be argued that the Army and the Police were the institutions with the strongest racial feelings. Evidence
for this argument is available to us from Zareer Masani’s book *Indian Tales of the Raj* (1987). Indians like Rajeshwar Dayal who had served the Raj found that:

Indianisation was a process far more fiercely resisted in the army ... because the army was the bastion of European racial supremacy and its officers were less accustomed to mixing with Indian social equals than their Indian Civil Service counterparts. (24)

Masani points out that the arrogance of British officers accustomed to dealing with Indian lower ranks could be galling to Indians of upper class background (Masani: 26). Merrick fits these arguments very well. We have already noted how he is inflamed by Kumar’s better accented English and refinement of behaviour. Major Mackay comments:

He [Merrick] disliked the chap [Kumar] because of the kind of boy he is. First rate British education, but black as your hat and going out with an English girl, and politically unreliable. *(Towers: 91)*

It is the racial indoctrination in the Army that is being articulated by Merrick.

The Merrick - Kumar encounter is also significant because it is Merrick who voices clearly the ideology of
Imperialism. During Kumar's torture Merrick expounds his views on race and Imperialism. Kumar later tells Rowan that his relationship with Merrick proved a theory: "The theory was exemplified in the situation" (Scorpion: 307). Merrick tells Kumar that the two of them were merely symbols of colonisation. But the reality of the symbols was to be articulated. Here he presents his views on the "situation". The passage is worth quoting in full. Kumar is speaking:

He [Merrick] said people talked of an ideal relationship between his kind [the British] and my kind [the Indians]. They called it comradeship. But they never said anything about the contempt on his side and the fear on mine that was basic, and came before any comradely feeling ... He said the true corruption of the English is their pretence that they have no contempt for us, and our real degradation is our pretence of equality ... The permutations of English corruption in India were endless affection for servants, for peasants, for soldiers, pretence at understanding the Indian intellectual or at sympathising with nationalist aspirations, but all this affection and understanding was a corruption of what he called the calm purity of their contempt.... (Scorpion: 307-11)
It is also important to note how this "situation" places the participants. Kumar describes the "situation" thus: "The situation of our [Merrick and Kumar] being face to face, with everything finally in his favour" (Scorpion: 291). The Westerner is in a position of authority, of power where he is able to give vent to what Raymond Williams calls "structures of feeling" behind British attitudes. Merrick and Kumar are alone. By virtue of his post as Superintendent of Police (the law enforcer) and Kumar's status as a prisoner (the law breaker), Merrick has both official and moral superiority over Kumar. Maria Couto in "Clinging to the Wreckage: Raj Fictions" (1984) correctly argues that Merrick is the spokesman for traditional Raj opinions. However Couto believes that Scott's Imperialist bias is obvious in this very strategy: that "there is no other voice to counter his [Merrick's] subversive view of so highly charged a subject (the colonial situation)" (Couto: 36). Couto ignores Scott's voices in the Quartet: Edwina Crane, Robin White and Guy Perron. These voices provide the counterpoint to Merrick's views.

Scott's use of sexuality as a theme in the Quartet is also effective in conveying his view of the tragedy of the Raj. Like Forster before him, Scott does not believe in the concept of the asexual Englishwoman. Edwina Crane, we are
told, also fell in love, inspite of her rigid upbringing and her present hard-as-nails image (Jewel: 16). This is the first heterosexual relationship, though undeveloped, suggested in the Quartet. All heterosexual relationships in the Quartet are unsatisfactory. Crane does not attain her Lt. Orme. Teddie Bingham and Susan Layton are not really in love, as Sarah realises (Scorpion: 139). Ahmed and Sarah, as we have already noted, do not develop their relationship. Merrick marries Susan Layton because he wishes to become a part of the famous Layton family, as Indira Kohli has rightly argued in Paul Scott: His Art and Ideas (1987, 66-7). Sarah Layton has numerous loveless affairs. Her relationship with Jimmy Clark in Calcutta has no affection (Scorpion: 436-459). John Bellinger lists her as the "twentythird girl he had had, not counting the ones he had had to pay for" (Division 356). She describes the affair as lacking love, only appeasing "the ache of physical desire" (Division: 356). Mildred Layton has an affair with Kevin Coley which horrifies Barbie Batchelor with its "instantaneous impression of the absence of love and tenderness" (Towers: 307-8). Daphne Manners is raped by hooligans after she and Kumar make love.

