CHAPTER I

POST-COLONIAL BRITISH FICTION ABOUT INDIA

SECTION 1: IMPERIALISM AND LITERATURE

The process of colonial domination of the world by the
western European powers which reached its zenith in the late
nineteenth century can be traced back to the early explorers
who went on perilous voyages to discover new territories.
Although trade was the main motive, there were other allied
factors that tended to camouflage the basic economic impulse
behind colonialism. Spreading the light of civilization to
the benighted barbaric regions of the world was one such
mission. Presence of religious persecution or political
dissent at home also triggered off the search for fresh
territories which might yield to the entrants a freedom
undreamt of at home.

Over the centuries two forms of colonization polarized
themselves; in the settler colonies like U.S.A., Australia
and Canada, the Europeans emigrated for permanent settlement
after either annihilating or marginalizing the local
inhabitants; in the subjugated colonies of Asia and Africa
the local population was governed by European rulers. They came to these tropical regions on a temporary basis primarily to enforce law and order so that raw material for their industry could be extracted and new markets for their products once opened, could be monopolized. By the nineteenth century the settler colonies either became independent or gained some measure of autonomy. In the other colonies, despite European rivalries, Britain succeeded in consolidating her supremacy as the reigning imperial power in a large part of the globe. A substantial body of literature was created by this British encounter with new lands, new climates and cultures and the texts generated by India are larger in number than those that emerged out of the encounter with other colonies. Since the men of action who went on the imperial mission were not necessarily men of letters, not all of this Anglo-Indian literature is of high literary value. But some of these texts unfold to us the subjective dimensions of the colonising enterprise that escape the historians' records. In recent years this literature has begun to be studied both by literary critics and historians for understanding the nature of the relationship between Britain and India (see Section 3, Chapter I for a summary). My focus in this
thesis will be not the texts produced during the high noon of colonialism, but the continuation or mutation of this tradition during and after the eclipse of the empire. In other words, I would like to examine fictional representations of post colonial encounter of two cultures.

With the first World War, Britain's position as an international power suffered considerably, eroding to a large measure her previous self-confidence. The next half century witnessed Britain's weakening grip over her colonies due to the political insurgency of the subject nations and her own simultaneous eclipse in the international power orbit. After the second World War, by gradually granting freedom to her colonies Britain accepted the new political equations whereby USA and the USSR emerged as the superpowers, a situation which was to continue for Britain's colonial history, or for that matter the entire process of imperial domination may be seen not only as acquiring of political power but also as a process of gaining cultural hegemony over the rest of the world. That this was indeed part of the agenda of the empire, and not an accidental by-product can be testified through the words of Lord Macaulay, one of the central voices that formulated the imperial ideology:
The sceptre may pass away from us. Unforeseen accidents may derange our most profound schemes of policy. Victory may be inconstant to our arms. But there are triumphs which are followed by no reverse. There is an empire exempt from all natural cause of decay. Those triumphs are the pacific triumphs of reason over barbarism; that empire is the imperishable empire of our arts and morals, our literature and our laws.¹

This objective was achieved in diverse ways - through the British system of education, through the establishment of various secular institutions like the judiciary, the parliamentary system and through the imparting of scientific systems of knowledge. Unlike in African countries where the British negated the entire past of a continent, in India Oriental scholars studied Indian history with diligence and care. But they looked at this history from their own perspective, and gradually, over the years the Indians began to see themselves as reflected through European eyes. Edward Said points out how the west appropriates the existence of the other hemisphere: "For the Orient ("out there" toward the East) is corrected, even penalized, for lying outside the boundaries of European society, "our" world; the Orient is thus Orientalized."² Even after half a century of independence the reversal of this process has not been achieved. Ashis Nandy, discussing the issues related to the colonization of the mind in his book The Intimate Enemy: The
Loss and Recovery of Self Under Colonialism (1983), describes aptly how the west has penetrated into the consciousness of the non-west; the west cannot be defined from outside, because its alternative no longer exists. Consequently his own book he claims, is an example of this dominance of one culture over another:

It is also possible to-day to opt for a non-west which itself is a construction of the west... The west has not merely produced colonialism, it informs most interpretations of colonialism. It colours even this interpretation of interpretation. 3

This admission reveals that the western modes of thought are as pervasive in India now as they were during the colonial rule and the interpenetrating world views cannot be disentangled any more. To scrutinise this process of mental dependence I shall focus on India, although each Commonwealth country would have a different version of the same story in this regard.

