CHAPTER - V

A Critical study of Man-Woman Relationship
With Special Reference to East-West Encounter.
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The present chapter reflects the relationship in east –west manner. The characters of these novels are either of East or of West. The four novels discussed here are of cross cultural assimilation. The world of ‘Esmond in India’ is ideologically confused and confusing. In its complex fabric modern western modes of life and thought are seen to be closely woven with traditional Indian living patterns. Talk of divorce is in the air at the same time that sentiments like “a woman’s husband is her God” (1) are being uttered. The world of ‘Esmond in India’ is rather unequally divided between the haves and the have-not’s – each group having arrived where it is seen by following certain basic instincts. The ‘haves’ or ‘materialists’ are linked with the ‘have-nots’ or idealists by ties of blood, friendship or marriage but separated from them by their respective ideologies. On the whole, the separations rather than the links are respected and upheld. Each group however has to reckon with dissatisfaction and disharmony within its ranks. Emerging from this dualism is an intricate pattern of cross-ideological relationships which the novelist represents with particular reference to an Indo-European
marriage. Thus, two important new themes, that of marital dominance and the futility of East-West union also appear for the first time in Ruth Jhabvala’s fiction.

The chief of the materialists is Madhuri, the middle aged wife of Har Dayal, wealthy gentlemen of some cultural standing in Delhi. Her right hand in the pursuit of wealth and position is her eldest son Amrit who, matched with an equally ambitious wife, openly admits his Philistine values. Madhuri is happy too in her younger son who is recently engaged to an English girl but disappointed in her husband who, it seems to her lacks the unswerving devotion to the material that she herself advocates. Madhuri believes that she has striven hard for years to keep her unstable husband on her own path. In reality, Har Dayal has always shared her attachment to material possessions and her love of luxury. True safety for Madhuri and her kind lies in a reacceleration of basic Indian value systems with the Western way of life Western living with its emphasis on appearance can be adapted, in Madhuri’s estimation to suit the needs of the Indian extended family based on emotional ties. Thus, while giving the highest priority in her scheme of values to elegant and tasteful living, she rejects the basic Western concept of individual liberty. A marked Indian trait in Madhuri is her refusal to grant her
children the freedom of thought and action common in the west, for it endangers the assimilative spirit of the family.

The materialists of ‘Esmond in India’ in terms of identification with an inherited way of life and an acceptance of the code is which the making and enjoying of money is given top priority. Idealists like Ram Nath and his sister Uma, though born to a similar inheritance reject its code and seek their assimilation with the mainstream of Indian life. The loss of identity that threatens the idealist is seen in yet another context in ‘Esmond in India’, in Uma’s daughter Gulab’s marriage with Esmond Still wood, an Englishman who has set himself up as an authority of India. Gulab brings her personal ideal of Indian womanhood to her cross-cultural marriage, providing her creator with an eventual framework as well as a central theme for depicting the incongruities of character and situation resulting from East-West interactions a phenomenon that was gradually entering the novelist’s consciousness.

Jhabvala’s here goes deeper to depict not only food habits and life styles but to show how Western immaterialism separates from oriental idealism. Gulab is the idealistic passive female of Indian tradition who refuses to live a tyrannical husband because her thinking is conditioned by the ancient ideal of marriage being a sacred state and her husband a common’s God. The modern European materialist Esmond dismisses all
ideals as a matter of course. Marriage for him holds no inescapable conditions and can only be based on a combination of sophisticated living and an elegant intelligent companion. In marriage Esmond seeks an equal – Gulab a God. The two naturally, cannot be reconciled. In the first phase of his response to India, Esmond had been fascinated by her delights and had sought assimilation with her thorough marriage with a traditional Indian girl. Gulab, just ripening into womanhood, had lavished her awakening responses and this fair English youth who must have seemed to her to have stepped out of some unwanted myth or legend. They had been happy in the birth of their dark haired child. Esmond had wanted an Indian wife. But in a few years the West had claimed it own. In the second phase that of disenchantment Esmond thinks restfully of Belly so light, modern and array. Being with her was almost as good as being in England. Yet Esmond’s yearnings do not stem from a sense of being cut off from his own country’s alienation is revealed with startling clarity in the scene in which he is invited to tea by Madhuri and Indira.

Esmond’s affinity with the materialists of the novel is complete in his speculations of the happiness that would have been had be married a girl like Indira with such a wife, he was sure, he would have lived happily. Gulab’s identification with the idealists of the novel is based on the blood
link, and operates on the level of the physical alone: She needs her mother for the pampering of her senses a powerful compulsion with her but not an all consuming one, as there is another, distinct of her personality. Through the course of her novel, she is seen engaged in a silent battle to preserve an ideal of womanhood derived from the chaste women of Hindu myth and legend. Turning a deaf ear to her mother’s please to leave her cruel husband and rightly resisting the cure of her old happy life, she clings stubbornly to her badge of sufferance she says:

“It was husbands right to do whatever he liked with his wife. He could treat her well or badly, pamper her or beat her that was up to him and it was not her place to complain. But in return there was one thing, only one, that he owned her, and that was his protection it was his duty to see that she was safe in his house and that no stranger would cast insulting eyes on her” (3). Esmond had failed in that duty, so now he was no more her husband. Nor she his wife since she considered herself defiled, she could not remain in his house any longer but had to return, as was the custom, to her own people.

Withdrawal then, is for Gulab the obvious sequel to sense of defilement she holds Esmond responsible for her fate but like her archetype Sita, expresses no resentment and demands no sympathy consequently; she
remains what she was with not a flash of the intuitive understanding that transfigures.

Esmond's indifference to Gulab's deepest instructs and his ruthless clamping of the most limited tenets of his own culture on her sensibilities have steadily worn away whatever edges she may have possessed. Continually thwarted in the lifestyle she has known from childhood, and having been denied the expression of her mother's love and a woman's instinct for nurturing those around her Gulab is overwhelmed by harsh reality. She sinks under the penuries of her husband's intolerance and an alien life style and his whole burden of an alien culture the level of a dumb animal that eats, sleeps and licks its wounds.

Ruth Jhabvala conceives the Esmond -Gulab relationship by relating Gulab's passionate allegiance to her husband with the traditional ideal of passively suffering womanhood which more than anything else stifles Esmond's materialistic soul and threatens his rationality. The lack of casual sequence leveling to Gulab's walking out of on her husband indicates that in the novel Ruth Jhabvala is less interested in depicting the nature of marital discord and more in establishing the impossibility of the merging of two modes of thinking the idealistic and the materialistic. In the end Gulab goes back to her own people not in the spirit of joyous belonging that had been hers when she was wearing her badge of
sufferance, but in a spirit of defeat. She was going to her mother's house and she would be staying there always she knew it but did not feel about it. It was her fate, and she accepted it without emotional comment, in the way one should accept one's fate. With her self-imposed stigma of desecration weighting her down, she will continue to suffer the pangs of alienation even when surrounded by loving faces in dear familiar world.