Thus all heterosexual relationships fail. Scott portrays Ronald Merrick as the sado-masochistic homosexual. It is important to note that homosexuality is also tied to
power, never affection in the Quartet. Merrick’s terrorising of a young homosexual, Lance-Corporal Pinker in A Division of the Spoils (246-260), symbolises this combination of sexuality and power. Pinker, a young homosexual, working for the psychiatrist Richardson, is trapped into a liaison with a native boy. The scheme is engineered by Merrick. Merrick then threatens Pinker with exposure and uses his blackmailing power to read the confidential files on Susan Layton in Dr. Richardson’s locker. Pinker is left a nervous wreck.

Scott provides suggestions of homoeroticism, all involving Merrick. Count Bronowski deliberately leads Merrick into unconsciously glancing at an "outstandingly handsome young officer" (Scorpion: 211). Teddie Bingham, separated from Susan, thus "denied physical intimacy ... craved the substitute; intimate accord with some man, here represented by Merrick" (Towers: 158).

Of more significance is Merrick's ill-treatment of Kumar. Merrick, as has been noted, is in a position to injure Kumar. He makes use of this opportunity to express his own sexual preferences. However, he contrives to disguise it as a degradation for Kumar. Ashis Nandy in The Intimate Enemy argues that the Western male in a colonial set-up develops a homoerotic relationship with the native male.
This relationship may only be unconscious but it exists, nevertheless (Nandy: 9-10). In Merrick, this attraction is combined with a hatred for the native. As a result, homoeroticism goes hand in hand with sado-masochism. Kumar's brutal ill-treatment with definite suggestions of near sexual abuse and subsequent humiliations imply that sexuality itself has been misused to oppress the native.

As in the case of heterosexual relationships, even homoerotic ones fail in the Quartet. Scott attributes this failure to a lack of human affection and the predominance of animal lust. Such lust, exemplified in the repressed homosexuality of Ronald Mernick, produces cruelty. It must be noted that relationships ultimately become sites for power play.

This brings us to the themes of authority and power in Scott. In the Quartet the English are always in positions of official superiority. The official superior was cast in the role of "ma-baap". The parental authority was also an official authority. A good example would be Col. Layton. He is the leader and official head of his soldiers. He also claims to be the "ma-baap" to them (Division: 344). The Westerner was thus protector - provider - teacher - parent to the native. Teddie Bingham, Col. Layton, Edwina Crane, Barbie Batchelor are all living this role.
The parent-Westerner sees the native as child-like. Hence s/he (the Westerner) is in control over the child (native). Yet this apparent philanthropic and compassionate move towards "parenthood" was not without hypocrisy or base feelings. Mannoni argues that the "dependency complex" nurtured in the native by the coloniser helped the colonial enterprise. He goes on to say that the colonialists live by the native's need for dependency and the coloniser fosters it by adopting a "paternalistic attitude" (Mannoni: 42-60). Scott suggests that this whole ideal of paternalism was an illusion and self-deceptive. Suhash Chakravarty in The Raj Syndrome argues much the same thing. Chakravarty believes that the British needed hypocrisy to supply nourishment to false consciousness and found in the same consciousness its own moral justifications and confirmation. Hypocrisy, says Chakravarty, helped obliterate the contradiction between reality and false consciousness (Chakravarty: 45).

The Merrick-Kumar situation noted above reveals the contradiction that Chakravarty locates at the heart of the Raj. Scott's work focuses on this reality vs illusion problem which permeates all Indo-British relationships. Scott targets this hypocrisy manifest as cruelty, contempt and hatred which was imbedded in the "philanthropic",

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"kind", "paternalistic" Western attitudes to India.

Scott suggests that the British Empire rested on illusions, and the men/women who tried to "live" these illusions were also ignorant, prejudiced or incompetent. We have already noted Sarah Layton's views on the British betrayal of the protector role and Crane's disparaging comments on reneged promises. These two are Scott's voices in the Quartet.