In the nineteenth century university education was used as a means for ushering in western knowledge and culture for the Indian youth. English literature was part of the curriculum but the main thrust was on awakening the Indian mind to western thought, philosophy, science etc., so that in the process the superiority of European over indigenous
systems of thought would get subtly established. Gauri Vishwanathan in her book *The Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India* (1989) has shown how English literature served the important function of inculcating certain values in India. Since religious instruction in schools was not part of the government policy in India, literature almost became a substitute for religion in establishing certain values as constant, immutable and universal. The literature which was thus being sacralised originated in England. The Anglo-Indian literature that was being generated in the colonies was not taken very seriously and was hardly ever accessible to the Indian subjects. Literature for the colonial educator meant literature from the home country alone.

Colonial writing can be viewed in many ways - as part of political propaganda for justifying the empire and creating a myth of racial superiority; or as the record of an unusual confrontation of cultures abroad; as exotica with commercial potential in terms of readership at home; and in the last phases of empire, as conscientious attempt to see the ethical implications of colonialism. The literary discourse of imperialism was a crucial part of the cultural representation of the British in India for the consumption
of those at home and also served as a justification for their presence in India.

As far as Indian education was concerned, Anglo-Indian literature, despite its links with Indian reality, was never considered respectable enough for academic study. Considering the uneven quality of what was being written by the British in India this is not surprising. It was primarily perceived as a popular form of entertainment and did not compare well with the finest work of British culture. Anglo-Indian literature, to some extent, was a record of British colonial history, first painted in glowing terms by writers like Rudyard Kipling and Flora Annie Steel and then critically by E.M. Forster and Edward Thompson mirroring the changing attitudes. The shift in sensibility and reaction from the kind of literature that Kipling wrote, a spontaneous celebration and mythicizing of imperialism to a liberal, democratic critique of the colonial system as represented by Forster, reflects not just the individual writer's personal and political commitment but also proves that ideology is always a shaping factor in colonial writing. It is true that ideology is inscribed into all texts but colonial writing is obviously a product of and
owes its existence to certain structures of power. Its genesis may be said to be a collision of cultures rather than an encounter of cultures. Thus colonial literature has to be seen from the multiple perspectives of power, hegemony, culture, identity and individual creativity. Literature of the colonizer comprised for a long time of the standard adventure tale, exotic and romantic, that glorified heroism and legitimized power. This encounter began to produce serious literature only in the twentieth century when writers like Joseph Conrad, Joyce Cary, E.M. Forster, George Orwell and Edward Thompson began to explore the myths shrouding the political aggression and the cultural dominance over other nations.

Joseph Conrad in his novel *Heart of Darkness* (1902) examines not only the formidable colonial enterprise in Africa and its corrosive impact on the natives, but also the sinister, decaying influence such political invasion can have on the invaders themselves. His other novels *Nostromo* (1904) and *Lord Jim* (1900) show that the empire is an arena stalked by adventurer-villains whose pursuit of wealth and glamour end often not just in failure but total self-destruction.
Joyce Cary's novel *An American Visitor* (1933) shows that an element of anarchy should blend with the constitutional powers of the ruling class to govern a country successfully. Despite the veneer of liberalism, one can feel that a writer, like Forster, is interested in balancing the power between the two groups - the colonised, and the coloniser - rather than in arguing for full political independence.

Forster's *A Passage to India* (1924) explores the basic insecurity of the British ruling class in India which during the crisis generated by the alleged crime of Dr. Aziz herd together, revealing their refusal to accord an Indian a minimum level of justice. But when Adela does render Dr. Aziz the justice due to him, he turns inimical towards her. Aziz's failure to transcend his hostility to Adela is comparable to the Turtons' and Burtons' paranoia regarding her. In *Burmese Days* (1934) Orwell shows Flory struggling to break through his loneliness to win the heart of Elizabeth, a white woman, who has pledged herself to the values upheld and cherished by the colonial system. Flory's ignorance about Elizabeth's convictions and even his refusal to acknowledge this truth destroys him ultimately. He
sought to escape the colonial system by choosing a profession outside it but does not realize how far the tentacles of colonialism have reached. These are some of the examples of introspection, and brooding about the experience of colonialism which had earlier produced only a literature of exultation and triumph.