At the book's conclusion, Esmond will flee to India to be absorbed by his own kind. Shakuntala will marry a young man from her own background and in time will evolve into a replica, with some physical variations, of her mother. Her Dayal will overcome all threats to his containing prosperity from within and without. But each new day will add its weight to Ram Nath's alienation till he loses touch with reality altogether. Uma's joy at having her daughter back will change to bitterness at the sight of her going through the motions of life with her mainspring gone, and it is doubtful if Narayan will find a wife who will match his ideals. One visualizes a bleak and comely future for this worthy son of India and a grouting disenchantment with his life and work.

Ruth Jhabvala published her sixth novel 'A Backward Place' (1965). The Novel is significant in this that it antiquates the change in her sensibility. In this novel here is a perceptible shift from the depiction of Indians
adapting to or resisting a changing social climate to that of Europeans endeavoring to assimilate or shake off an alien culture.

In ‘A Backward Place’, Ruth Jhabvala’s efforts are primarily directed at transmuting her own complex response to India into the varied responses of her European characters. ‘A Backward Place’, articulates, very subtly and skillfully the author’s conflicting emotional and intellectual responses to India during this phase of her life. The responses are sometimes affirming sometimes negative and at others ambivalent. But each response is truthfully recorded and assessed without bias.

Four out of the five expatriates in ‘A Backward Place’, bring to their Indian experience attitudes inherited from their colonial predecessors and are, like them, turning the alleged backwardness of India to personal advantage. With a changed environment, they can no longer claim their privileges as a racial prerogative but are reduced to striking certain postures. The Hochstadts justify their presence in India by pretending to advance the cause of East-West synthesis. Clarissa professes a devotion to Indian spiritualism she does not even vaguely feel. Elta, who declares she is being submerged in a lower culture, flatters and wheedles money out of men from India’s least cultured section-the baniya or business class. All the postures are recognized as false and Ruth Jhabvala un_masks her Westerners as pitilessly as she unmasked their Indian
counterparts in her earlier novels. Though her European characters share some of her attributes, convey from time to time her enthusiasms, desperations and intellectualizing tendencies—yet, pitted against an India of infinite complexity and mystery, they have their pretensions punctured, sometimes by each other but more often by the impartial authorial voice. The India of ‘A Backward Place’ is an area in which the alien spirit is put to a strenuous test. India traps, rejects or embraces her aliens as they deserve-assimilating the worthy and expelling or destroying the unworthy. Thus, her final point of view is conveyed through the consciousness of a woman who is least like her in character and spirit. Judy’s voice the voice that affirms all experience is Jhabvala’s voice in ‘A Backward Place’. This spirit of affirmation is the basic element that goes into the making of the character of worth in the novel.

The most significant aspect of ‘A Backward Place’ which strikes me as a major element of Jhabvala’s thought process is the dominant voice of affirmation which rings true and clears in the various chambers of its structure. Judy seems to me the central character in the novel who says ‘aye’ to all the challenges that her life and experience present to her. More than Etta, more than Clarissa, Judy represents the authentic voice, the dominant note of this international orchestration in ‘A Backward Place’. The most virulent attack on India’s backwardness and the most
determined resistance to assimilation comes from the neurotic ageing beauty Etta, whose parasitical tendencies are established quite early in the novel. Like the memsahib of colonial India, she loathes the country which has provided her with a luxurious living for two decades and like them makes India the scapegoat for the physical and psychic ravages wrought by an unworthy approach to life. For years she has traded her youth and beauty for materialistic returns and now that they show signs of diminishing she convinces herself and is continually trying to convince others that the fault lies with the primitive society in which she is trapped. The backwardness of India is, in effect, her theme song.

Etta, in her own estimation, is the supreme victim of India. In her unbalanced emotional state, she has contrived to make herself believe that her years in India have been lost to her, or sacrificed to a country unworthy of the favour. Etta’s alienation from India, as it is portrayed in the novel, is not the consequence of a deeply felt cultural loss or a futile striving for a meaningful cultural synthesis. Etta’s relationship with Guppy is a case in point. She attempts to make him respond to and value the delicate nuances of her Western sensibility but the idea that she might learn to value his sensibility does not even occur to her. In the ultimate analysis, Etta’s alienation is nothing more than a hankering after the
fashionable life of the West; for admiration from personable males and an assured supply of wealth and good living.

A desire to belong, being a fundamental human instinct, these attitudes to the country that houses her are gradually driving Etta to the brink of a mental breakdown. In such a state her feelings of insecurity at approaching old age, the loss of her charms and the defection of her lovers get ambiguously mixed up with resentment against India.

Etta has, in effect, become the ‘nowhere’ person of Expatriate fiction who rejects the East to be rejected by the West—a fact that is a pointer to the dangers inherent in a refusal to assimilate with surrounding life. The futility of upholding norms and values that are out of context with immediate reality is mirrored in Etta’s fate. Yet Etta’s life in India is, with some differences, a conscious mirroring of the novelist’s vision of her own destiny. Though Ruth Jhabvala presents Etta as a Character of little worth and one who comes out to India for all the wrong reasons, an element of genuine sympathy has gone into her making for she closely represents the novelist’s own impulse towards exclusion at this point of her life in India. In ‘Myself in India’ Ruth Jhabvala describes her life style in terms that bear an uncanny resemblance to that of Etta’s
Isolating one, whether in India or Europe, leads to alienation and psychic disturbance in terms of the novel’s theme. Etta’s mental breakdown in India has a parallel in that of another woman in England. Judy’s mother’s suicide, like Etta’s abortive attempt, is the climatic point of a lifetime of exclusion of self form surrounding life. The facts that she hangs herself and that Etta is careful not to take too many pills and to ring up the Hochstadts immediately on doing so, suggest that Etta’s life in India holds out more hope for her than that of Judy’s mother in England. Etta’s isolation is self-imposed while Judy’s mother’s is a way of life that is fast becoming a stereotype in the West.