The hypocrisy and double standard of the British was possibly best embodied in the Memsahibs. Sarah Layton, herself a Memsahib, detests the supercilious and superficial role. She says of Kasim's sacrifice and her own behaviour: "And I couldn't stop filling the bloody jars going through my brave little memsahib act" (Division: 592). The self reproach is evident in her agonised comment. Edwina Crane who realises that she had failed her role eventually commits "Sati" in The Jewel in the Crown. Jacqueline Banerjee in 'A Living Legacy: An Indian View of Paul Scott's India' (1980) believes that Crane's death is a gesture symbolising an absolute commitment to India. Crane realises that this commitment cannot be fulfilled anymore and hence kills herself (Banerjee: 97-104). Writers like Joanna Trollope, Ashis Nandy and Pat Barr have argued that the English woman was a fierce Imperialist. Scott's work suggests that this
may have been true. People like Edwina Crane, Sr. Ludmilla, Daphne Manners and Barbie Batchelor are being Imperialist in that they are the "do-gooder" Memsahibs. Scott however portrays these Memsahibs as having realised the hollowness of it all. In their misguided attempt to reach out to India all of them experience and/or initiate tragedy. Sr. Ludmilla goes blind. Barbie Batchelor in her madness retreats into a world where the "birds had picked the words clean" (Towers: 396). Edwina Crane commits a symbolic Sati. Daphne Manners is raped and dies bringing forth a "tainted" child. Sarah Layton has all her illusions swept away with the Partition riots and Kasim's brutal murder. Christopher Hitchens in his essay "A Sense of Mission: Paul Scott's The Raj Quartet" (1985) locates in the Quartet the expression of a double fear. The first is the fear of treachery and betrayal by the Indians, a fear that the native cannot be trusted. A second fear is of having to break that trust oneself and ruling by terror, casting aside the pretence of consent and paternalism (Hitchens: 180-199). Crane's Sati is a result of both the fears - the attack by the natives triggering the first one and her inability to save Mr. Chaudhuri causing the second. The same explanation holds good for Sarah Layton's anguish at the end of the Quartet or Sr. Ludmilla's blindness. They symbolise this dual face of the British in India.
Scott hence suggests that the British failed because their illusions were based on ignorance and because it was only a veneer for the cruelty and hypocrisy beneath. We shall return to this point a little later when we look at Guy Perron's views on British responsibility.

When the British cast themselves as the "ma-baap" they claimed a certain moral superiority in addition to the official one. Scott denies the British any such moral superiority. The natives in the Quartet are definitely of lower official status. Yet Scott cloaks them with a certain moral superiority. As servants, for example, people like Joseph and Suleiman serve their Memsahibs faithfully. Joseph even scolds Edwina Crane for coming back late in the night. He is anxious about her health due to her tendency to overwork (Jewel: 40). Minnie saves Susan Layton's child from certain death in The Day of the Scorpion (494). Chaudhuri, Edwina Crane's subordinate, turns mob fury away from Crane, and dies in the attempt. Kumar refuses to break under Merrick's torture and remains a dignified man, as Lady Manners perceives (Scorpion: 313). Ahmed Kasim hands himself over to the rioters and thus saves the English on the train in A Division of the Spoils.

Robin White in The Jewel in the Crown voices Scott's view on the hypocritical British and the morally better
native. White says:

The moral issue is bound to arise and eventually grow, and finally appear to take precedence in any long standing connexion between human beings, especially if their relationship is unequal. The onus of moral leadership falls naturally on the people who rank as superior.... (Jewel: 340, emphasis mine)

White goes on to add that the British only assume their moral superiority. Francine S. Weinbaum in "Paul Scott's India: The Raj Quartet" (1978) points out that in Scott this moral issue is emphasised throughout. Weinbaum writes: "He [Scott] mirrors his countrymen's lost moral purpose and self-definition" (100-108, emphasis mine). I believe that more than a loss of morality, Scott focuses upon British morality as a mere assumption, a self-deluding enterprise based on false premises. Scott believes the same when he uses Guy Perron, Edwina Crane and Sarah Layton to talk about the wickedness of the Raj.

Just as the British assumed their moral superiority, most of their ideals were only assumptions. To portray this binary opposition of assumptions vs truths effectively Scott uses the theme of illusion prominently.

The opening of The Jewel in the Crown (quoted before)
suggests this shadowy region between illusion and reality. We are told that the Mac Gregor House has ghosts (Jewel: 74-6). Sr. Ludmilla's origins were "obscure" (Jewel: 124) and she narrates stories "seeing beyond ... into the world of legend and fantasy, the reality behind the illusion" (Jewel: 132). Susan Layton believes in the myth of the scorpion (Scorpion: 83). Guy Perron's Aunt Charlotte harbours illusions about British responsibility:

The inner convictions of class rights and class privileges, of our permanence and of our capacity to train ... and of course our fundamental indifference to the problems towards which we adopt attitudes of responsibility. (Division: 208)

The illusions were thus fed on ignorance. The British never "know" India. Paul Scott in his interview to Publisher's Weekly (1975) had stated that "after three hundred years the English really don't understand the Indian mind" (6-7). Notions of superiority, permanence, philanthropy were either illusions or shot through with hypocrisy. Guy Perron meditates over this and comments:

Paradox 1 The most insular people in the world managed to establish the largest empire the world has ever seen ... Insularity, like empire - building, requires
superb self-confidence, a conviction of one's own moral superiority. And I suppose that when the war is really over the recollection that there was a time when we 'stood alone' against Hitler will confirm us in our national sense of moral superiority. (Division: 106)

When Perron places "stood alone" in quotes he is obviously referring to the illusion Britain had designed for herself in the Second World War. Perron is thus exposing the veneer of responsibility and respectability for its falsity. Perron's query in the last paragraph of A Division of the Spoils is a useful example of Scott's theme of abdicated responsibility. Perron, watching the Indian landscape, thinks: "The India his countrymen were leaving, the India that was being given up. Along with what else?" (Division: 598). Martin Green in The English Novel in the Twentieth Century (1984) emphasises this problem of Perron's. Green believes that the "what else" refers to the responsibility shirked by the British at the time of the Partition (Green: 190-191). This abdication of responsibility is foretold very early by Hari Kumar. In his letter to Colin Lindsey Kumar describes the British attitude of 1942 perfectly. Kumar writes:

I think there's no doubt that in the last twenty years ... the English have succeeded in dividing and ruling the English now seem to depend upon the divisions
in the Indian political opinion perpetuating their own rule at least until after the war ... They are saying openly that it is 'no good leaving the bloody country because there's no Indian party representative enough to hand it over to' ... I can't believe that Pakistan will ever become a reality, but if it does it will be because the English prevaricated long enough to allow a favoured religious minority to seize a political opportunity. (Jewel: 276, emphasis Scott's)

The "ma-baap" ideal collapses as people like Col. Layton find it difficult to realise them. Sarah Layton notes that "the effort of living up to it had become too much for him" (Division: 344). Edwina Crane and Sarah Layton realise their failure. Merrick's attempt to extract a self-degrading confession from Kumar fails. Barbie Batchelor ends her talkative career in the silence of madness. Susan Layton likewise becomes victim to nervous breakdowns.

To reinforce the idea of illusions Scott repeatedly makes use of the reality/falsehood opposition. Much before the Quartet Scott had used the theme of the playacting British. The Birds of Paradise (1962) is replete with the images of stuffed birds. Sujit Mukherjee has pointed out that the stuffed birds in cages are metaphors of what the British and the princes did to each other. The "live birds embody
some greater illusion which energises human beings all the time" (Mukherjee: 81). This image of British theatricality in India occurs throughout Scott. Throughout the Quartet we are told that the British are putting up a "performance". Mrs. Crane is seen as a "cardboard heroine" by students (Jewel: 26). Robin White says: "people in public life are supposed to project what today we call an image..." (Jewel: 344). Sarah Layton asks: "But out here are we ever really ourselves?" (Scorpion: 158). Mabel Layton has a similar view: "Even when we're alone we're on show, aren't we, representing something?" (Jewel: 30). derrick is described as a "hollow man" by Bronowski: "The outer casing is almost perfect and he carried it off almost to perfection..." (Division: 171). Even Merrick's killing, dressed in a Pathan's clothes, emphasises the dramatic nature and theatricality of the whole situation (Division: 548). Even after Independence, the Raj survivors like Lucy Smalley have to put on the "Memsahib act". In Staying On (1978) she refuses to cry at her husband's burial because true Memsahibs never panicked and she had the "performance" of the burial to carry off (24, 216).

When Scott emphasises the theatricality of the proponents of the Raj he actually suggests the sandy foundation of the whole enterprise. The tragic end of almost
every important character in the Quartet invites this interpretation. The only survivors are people like Guy Perron, Robin White and Sarah Layton who are more sceptical of the Raj.

Scott however does not end his criticism of the Raj within the Quartet. In his Booker Prize winning novel Staying On he has more to add. In Staying On the "leftover" (Scott's own term) Raj is represented by Tusker Smalley and his wife Lucy. Scott portrays them as weak, vulnerable and dependent upon the natives. Scott suggests that the Raj still persists in the mind. He refers to the sound of the "distant and diminishing but not yet dead echo of the sound of the tocsin" (Staying: 146).

The more trenchant attack in Staying On is on the new Raj. The British hypocrisy has been replaced by the Indian one. The post - 1947 Indians ape their former masters: "Gossip, coffee, magazines. All London style" (174). They are "the new race of Sahibs and memsahibs of international status and connexion who had taken the place of Generals and Mrs. Generals..." (181). Scott says; "the old hierarchy collapsed and the new one, the Indian one, took its place..." (79). We have noted Sujit Mukherjee's comments on the theatricality of the Indians. In Staying On Scott has used the theme effectively to reveal the hollowness of the new
Indians. Even the topography is back to the Raj style: the tennis court of Rose Cottage has been re-converted into a garden as in Mabel Layton's time by the Menektaras.