The colonial experience continued to provide impetus to creative literature even after the imperial chapter in history came to a close. As far as Britain and India are concerned, Kipling, Forster and Masters who knew the Raj in the first hand were followed by Paul Scott and J.G. Farrell whose actual experience of India was not colonial, but they too drew upon the British rule in India for their fictional material. There have been many other writers, most of them minor, who have focused on the post-colonial situation, and explored the racial interaction of the two countries after they ceased to be interlocked in an intimate yet antagonistic relation of power.

This dissertation will attempt to examine how the continuing relationship between Britain and India after the dissolution of the Empire has been rendered in fiction written in English. The period studied here does not begin
exactly at the moment of Indian Independence because historical and attitudinal changes cannot be chronologically charted so accurately. To observe the gradual erosion of the structure of colonial power by internal and external upheavals the half century beginning with the Second World War may be seen as important. I shall focus on several recurrent patterns in this relationship as seen in the fiction written by British and other non-Indian writers during this period (1939-1989).

Indian writers too have rendered this intercultural theme in fiction. Such texts may be occasionally referred to in this study, but my basic intention is to see how the British imagination dealt with the continuing interaction between the two races who were no longer linked in any obvious power nexus.

Authors like Paul Scott, Ruth P. Jhabvala, Deborah Moggach, Rumer Godden, H.E. Bates, writing about the transition of India from a colonial to an independent state or about the period after the transition might have continued to reflect the earlier images and attitudes. That is, they might have expanded the scope of the adventure tale, so popular during colonial times. But the new
political environment and the rapidly changing social situation impelled many of them to discard the old perspectives on the Indian situation, and create new patterns. In the process some of them unveil before English view the frontiers of the empire that has now receded and curled upon their island home, especially since many of them have lived on and experienced that receding frontier. These writers, by fictionalizing the post-colonial encounter between Britain and India could be infusing into their texts not only the spirit of a shared past stretching into the present but also a creative energy that transmutes the topicality of their fictional subject-matter into enduring human concerns.

SECTION 2: BRITISH PERCEPTION OF INDIA

Imaginative writing on Indian themes began to appear in England from seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in the form of drama, spectacle and fiction, most of which highlighted an exotic romantic or barbaric ethos, rather than draw upon historical imagination. Dryden's *Aurangzeb* (1676) and *The Indian Emperor* (1665), Barrymore's *El Hyder* (1818) and Moncrieff's *The Cataract of the Ganges* (1823) are some of the earlier examples of such texts. In these,
British presence in India is seen as valuable for helping "good and deserving" Indians to overwhelm the evil Indians. Britain's alleged mission in India at this period of shielding good rulers against powerful tyrants and rescuing Hindus from the oppression of the Mughal empire is endorsed in these books although it is done in a vague non-specific manner. Towards the end of the eighteenth century there was a profusion of novels that dealt with India. The Disinterested Nabob (1785), The Indian Adventurer or History of Mr. Vanneck (1780) (these two bear no authors' name), Helenus Scott's Adventures of a Rupee Wherein are Interspersed Various Anecdotes Asiatic and European (1782) or Henrietta Mosse Rouvières Arrivals From India (1812) demonstrate the obvious appeal of India to the popular imagination catering to the appetite for the unusual, the curious, the extraordinary aspects of life overseas. Some of the other popular books of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century England that dealt with India are Translations of the Letters of a Hindoo Rajah (1796), a novel by Elizabeth Hamilton, The Empire of the Nairs, an Utopian Romance by James Lawrence (1811) and The Missionary, an Indian Tale (3 vols.): 2nd ed. (1811) by Sydney Owenson, Lady Morgan.
In the nineteenth century India often got marginal references in English fiction, e.g. in the novels of Charlotte Brontë, W.M. Thackeray, Sir Walter Scott and Mary Shelley. Although Scott never visited India he set his novel *The Surgeon's Daughter* (1827) in Mysore. It is a historical melodrama, in which a Scottish surgeon's daughter is taken to India by her lover to be given to Tipoo Sultan, but is finally rescued. His other novel *Guy Mannering* or *The Astrologer* (1815) is a tragicomical portrayal of a decadent ancient family but Guy Mannering's misfortunes occur in India.