In fact, if Etta’s dismissive view of India represents a fact of Ruth Jhabvala’s complex response Judy’s impulsive embracing of India and Sudhir’s sensitivity and faith embody others, which, if not more dominant, are certainly more valued by the author. Like Ruth Jhabvala and Etta, Judy had come out to India following a cross-cultural marriage but unlike them she chose to merge with the society in which she found herself in preference of being drowned in or expelled from it. Judy is seen throughout the novel as determined to adapt her new country. “She wears a sari and puts her hair up in bun in order to look like everybody else” (Ibid., p. 174). (4) speaks fluent Hindi and interacts with
her husband's family with the utmost ease. She loves her ramshackle home and looks forward to going back to it after the day's work.

However, ten years in India have not wrought disillusion and disenchantment for Judy as they did for the novelist. In fact, the process of adapting her inherited modes of feeling and thinking to the requirements of an alien culture is nearing completion, and Judy with her two children, irresponsible husband and family in-laws is as securely entrenched in her environment as any other Indian woman.

Judy's Western world had consisted of little more than a small semi-detached house "with smoking fires and frozen pipes and carefully drawn curtains bought at two and eleven a yard at the sales" (Ibid., p. 173) in which she had lived, shut in from the outside world, with an inarticulate father and a mother employed in a ceaseless round of domestic activity. Judy had yearned for freedom, for a life full of possibilities, and with her marriage to Bal and her voyage out to India had felt she had found it. Never regretting her girlish impulse Judy opened herself, from the very beginning, to all of India's influences.

Between the two extreme approaches to India represented by Etta and Judy, there are two other Western approaches which, by providing contrasts, externalize aspects of Ruth Jhabvala's relationship with India.
as well as help to clarify the image of worth that is central in the novel. The Hochstadts couple approach to India is, on the surface, the reverse of Etta’s. India, for them, is no backward place but aesthetic and charming. As short term visitors, they feel neither the need nor the desire to assimilate with India. They have, however, come with many pre-conceived views on the subject that seem to represent a trend in the West for appreciating everything Indian.

During their stay in India, the Hochstadts propound the view “that the Indian spirit has in many fields soared far above the European and that a serious comparative study of Indian and Western spiritual achievements will widen the horizons of both”. (6)

Franz and Frieda Hochstadts have all the right theories about expatriate approaches to India. Dr. Hochstadts explains to Etta: “Life plays itself out to a different rhythm here. It is fatal to come to India and expect to be able to live to a Western rhythm” (Ibid., p. 26), (7) which as a piece of advice to Etta is excellent but, as Ruth Jhabvala is careful to point out, is not one which he himself need follow. Though in India for a very short time the Hochstadts have managed to carve out a life style which is not very different from what they had in their flat in St. John’s Wood.
Out of all the characters in the Novel, it is Etta who sees through the pseudo-idealism of the Hochstadts and exposes it to the reader. In fact Etta’s voice often represents the authorial voice. When Dr. Hochstadts regrets that as mere visitors to India they “can never have that understanding of India, which comes to those who are in touch with the humbler people of this land” (Ibid., p. 27) Etta is quick to point out that Clarissa holds similar views but “takes good care to get in with people who don’t live in villages and who aren’t in the least bit humble” (Ibid., p. 27-28). That Etta’s comment is actually meant for the Hochstadts is amply supported by textual evidence. The Hochstadts, for all their advice to the other expatriates, restrict their socializing to Westerners and westernized Indians and live a life which excludes the average Indian as much as Etta does.

The cultural synthesis that the Hochstadts believe they have helped to initiate in India is revealed in its concrete form to be nothing more than a ludicrous yoking together of incompatible elements. The sustained satiric tone of the concluding pages of ‘A Backward Place’ puts into brilliant perspective the pseudo-enthusiasm and shallow intellectualism of a pair of foreigners for whom India has as little use as she did for their spiritual counterparts.
If Etta is disdainfully resisting assimilation and the Hochstadts are only theorizing about it, Clarissa, self-proclaimed lover of India, is desperately trying to belong, but for all the wrong reasons and in the wrong spirit.

Clarissa and Etta establishes the fact that Clarissa is staying on in India because her straitened circumstance she lives on a tiny legacy left to her by a great-aunt makes any sort of independent living impossible in England. Her wealthy relations, she is convinced, will not accommodate her except as a “free baby sitter and nurse maid and general drudge about the place.” (10)

Dressed in a Rajasthani peasant skirt and a handspun blouse, Clarissa projects an image of herself as a “free-and-easy mixture of Sadhu and artist” (Ibid., p. 61) a humane, simple soul slightly addled by the Indian sun but untouched by Western materialism and in love with the Indian way of life. That the image is false and that she, like Etta, shares the spirit of her memsahib forebears who demanded and received their living from India with no contribution from their side, is established by the novelist in several ways.

This novel belongs more recognizably to the tradition of expatriate writing than ‘A Backward Place’. In fact, ‘A New Dominion’ carries the tradition forward by operating within the socio-political context that ‘A
Passage to India’ anticipates one in which Indians and Europeans can communicate freely. The races do communicate with one another, for the separations created by a political situation that thrived on exclusion have no relevance twenty-five years after Indian Independence. The Westerners of ‘A New Dominion’ pursue their quests with a freedom. Lee and Raymond move in and out of every stratum of Indian society, rubbing shoulders with the royalty, the middle class, the proletariat and the ascetic with equal ease, unhampered and unprotected by official doom. The food at a supper party hosted by a British High Commission official is, like the guests, ‘a judicious mixture of English and Indian’ and the host boasts of a ‘special relationship’ between the two races and speaks in terms of family bonds and mutual influences quite unlike his predecessors of the old dominion.

Raymond represents the authorial point of view more closely than any other character in the novel. The scrupulous cleanliness of the High Commission compound with its smart suburban architecture seems to mock the poverty and squalor that lie just beyond its walls. It is Raymond again who shrewdly recognizes that the loud commanding voices that the British acquire in India obviously derived from memories of their rule have to be kept confined within the High Commission
premises, for the new dominion of which they have to be wary, lies just outside.

Racial distinctions are carefully maintained and the ideal of white superiority upheld, in the charity home for aged Europeans that Raymond visits with Miss Charlotte. A decaying old woman of eighty-six still thinks it worthwhile to dress as a proper memsahib should, and is outraged at a rumor that her ancestry is not all white. The home is, in fact, a hotbed of scandalous gossip and intrigue, each member accusing the other of mixed origins. The presence of the cemetery just beyond the home which is housed by generations of English men and women be in the near future, reduce the inmates to a handful of Indian soil, is a valuable pointer to the novelist’s stance.