### III

Paul Scott is then attacking the Raj for what it really meant: cruelty, contempt, racism and suffering. He is also against the new Raj which seems just as bad. Susy Williams, the Eurasian in *Staying On*, is treated badly by her Indian acquaintances. The Menektaras and Mrs. Bhoolabhoy carry on the Raj - Memsahib behavioural patterns. I suggest that Scott attacks the Raj for its false promises, betrayals and mainly self-deceiving illusions. His attack on the Indian Raj is a humanist one, since the new Raj is as cruel, oppressive and anti-human as its predecessor. If relationships in the *Quartet* are failures and cruelty-ridden (as in the Merrick - Kumar one) they fail in *Staying On* for the same reasons. Scott's critique is therefore a humanist one like Forster's. However, he moves beyond Forster in certain areas. The sado-masochist tendency of homoeroticism is stressed by Scott. Where Forster downplays the hatred and racism, Scott emphasises the same. Scott therefore gives us a more radical and overt criticism of the system of the Raj.

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Scott gets Daphne Manners to voice the harshest criticism of the Raj. She says:

I thought that the whole bloody affair of us in India had reached flash point. It was bound to because it was based on a violation ... what happens when you unsex a nation, treat it like a nation of eunuchs? Because that is what we've done, isn't it?" (Jewel: 427, emphasis Scott's).

Daphne Manners who is herself violated speaks of the violation of India. The immorality and inhumanity of Britain's rape of India is paid for by a white woman who is herself raped. Scott's deeply moving criticism is to be found in this very tragic affair of Daphne Manners and Hari Kumar.

However, notably, Scott does not restrict his criticism to the British and argues that a similar Raj was installed by the Indians. This calls for an examination of the post-1947 attitudes of the Indians themselves - whether they repeated the ideology of the Raj or moved against it. In short, we need to explore the ways in which post-Independence Indo-Anglian fiction deals with the theme of the encounter. The subsequent chapter is thus an obvious extension of the chapters so far. It reads select Indian texts for their portrayals of the theme of interracial liaisons and for their opinions vis a vis the Raj.
NOTES

1. Scott himself voices a similar feeling in his essay on Enoch Powell from the collection *My Appointments with the Muse*. Scott describes the apathy of the British towards their "responsibility" (India): "The British at home were always quite happy with their Empire and quite happy to let it go, bit by bit, so long as they weren't pestered by it or about it" (*Muse*: 92).

2. Scott revels in shades and darknesses. The *Quartet* has abundant images of such shadows. Daphne Manners is assaulted in the shadows of the Bibighar Gardens by men with "nightmare faces" (*Jewel*: 433) who come out of the night's blackness. Sarah Layton feels that her "core", under the white skin, is not illuminated (*Scorpion*: 86). She is the shade where Susan is the light (*Scorpion*: 86-7). Barbie Batchelor sees "smudges in the sky" when looking out of the hospital windows (*Towers*: 395). Nigel Rowan sees black storm clouds over Government House, ominously foretelling the darkness of the Partition riots (*Division*: 138).

3. The *Haileybury* college was another institution which trained English boys for an Indian career. Set up in 1853 the college produced civil servants. Geoffrey Moorhouse in *India Britannica* points out an ironical feature of Haileybury. The
college set up to train Englishmen in "holding" India also produced Clement Atlee who speeded up Independence for India (Moorhouse: 187).

4. The loveless heterosexual relationships of the Quartet anticipate the Lucy Smalley - Tusker Smalley and Ibrahim Minnie relationships in Scott's "postscript" to the Quartet: Staying On.

5. Lady Curzon in her letters makes a revealing observation. When the King and Queen of England visited India (during Lord Curzon's Viceroyalty) there was not a "word of interest" in India (Curzon: 102). This shows how the moral superiority was only an act: the reality was very much different.

6. The Tuskers have invested their all in India. They have nowhere else to go. Yasmine Gooneratne in her essay "Paul Scott's Staying On: Finale in A Minor Key" (1981) argues that in Scott certain Englishmen love India intensely. Daphne Manners and the Tuskers are such Britons who loved India enough to place all their resources in her (Gooneratne: 1-12). A similar point might be made in favour of Edwina Crane and Barbie Batchelor.