In the British imagination India is seen either as a land of untold riches, or untold privations where Britain is establishing legitimate commerce and where the hero has to go in order to prove his worth. In *Vanity Fair* (1847) Jos Sedley makes his fortune as the collector of Bogleywala, and bolsters his social insecurity in England with tales of grandeur in India. Amelia's admirer Major Dobbin too achieves success in India. In *Vanity Fair*, Thackeray shows the mercenary connection between India and the British middle and upper classes in Victorian society. In *Jane Eyre* (1847) India is the land of the heathen overridden by
disease and poverty. St. John Rivers has resolved to go there as a missionary to bring light to the natives. Jane Eyre's refusal to marry this missionary not only indicates her horror of this hot and overpopulated land, but also her insistence on maintaining her own autonomy. She wished to live on her own terms, rather than be an appendage to an idealistic husband. By the end of the novel, when Jane has married Rochester and the author, following the standard practice of all Victorian novels, brings us up to date on the fate of the other characters, we learn that St. John Rivers has died in India. This reconfirms the notion (not entirely untrue) of the inclement weather and the hostile circumstances in which the missionaries had to work.

Thackeray's novels The History of Pendennis, His Fortunes and Misfortunes, His Friends and His Greater Enemy (1848-50) and The Newcomes: Memoirs of a Most Respected Family ed. by Arthur Pendennis, Esq. (2 vols. 1853-55) contain sketches of Anglo-Indian characters exuberantly drawn. In Pendennis, Major Pendennis, on the return of his regiment from India, associates himself with distinguished members of the aristocratic class. Colonel Altamont, another character in the novel, with his conviviality and humour, endears himself to his London listeners who find anecdotes of colonial life
simply charming. In *The Newcomes* through the portrait of a colonel, who had served in the Indian Army for thirty-five years, Thackeray comments on the sacrifice and the sorrow of the British who went to India in the nineteenth century.

Although India does not enter directly in Mary Shelley's novel *Frankenstein* (1818), Henry Clerval, the friend of Victor Frankenstein, chooses to devote his energies to the learning of Persian, Arabic and Sanskrit languages in his university days so that he can find suitable employment in India later on. He is intended as an antithesis of the hero who is a scientist by choice and by inclination.

The perils of soulless scientific skill exemplified by this novel apparently underscore humanistic values and are set here against the languages of ancient wisdom and philosophy. The colonies (India, West Indies, China, Australia) were generally used in nineteenth century fiction as narrative devices sometimes to get rid of inconvenient people, as in *Hard Times* (1854), sometimes to explain the absence of a character, as in *Mansfield Park* (1814), or for the hero to acquire unusual experiences, *David Copperfield* (1850), *Little Dorritt* (1857) or to explain great wealth or
for other strategic purposes, as in Belinda (1801). The country itself does not become the stage for the unfolding of the plot. These novels of Jane Austen, Charlotte Bronte, Sir Walter Scott, Charles Dickens and William Thackeray are very different from the fiction written about India by the British who settled there.

The Anglo-Indian novels set exclusively in India written by Englishmen living here had a different perspective. Although these novels never entered the canon of English literature, in their own time they enjoyed great popularity both in England and among the expatriate readership in India, John Mackenzie comments on this phenomenon thus,

Stories of travel and exploration, missionary writings and biographies... The excitements of migration and pioneering life, the quaint and exotic among indigenous people of the Empire, all these became Christmas and birthday present for school and Sunday school.

An outstanding literary figure of the pre-mutiny period, Captain Philip Meadows Taylor, tried to forge an understanding between his people and the Indians both through his fiction and through his personal example. He familiarized himself with Persian and Marathi and strove to understand the culture of India and assimilate the history
of the subcontinent. G.S. Amur defines Taylor's literary contribution to Anglo-Indian fiction in the following words:

... (Capt. Taylor) is the first major writer in Anglo-Indian literature who attempted the great theme of the cultural dialectic between the East and the West and laid down the tradition for writers like Kipling, Forster, Raja Rao and Kamala Markandaya.