Traces of the old dominion linger too in the educated Indian’s hatred of the Raj which has remained unchanged from the first stirrings of nationalism in India. Deepak, a latter day Aziz challenges his host’s assumption at the High Commission dinner party that some kind of integration had been affected during the two centuries of British rule. When his host Gerald points out that the two races have shared a common language meaning common ideas and values, Deepak retorts that Indians had ‘willly nilly’ to learn the ‘language’ of the British but not vice versa (Ibid., p. 52). (12) His argument is borne out by the fact that
his own aggressive nationalism does seem to be inspired by his Western education and is as obviously derived as the language he uses for self-expression. This, however, is only one aspect of the impact of British rule on India. The other is a vicarious identification with the alien culture. Raymond's Indian neighbor at the Embassy dinner table brags about her friends the Haffners and prattles happily about English style cottages in Kasauli, "so quiet and peaceful like an English village." (Ibid. p. 54). (13) Both approaches are viewed by the novelist as out of context with the needs of contemporary India and compare unfavorably with a young Englishwoman's genuine distress at the condition of India and her guilt about her own life of luxury in it.

But by far the most powerful reminder of the Raj in the India of 'A New Dominion' is the presence of an erstwhile royalty now stripped of its powers and privileges and forced into a position of choice between two alternatives that of an arrogant extinction or a humble putting out of new roots. For the first time in her fiction Ruth Jhabvala depicts the tattered remnants of princely India in a world ruled by politicians and plutocrats. Ex-royals who are intelligent enough to recognize the inevitable are quick to seize their chance and can exchange one form of kingship for another while the foolishly arrogant defy the new order and are winnowed out. The author's moral assessment of both types is in the negative. She sees
the first as desecrating a noble heritage in an attempt to worm itself into the favors of a corrupt bureaucracy. The other by constantly harping on the past and refusing to recognize reality, is assailed by acute imbalances and neuroses. In her delineations of Rao Sahib and Asha, the novelist presents the two aspects of this struggle in the new India.

Rao Sahib is remarkably free from the royal complexes that may have stood in the way of his wheedling votes from erstwhile subjects and his shameless pandering to the whims of the ruling party. He is assisted in all his endeavors by his wife Sunita who, though a princess herself, his her ambitions fully geared to see her husband as a Cabinet Minister one of the real monarchs of the new dominion.

Rao Sahib’s sycophantic allegiance to a political party that has robbed him of titles, lands and powers is as demeaning as his helpless submission before his sister’s undisciplined and licentious ways. For Rao Sahib is forced to adapt not only to a changed political situation but to a changed ambience as well. In the character of Asha, Ruth Jhabvala records the growth of a feminist ideology that received surprising acceleration in the Sixties and Seventies, setting off a corresponding reduction in the power and status of the male. Rao Sahib’s reduction both as male and monarch is placed in comic juxtaposition with the power and vitality of his ancestor of Bulbul’s story who had castrated his sister’s lover for 200
bringing dishonors to a noble lineage. The present Rao walks into a
darkened room at the precise moment when Bulbul is concluding her tale
to find his sister and her lover lying together on the sofa listening to it.
Hesitant and ineffectual, he finds it safer to ignore a situation he is
powerless to handle. Apologizing for having burst in on them, he tries to
regain some of his dignity by advising Asha to do something constructive
like joining some of Sunita’s committee.

Asha, however, is a totally different type. She cannot overcome her
nostalgia for her childhood world as easily as her brother for she lacks his
capacity to adapt. The individualism and arrogance that her blue blood
has fostered in her, stands in the way of her seeking a new identity. In
consequence, she is, for a good part of the novel, assailed by depressions
and traumas that threaten to destroy her sanity. However, the new
doctrine of the equality of the sexes with its revolutionary concepts of
love, sex and power for the female, gives her a position of dominance that
helps to partially resolve her frustrations as a deposed princess. Her
emancipation is not discreetly transmuted into subservient collaboration
with the male as it is in her sister-in-law Sunita. She shakes off her
inherited concepts of female meekness and chastity and explodes the
myth of the sanctity of marriage and its careful guardianship by the wife.
Adultery is no longer a man's privilege in the world of 'A New Dominion'.

Asha's loneliness and alienation stem from these conflicting desires. She knows that the glories of a love affair are short-lived and is ashamed of her excessive eroticism, yet nothing can hold ground before her overwhelming sensuality.

Ruth Jhabvala's India is not ready to contain such women, but the existing cultural absolutes are seen in the process of change. The line that had demarcated the areas of operation for males and females in 'The Nature of Passion' and 'The Householder' is blurred in 'A New Dominion'. Marriage is no longer the ultimate goal for a woman and the blessedness of motherhood is thoroughly familiarized. A female without male support needs to evoke neither pity nor surprise. Asha is just as much at ease in being by herself as she is with men and her relationships with men and women are equally uninhibited and free.

The invasion of the old by the new is evident in other areas of the Indian landscape, external as well as internal. The young industrialist Bob, Indian by birth but American by education and conviction is clearly a prospective builder of modern India before whose ability rank and wealth have to take the second place.
But the most powerful indictment of India in ‘A New Dominion’ is contained in Ruth Jhabvala’s delineation of the damage, physical and psychic, that is done to the Westerner in India. In this third phase of her Indian experience, the value systems of the two cultures appear irreconcilable to her. The demarcations of the encounter are drawn in terms of a conflict between Western affirmations of individualism and fostering of the self and Eastern encouragement of self-negation in the interest of reaching a higher state of being. Ruth Jhabvala believes that while conformity and adaptation are part of the value system of the East, nonconformity and dissent are integral to that of the West.

Although the East wins in ‘A New Dominion’, its values are not idealized as they were in ‘A Backward Place’ or as they are in the general run of Indo-Anglican novels depicting a similar struggle. Thus, the conflict in ‘A New Dominion’ emerges as sided—not a conflict at all but a frightening assault on Western values.

The central theme of the novel is an encounter between the forces of Hinduism, as embodied in a spurious good man and an enigmatic holy woman, and the forces of Christianity and modern rationality represented by three Western girls on a spiritual quest, a Englishman on a study tour of India and a female missionary who has spent thirty years in India. At the conclusion of the novel, the Westerners flee to India; get trapped in
the ashram of a bogus guru; are rendered homeless and rootless, or die in acute physical and mental anguish. The ones who come in the hope of a genuine merger fare the worst. Raymond, who had only wanted to see and understand the country, suffers shock and terror but can withdraw before it is too late and is saved. Margaret is physically and Evie spiritually destroyed and Lee, after experiencing the full term of the cycle of response-passing from rapture and delight to disenchantment and despair is in the throes of a renewal. It is not the seekers who comprehend and assimilate India but India that engulfs and annihilates them. Thus, the novelist’s earlier optimism, visible in her depiction of Judy’s assimilation of India in ‘A Backward Place’, gives way to an acute pessimism and a sense of defeat in ‘A New Dominion’.

Two Western approaches to Indian spirituality are present in ‘A New Dominion’. One is the old colonial view of Hinduism as a dark primitive faith into which it is the duty of every Christian to bring light. This view, represented in the person of Miss Charlotte the missionary, is seen in conflict with a new Western view. India, the young Western self-seekers believe is a land to which the Europeans should come not to bring light but to seek it.

Representing Indian spiritualism in ‘A New dominion’ are two religious charlatans whose interactions with Western self-seekers crystallize the
two opposing approaches to life the blind faith of the East and the rationality of the West. Blind faith being an effective prop, people faced with an identity crisis fall easily into the snare laid by the pseudo-eremite and give in to his demand of a total, unquestioned obedience to his will. But the western self-seeker’s voluntary surrender of the reason and the sense of proportion that has been inculcated in him through generations betray an essential moral weakness. The false guru battens on this weakness. He instills into his disciple a desire to slough off his existing personality as the first step towards spiritual assimilation with the guru who will then lead him to a higher state of existence. The disciple, eager to reach this higher state, allows a destruction of his identity and believes that the tensions he experiences in consequence are the pangs of adjustment to a superior identity. The false guru can, thus, exploit the ideal of jivan mukta to realize his worldly ambitions of commanding wealth and power over human beings.

Ruth Jhabvala warns the Western self-seeker in ‘A New Dominion’, for whom recognition does not come or not till it, is too late. Lee, an American girl of twenty, comes to India “to lose herself in order as she liked to put it to find herself” (14). Like the other woman, Lee seeks affinity with India by traveling with her rural and urban masses from one small dusty town to another. Sitting in cheap buses and third
class compartments of trains. Lee revels in the sensation that she was “no longer Lee but part of the mass of travelers huddled and squashed together” (Ibid., p. 2).

She surrenders her body to an Indian youth in the belief that “this was part of the merging she had so ardently desired” (Ibid., p. 42).

In this mood of yearning for a total immersion in something greater than own self she arrives at the ashram where she meets Evie and Margaret. Both share her yearning for a great spiritual merger. Evie believes that she has found it and Margaret that she will find it by living the life determined for her by the swami. Lee, however, cannot accept the idea of total obedience as easily as the other two seem to do. She experiences a conflict between her Western upbringing with its emphasis on freedom and self-respect and the swami’s demand for total humility and submission. Often depressed, confused and demoralized, she attributes these feelings to her own spiritual poverty. This is affirmed by Evie who assures her that the true joys of a spiritual merger will be hers if she could surrender her ego and dedicate herself to Swamiji live by his will and not by her own.

Raymond recognizes the same symptoms in Lee when Swamiji works on Margaret is done and it is Lee’s turn to suffer his callous indifference. Margaret’s will is broken and she is physically and mentally shattered by

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the time Swamiji has finished with her. His triumph over the forces of Western rationality, with which he had been warring for Margaret’s soul, is complete when Margaret, having contracted jaundice, refuses Raymond and Miss Carlotta’s offer of taking her to a doctor and pins her faith instead on Swamiji’s powers of restoration. Reduced to a mere shell of the “very definite kind of girl” (Ibid., p. 27) (17) who had come out to India in the hope of acquiring “a pure heart unstained by modern materialism” (Ibid., p. 26) (18), Margaret’s disintegration is the full measure of the swami’s success.

Over Evie’s soul the battle has already been fought and won. A reincarnation of Jean in ‘An Experience of India’ Evie is one of Swamiji’s disciples whose education in the doctrine of relinquishing ego, will and intellect in an implicit and unconditional identification with the guru, is complete.

The three girls are unaware that they are being manipulated on a very physical level. Mistaking “what is lower in themselves for a higher manifestation, Margaret and Evie lay themselves open to Swamiji who leads them “very far, right to the end” (Ibid, p. 179) (19) one of physical and the other to psychic death. Lee, however, is a tougher proposition and Swamiji knows that over her he will have to wage a fierce battle and use all his weapons. He woos, derides, neglects and

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hypnotizes her in succession, continually testing her strength and assessing her potential for rebellion till Lee succumbs. She obeys his silent summons in the foolish belief that it is prompted by love and pity for her suffering. A physical and psychic rape follows. Lee’s western consciousness, never quite buried, rises in revolt and she runs away from the ashram. Though her defiance does her no good, she eventually comes back, it has a strong effect on her. The swami’s confidence in his ability to conquer and his pride in his judgment of his victim’s powers of resistance are shaken.

Western civilization as it emerges in the novel is a spent force. Its representatives have so little to fall back upon that they succumb to the powers of the East after the briefest of struggles. The East, on the other hand, is powerful and full of guile. It masses invincible armies at all strategic points of the Western consciousness, eroding resistance and blockading a return to old norms and ideologies. In the swami’s conquest of the three white girls in ‘A New Dominion’ Ruth Jhabvala conveys her recognition of the moral vacuum that people particularly the young are facing in the West. This recognition however does not reduce her aversion to the therapy offered by the East to her refugees. The guru has often been represented by Indo-Anglican and Expatriate fiction writers as a fraud, hypocrite, and tramp and criminal for whom the saffron robe
offers anonymity and a way of life. But no writer has exposed the
destructive process that the false guru sets in motion with the
uncompromising bitterness that Ruth Jhabvala brings to her delineation.
Her swami is an embodiment of criminal exploitation. The collective
faith of his disciples does not inspire him to transcend his earthly
aspirations even momentarily.

The acceptance, even enjoyment, of another's suffering that characterizes
the swami seems derived from the old colonial view of Hindu cruelty as it
emerges in the work of early expatriate writers.

The meekness with which Evie and Margaret succumb to the injuries he
inflicts while still idealizing him is significant comment on the failure of
the West to protect its own people. The collapse of confidence in
Christianity and the doubt of the worth of Western culture that are being
generated in certain parts of the West are, Ruth Jhabvala implies
relentlessly pushing its members towards an unnatural assimilation with
the East.