One common motif in novels like Seeta (1872) and Tara: A Mahratta Tale (1863) by Taylor and On the Face of the Waters (1896) by Flora Annie Steel is that of 'sati'. Seeta, the eponymous heroine of Taylor's novel is a Hindu widow who is rescued and married by an English official and then both settle down in England. In the other two novels mentioned here both the Hindu widows bear the same name - Tara, and they are both saved by Englishmen from being burnt alive but cannot enter into marriage with their saviours. Taylor's character ends up as a devdasi and Steel's as an abandoned mistress, whose conscience tortures her about escaping her husband's pyre. The theme of a Hindu widow being rescued by a British officer is a recurrent one in Anglo-Indian literature and can be found even in texts as recent as M.M. Kaye's The Far Pavilions (1975). A number of attitudes, overt and covert, converge in this motif - the barbarous customs of Indians, the civilizing influence of
the English, the humanizing power of Christianity and
the superior power of the ruling class that liberates the
native victim from the native oppressor.

The year 1857 can be seen as a decisive turning-point
in Indo-British history after which British political power
got legitimised in India. In some ways the divisions
between the races became sharper because British faith in
the humble, supplicating Indians was shattered in one stroke
by the unexpected rebellion in North India which gave rise
to various attitudes which G.D. Bearce sums up succinctly:

During the period of crisis in 1857-58, then, British attitudes towards India oscillated violently. Initially, the British felt dismay and anger especially towards Indians. After time permitted study, many Britons recognised that their nation and its policy were not blameless, and they sought to check their violence and anger. After the crisis was over, the British endeavoured through constitutional changes to conciliate the rebellious inhabitants of the empire and resume the work of progress.6

Flora Annie Steel is a major literary figure of the post-Mutiny period. The wife of a civilian, she visited Indian women in their homes to help them in whatever manner possible and studied simultaneously the class and caste dimensions of their social existence and the impact of their religion on their quotidian life. Her novel - On the Face of the Waters (1896) deals with the relations between the
races, genders and classes. Tara Devi, a Rajput widow living with Jim Douglas, and Zora-bibi, who is sometimes visited by this British conman, are destitute Indian women. They are marginal members in their own society and outsiders in British society. The Erltons and Gissings, two British couples, are embroiled in their own domestic problems. Mrs. Erlton and Mrs. Gissing make moral choices which reflect the white woman's comparative independence when compared to the helpless Indian women who are portrayed either as their husband's shadows or as peripheral characters. The historical details are accurately rendered in her novel, and the tension of the marital atmosphere competently built up, but we are never allowed access to the inner recesses of the Indian characters.

From the last decade of the nineteenth century onwards Kipling emerges as the major Anglo-Indian literary figure celebrating imperial rule. His adventure yarns portray the colonies as a vast arena of action for British men with initiative and courage. Kim, the white adolescent, is seen to have a superlative capacity to dominate both in the white world of learning, the world of military enterprise, and in the native world of cunning and constant danger. Kim's
secret service work makes imperialism appear more as a game than a complex nexus for exploitation and subjugation. Kipling grew up in India, and hence had the feel for the landscape and texture of the country that only a childhood exposure can provide. In *The Man Who Would Be King* (1910) Dravot and Carnehan lack Kim's resourcefulness and they forget their improvised roles as royalty in Kafiristan. Their impetuosity exposes their buccaneering selves to the villagers who punish them with death. Through Dravot and Carnehan's tragic end Kipling rings a warning note that the colonial should not forget the exact demands of his task and the limitations of his authority. If the white power-wielder strains his credibility for too long, he will risk demystification. As an imperial propagandist Kipling is not predicting the end of British rule but only suggesting the art of extending it comfortably.

But even British ingenuity could not save the might of the empire from the devastating effects of the First World War. According to Martin Green the ironical situation after the First World War was that not only did the Indians regard the British with hostility the British also began treating their colonies inimically.
During Kipling's lifetime the modern system crossed the great divide of 1914-1918, after which everyone assumed that the British empire was dying, and everyone in serious literature was openly hostile to it... After 1918 they turned more often to it, in aggression. One of the first examples of such writing was also the finest, E.M. Forster's *A Passage to India*.