Hinduism is depicted as a compound of hypnotism, sadism, mass
hysteria, selfish manipulation and spurious claims with prayer, meditation
and religious discourse as its media. 'A New Dominion', embodies a
series of quests all of which including the aesthetic one of Raymond and
he proselytizing one of Miss Charlotte's come to naught. A strong
woman with a mission and an embodiment of her creator's ideal of the
only Western type fit to live in India. Miss Charlotte becomes a victim of
political change. She is repatriated after thirty years of selfless service in
India her life-long ambition of being laid to rest on Indian soil being left
with no possibility of fulfillment. Raymond's attraction to the beauty and
purity of Indian art forms gets inextricably mixed with his feelings for an
Indian youth whose physical perfections mask his complete self-
absorption, unconscious cruelty and parasitical tendencies. Through
Gopi, Raymond receives the full impact, as Lee does through the swami
of the intimations of Heaven and Hell that Ruth Jhabvala describes India
as transmitting to her aliens. Gopi is the source of Raymond's most
exquisite pleasure and pains. That he also holds in his hands the power of
annihilating him comes home to Raymond through Asha's battle about
her brother's English tutor whose homosexual yearnings for an Indian
clerk had ended in suicide. Seeing his own destiny mirrored in that of the
dead Peter Raymond flees from Gopi who comes for him along with
Swami. Banubai and Asha, a symbol of rapacious India with which he
can no longer come to terms.

Like all the other characters in 'A New Dominion', Gopi too is engaged
in a quest. If Asha could be described as a quest for physical fulfillment,
Raymond for beauty and Lee for self-realization, Gopi may be termed as a quest for financial expansion. He finds himself alienated from the members of his family because of their poverty.

The final image of India that emerges from ‘A New Dominion’, is a malevolent one. While the novelist conceded that India has supreme gifts to give to those who are ready to take them. She deplores the fact that when the offer is false it is readily accepted and when genuine it does not make a mark.

The form of the novel reflects this morbid negativity. Putting to fictional use the technique she had learned in writing for film, Ruth Jhabvala structures her novel like a play. Beginning with a cast of characters she divides it into three acts each composed of several scenes. There is more action here that in her earlier novels and a predominance of dialogue. Yet the over-all impression is one of structural disjointedness and indirect presentation. As the title of the American edition ‘Travelers’ suggests, ‘A New Dominion’, is built around many journeys physical and spiritual. A strong sense is conveyed of ceaseless travel leading nowhere. The consciousness of the tourist Raymond comes up against something unfathomable and unchangeable, every time, in all his encounters with India.
In 1975, Ruth Jhabvala published ‘Heat and Dust’ her last and most controversial novel of India. Ruth Jhabvala presents once again in 1975, a vision of India that affirms the possibility of a meaningful assimilation for the Westerner meaningful in this that it does not involve a surrender of his freedom and rationality. Coming after ‘A New Dominion’, ‘Heat and Dust’ repeats the earlier a vision of a genuine merger of the alien moving spontaneously from a physical involvement with India to a spiritual one in accordance with the Indian cycle of life. ‘Heat and Dust’, in fact, hints at a renewal not only of the novelist’s own cycle of response to India but of her faith, lost to her in the last decade, in India’s genius for assimilating those who genuinely seek it and rejecting the pretentious and the shallow.

Two stories run side by side, their twists and turns following a common route in a common landscape of two hot, dusty little towns of Central India. They are the stories of two women linked not by birth but by the common sensitivity and openness they bring to the land in which they are expatriated. Though differing vastly in character and temperament, their responses to India and their experiences in it are astonishingly similar. An illusion of time having stood still is created by the device of projecting the two women’s experience against a common cycle of seasonal change. Both come out to India in the early summer, experience
emotional ecstasy through an inter-racial union in the hot dusty months, and are faced with the necessity of making a major decision whether to cast their lot in favor of East or of West during the monsoon and are seen thereafter among the mountains seeking a dimly visualized spiritual goal.

Yet, the ultimate fates of the two women differ, created as they are by their differing times and environments. The break with the past is as distinct in ‘Heat and Dust’ as the sense of continuity. It is mirrored in an Independent India, separated by a gap of fifty years from an Imperial India of undiminished glory effectively but cruelly controlling the princely states, in which Imperialism and Royalty exist as relics. The beautiful bungalows in which the British lived their stately and gracious lives in 1923 have been stripped of their luxurious trappings and reduced to their utilitarian essentials to serve the needs of the new India. The palace at Khatm is no more than a shell, its owners compelled to make a living by selling family treasures.

Through this double perspective of continuity and change, Ruth Jhabvala presents her most composite picture up-to-date of a historical, sociological and spiritual India and examines the differing depths of the alien’s penetration into the two Indians the separatist one of the Raj and the catholic one of post-Independence.
Yet the British residents Satipur, like their counterparts of Chandrapore, maintain the old divisions between the ruler and the ruled in the same spirit of racist superiority that served as their predecessors’ protection against the ever-present threat of submergence in a lower culture. The ‘old India hands’ of Satipur whose ‘experience went back several generations claim that they know all there is to know about India, but are actually still perplexed and repelled by the country in which they live. They believe that their only chance of survival in it lies in a meticulous fulfilling of their Imperial obligations which presupposes a scrupulous adherence to the line separating the white from the native and an unswerving faith in the rule of the white.

By taking away his right to rule, the representatives of the Raj restrict and thwart the Nawab of Khatm natural movement on the path of an inherited tradition, once fiery and dominant but now reduced by them to a bare nothing the name of his kingdom Khatm being a symbolic one meaning exhausted or consumed. Thus, the ‘pukka sahibs’ the I.C.S. officials and political agents who uphold and enforce the separatist ideal occupy positions at the top of the system while right at the bottom are the despised lower castes who have forgotten their racial superiority and given themselves over to India.
The officials at the top of the hierarchy in Satipur rise handsomely to their imperial obligations and by virtue of their rectitude, consistency and faith keep the system alive. Dr. Saunders, Major Minnie's, Mr. Crawford and Douglas Rivers strive hard, each in his own way to preserve British rule in the district and by implication all over India. The women too, believe that they have a role to play in the maintenance and preservation of British rule even though, for all practical purposes, their contribution lies in little more than identification with the cause, and a willingness to live the regulated life of the memsahib in India. Dr. Saunders sets the moral tone of Satipur and guards it closely. Major Minnies suppresses his innate admiration for the Nawab and struggle against the unpatriotic feeling that the British administration brings out the worst in a strong and forceful character like the prince of Khatm. He strives, instead, to keep him in strict order in accordance with the dictates of Simla. Mr. Crawford the collector and his burra mem both are the accepted models in their community for all young Englishmen and women out in India for they have made a complete success of living on the right side of the dividing line. Crawford represents the type of ideal Britisher extolled by litterateurs of the first phase of expatriate writing, and is everything that Douglas has the potential for and aspires to be. It is this image of
Douglas the text-book image of the best type of Englishman in India that Olivia falls in love with and marries.

However, the men and women who embody all that is best in the British community are subtly transformed into dull and snobbish stereotypes to Heat and Dust.

The novelist’s stance approximates to a denigration of a culture governed by the separatist principle is suggested within a few pages of the book by her depiction of the fate that overtakes Mrs. Saunders in India. The breakdown of Mrs. Saunders’ physical and mental health and her morbid fears and complexes are attributed, not so much to the harshness of the Indian environment as to the fact of there being something wrong in the system in which she is trapped. Mrs. Saunders complains bitterly of the heat and filth of Satipur and lives in constant terror of being raped by her native servants, yet she never goes up to Simla where she can escape the pressures of her environment for a good many months in the year like the other memsahib.

Isolated from her community; neglected by her husband, who as one of the major props of the system has little sympathy for her failures, and deprived of the joys of motherhood, she grows lonelier, more hysterical, and more violent with each passing year in India. Victim of a narrow
divisive code, she clings passionately to those very dividing lines that threaten to poison her existence. Another character of sensibility and equally a victim of the system is Harry who stands at the opposite end from Mrs. Saunders in his relationship with India.

Harry's love for the Nawab whom he sees as the ideal anti-type of the public school moralists makes him hate the Raj and its coercive tendencies. He recognizes that there is no basic difference between the way his countrymen treat Indians and the way they treat a member of their own tribe who does not conform. In reaction, Harry flouts the dividing line and firmly entrenches himself in the Indian camp. Though he experiences that joy of true friendship it is only temporarily, Ruth Jhabvala affirms the Forsterian conviction that inter-racial friendship cannot be sustained in an Imperialistic set-up. The impulse for friendship from the Indian side is generated by racial hatred. The whites of 'Heat and Dust' share this view as is obvious from the comments of the narrator: No one ever doubted that the Nawab had used Olivia as a means of revenge. Even the most liberal and sympathetic Anglo Indian, such as It is true that the Nawab views Olivia's pregnancy largely in terms of a revenge on a race which believed that the secret of leadership lay in the English blood and the onus of keeping that blood pure was on the English race. In a society that frowned on inter-racial unions and rejected the
Eurasian, the Nawab gleefully looks forward to the birth of his half English child: ""Wait till my son 1st born, her said; then they’ll laugh from the other side of their mouths" (Ibid., p.161). But there is more to the Nawab’s feelings for Oliva than his use of her as an instrument of revenge. Oliva undergoes an abortion to save her community from shame. But her action, though it frustrates the Nawab’s revenge, does not drive them apart. She is forgiven by the Nawab but not by the Empire builders. Confronted by Dr. Saunders, she escapes to the Nawab and is permanently separated from her own people.

Since affection, sympathy and love can form the basis of human relationships only in a climate in which the heart rules the head, this message is conveyed through the consciousness of Oliva and the narrator, but in the climate of racial alienation inevitable in a ruler-ruled context, it is rejected in the India of 1923.

This rejection is embodied in Oliva’s fate. Of all the characters in ‘Heat and Dust’, it is Oliva who upholds the ideal that following the dictates of the heat in preference to those of the intellect is more conducive to acceptance and sympathy. Endowed with an exquisite sensibility that is denigrated by Major Minnies as ‘an excess of feeling, her heart trembles in response to the sorrows of others, irrespective of class, race, colour or even legitimate claim to sympathy.
Like the heroine of the typical expatriate novel of the pre-Forsterian phase, the young, beautiful and delicately bred Olivia begins her life in Satipur with little knowledge of the line that separates the ruler from the ruled. Her initial mistakes of understanding, common in a new-comer to the system, provide a good deal of amusement to the seasoned old sahibs and memsahib.

Olivia’s white and golden beauty may symbolize “all that is worth fighting and dying for” (p. 178) for the Empire builders, but she herself shares none of their convictions. Olivia white and golden beauty may symbolize “all that is worth fighting and dying for” (p. 178) for the empire builders, but she herself shares none of their convictions.

Olivia resents interference with native customs on the arrogant assumption of a superior culture.

It is a grave comment on the consciousness of the British in India that this absence of parochialism in Olivia is described as “something rotten” by Dr Saunders (p. 170) and by Major Minnies as a “weak spot” often found in the finest people but one that aliens need to guard against since it is there that India seeks them out and pulls them over into the other dimension. So fundamental is the separatist consciousness
in the British community that even bright, practically both Crawford "did not allow herself to speak about Olivia until many years a lifetime had passed" (24).

Olivia had loved and married Douglas Rivers for all the qualities that she had been educated to value in the British male his quiet, sturdy, manly spirit and his conscientious adherence to his ideals. Yet the same code of courage and honor that had seemed so idealistic in England appears base and unworthy when put to the test in India. The system in which it is embodied metamorphoses Douglas from a fine healthy English boy into a puffy, pompous Anglo-Indian and a pillar of Imperialism. A sense of alienation sweeps over Olivia when she sees in her husband the shadow of what he is to become: The deeper his immersion into the system, the more hopelessly narrow-minded and unimaginative Douglas becomes, and the more he mouths the platitudes of his community the more greatly he is estranged from his sensitive, artistic wife. Douglas is conceived as stoical idealistic and striving for perfection. Locked, within the Imperial system, however, his striving is reduced to a painstaking identification with those who rule, exploit and patronize India, and his ideal of perfection that of becoming a great colonizer and administrator.

Olivia's feelings about the Anglo-Indian attitude are crystallized in two of her remarks in the novel. One is a scathing comment on the white man’s
isolation in India. When Douglas says casually: “it can get very tedious if you’re stuck out too long in a district all on your own” Olivia is quick to react: “With only a few million Indians, Olivia could not refrain from saying” (p. 154) (25). The second is an appeal for inter-racial friendship curiously reminiscent of Fielding’s to Aziz. Olivia pleads with Harry: “you’re being like everyone else now; making me feel I don’t understand. That I don’t know India. It’s true I don’t, but what’s that got to do with it? People can still be friends, can’t they even if it is India” (26).

Yet Olivia had not come out to India on a mission of friendship and understanding. She had been in the beginning only a pretty, frivolous young woman in love with her husband and determined to enjoy her life in India. As the hot weather advances, Olivia becomes increasingly aware of the rigors of her transplantation. She is assailed by an uncanny awareness of the real India pulsing and breathing outside. This awareness renders her, on the one hand, too listless to pursue her regular activities and fills her, on the other, with an excitable urge to break out of her hermetically sealed European interior and meet her environment face to face. Olivia starts going out with the Nawab and then to him at the palace at Khatm. And after a few visits, she discovers something curious that
she was getting to know the real India and to love her well, even her heat and dust the two most dreaded opponents of the British in India.

Olivia spends a lifetime communing with the sky and the mountains of India attaining in the process a richness of soul. After her precipitate flight from the harsh restrictions of the English camp, Olivia needs space and light in which her awakening spirit can come to full efflorescence.

In this novel Ruth Jhabvala demonstrates how those who approach India with the "virile, measured, European feeling" (p. 171) advocated by Major Minnie's find no place in India, except in the separatist regime of the Raj. Mr. and Mrs. Crawford, who had made such a splendid success of their life in British India, find that capacity gone after Independence. Incapable of adapting to a new India in which they are no longer the privileged class, they sell their house in Kasauli and go back to England. Dr. Saunders is never heard of again and Major Minnies, though he chose to spend the rest of his days in India, utilized them, curiously enough, in writing a monograph on the subject of the fatal attraction that India has for some of her aliens among whom he counted himself.

Conscious striving towards a goal clearly glimpsed or otherwise is a recurring pattern in 'Heat and Dust'. There are swarms of self-seekers in
Independent India who believe that through meditation and guru worship they will be enabled to touch her soul. The superficiality of their knowledge of India and the blind faith with which they glorify her false elements reduce their efforts at spiritual assimilation to the comic and the pathetic. Contrasted with them is the narrator who belongs to a line of men and women having close connections with India. Though limited in their attitude to her by a political principle, they were heroic and disciplined and had conscientiously striven to do what they believed was right. Olivia, with a vision ahead of her time, had regretted the limitations in the outlook of her community, but it was left to her granddaughter by marriage to exploit those very qualities of stoic heroism that she had inherited in pursuance of an ideal that was the exact opposite of her inheritance. Whereas Douglas had wanted to rule India in the best interests of Empire which, in his estimation, were to India’s advantage as well his grand-daughter’s goal is to effect a complete merging with the country her predecessors ruled but kept at arm’s length.

Riots no longer disrupt the congregation of the Hindus and the Muslims at the shrine of Baba Firdaus in 1975. Many whites are also seen in the throng of people united by a common faith. From the woman of the legend onwards, all barren women who come to the shrine even aliens like Olivia and the narrator are impregnated. A tiny oasis set in a desert
of ‘Heat and Dust’, the shrine becomes a symbol of the fertility inherent in human relationships even when they are threatened by racial and cultural alienations.

The Shrine and the festival are functional in the novel not only for establishing the theme but for structural purpose. The two together constitute the focal point towards which the incidents of both sections converge. The myth which is outlined in some detail by the Nawab is re-enacted twice in the novel in Olivia’s life and in that of the narrator. Sthala Purana or local legend is used by the novelist for yet a third purpose to comment on Indian reality. The Husband’s Wedding Day with its implications of male domination and female suffering has patterns emerging from it that point to the novelist’s continued interest in the intra-Indian context, particularly as it affects the woman.

A successful marriage in a traditional society, like the Indian, is almost entirely dependent on the bride’s ability to slough off her existing personality and assume the one considered fitting by the family into which she is married. Thus, the younger and the less exposed she is to the outside world, the better for the patriarchal society of which she is the chief prop. The psychological pressures of such a metamorphosis may vary from individual to individual. The weak and unresisting are quickly changed into the faceless creatures that Indian life as their isolation in
their husband's homes. Ruth Jhabvala exposes this phenomenon in the fates of Sandy and Ritu in 'Heat and Dust'. There are symbolic suggestions of the way the Indian family smothers any sign of rebellion in the female in the image of Inder Lal's mother forcing her hand on Ritu's mouth to stifle her screams (p. 52) (28) and the confining of Sandy in the Zenana from which she would periodically escape. The Nawab's instinctive reaching out to Ritu suggests that they all have a certain quality in common a distinctive identity. This, as the novelist sees it, is a source of strength in a Western woman but distorts and destroys the native. The extreme point of female subjugation lies in the Suttee ideal, the belief that a woman is nothing in herself-only an extension of her husband that ceases to serve any meaningful purpose after the principal has gone.

The most important facet of this essential character, in Ruth Jhabvala's analysis of India, is her genius for accommodating and incorporating the new while retaining the basics of her original ethos. We have seen how Olivia received a vision of spiritual affinity even in the separatist regime of 1923. Indeed the narrator not only experiences the flowering of an inter-racial relationship but initiates a spontaneous acceptance of its fruits. Her child of a mixed race will not be aborted surreptitiously as was Olivia's for in the new India it is neither an instrument of revenge
nor a symbol of shame. Olivia’s spurning of a separatist code had brought her a lifetime of isolation. It was left to her spiritual descendant to experience the joy and fulfillment of a complete merger.

Major Minnies, was convinced of it”.

In the true synthesis, East and West come together guided and nurtured by one another. Such a synthesis is hinted at in the reconciliation of the Oriental and the Occidental and the traditional and the modern in the life of the narrator. She will give birth in a hospital which is a British legacy to India, but believes that a message by an Indian midwife can protect or destroy a human fetus. She can reconcile a faith in meditation and pilgrimage with a belief in psychiatry and modern medicine. She will not suffer the loss of identity that threatened Lee and overcame Evie in ‘A New Dominion’, for her merging with India will be affected without their struggle and agonized surrender.

The gap in the value systems of East and West is not unbridgeable in Heat and Dust. What is relevant here is the shared humanity of man. The spiritual kinship that exists between certain human beings of different races illustrates the underlying unity of all races a unity that can be threatened or even partially damaged by the accidents of history but is never completely or permanently destroyed. The recognition of this basic
harmony, in the novelist's final assessment, is the first step towards a resolution of inter-racial tensions to lead eventually to a true and meaningful assimilation of the races and cultures of the world.

Thus this chapter has shown that though East fascinates West or West fascinates East, they both are momentary. It is reflected that neither of each can live with other permanently.

References:

1] Ruth Prawer Jhabvala 'Esmond In India', George Allen Unwin, 1958, p.41.

2] Ibid, p.25

3] Ibid, p.74


6] Ibid, p.88


8] Ibid, p.27.

10] Ibid, p. 54.


13] Ibid, p. 54.


16] Ibid, p. 42.

17] Ibid, p. 27.


19] Ibid, p. 179.


22] Ibid, p. 178.


24] Ibid, p. 175.