Forster explores the cultural dialectic between East and West and exposes the established orthodoxies of the British in India through stock characterisation. Nor are the Indians entirely spared the thrust of his criticism. Within the scope of the novel Forster attempts to encompass a wide range of Indian reality in its social, geographical as well as metaphysical dimensions. To achieve such an integrated effect he takes recourse to symbolism and deliberate ambiguity. The real India according to Forster is elusive and the mosque, the cave, the temple represent its different resonances. Any single attitude - whether it be Adela's earnestness to understand the 'real' India or the Anglo-Indians' haughty rebuff to the land - is insufficient for unravelling its myriad meanings.

Orwell, like Forster, denigrates the myth of British supremacy primarily through characterization, and through the suicide by Flory in *Burmese Days* (1934) which highlights the putrid aspects of imperial system. The British people
in Kyaukatada are basically presented as flawed personalities who seek fame and wealth in Burma, i.e., fancy themselves as privileged adventurers; but they also find themselves duped by the colonial system in Burma which gradually debilitates them. Elizabeth, the woman whom Flory adores and for whom he kills himself, marries the district collector after rejecting less eligible suitors. Elizabeth's success reveals her unadulterated passion for the privileges offered by the imperial power structures. Orwell implies that only such personalities can flourish within the system.

Orwell is clearly exasperated by both the English people and the Burmese. The novel was written partly to exorcise himself of the guilt and remorse he suffered during his police service in Burma. Through U.P.O. Kyin's success at the end Orwell argues that it is not exclusively the whites whom the imperial system favours, even the natives cultivate the negative traits of a colonial and reap the benefits.

Edward Thompson, a contemporary of Forster and Orwell, taught in India during the 1920's and the 30's. As a teacher he had a different access to India than the
administrator or the tourist. He understood the difficulties facing British officials in their task of ruling. He admits through his fictional characters that while Britain did bring a proper infrastructure of institutions and public life to India her mission was a failure to a great extent because of the attitude with which this was carried out. Britain may have considered it her duty to enlighten the masses but in practice her civilizing mission was painted with arrogance, ignorance and sometimes indifference. In *A Farewell to India* (1930) Thompson's growing disenchantment with Indians can be seen. He seems sceptical whether their national movement will lead to anarchy or to a positive state of being.

Rumer Godden's novels *Black Narcissus* (1939), *Breakfast with the Nikolides* (1942), and *Kingfishers Catch Fire* (1953) deal with the personality problems of the Europeans magnified and distorted to some extent by India. The author emphasizes the beneficial effects and positive changes brought about by her characters' encounter with India. Having been born and brought up in India she has a sensitive perception of the people, the custom and the landscape of the country. In *Breakfast with the Nikolides*, a British child struggles to adapt herself to her Indian surroundings.
but grows up alienated. In her other novels well-intentioned but misguided Europeans can bring disaster not only to unsuspecting Indians but also to themselves. It is only Mr. Dean in *Black Narcissus*, a white political agent, who surrenders himself completely to India and her ways to acquire stability.

John Masters, through his novels *Coromondel* (1955), *The Deceivers* (1952), *The Lotus and the Wind* (1953) and *Bhowani Junction* (1954), tries to capture the essence of the crucial last chapters in Indo-British history. His emphasis is chiefly on the achievements of the British rather than on their drawbacks as rulers. He fictionalizes the bond between the British and the Indians but keeps silent about the unequal power relationship. In *Bhowani Junction* Masters shows the British withdrawal from India in terms of the dangers and threats posed to both the Eurasians and the Indians. The Eurasians' predicament lies in their social alienation from both Indians and whites.

After this brief sample survey of major Anglo-Indian novels I shall attempt a short chronological survey of the available critical material that interpret and classify them.
In this section I shall attempt a brief summary of the critical material available on Anglo-Indian fiction. Probably the earliest work to explore systematically this area is Susanne Howe's *Novels of Empire* (1949). Demonstrating the intermingling of Indo-British history and the creative imagination of Anglo-Indian writers, Howe classifies the writers whose work spread over a century as Defenders, Doubters and Attackers. These labels underline the close co-relation between the novelist's vision and his/her ideological and political position. Howe asserts that the image of India presented by Anglo-Indian novelists is derived from a conservative and imperialist British view. This partisan view found its full expression in Kipling. He generated the myth of the empire for the consumption of those in England who had no close contact with India and for those in India who wanted an imaginative perception of the colony. This myth of the empire, a careful construct of the Kiplingesque tradition of the Defenders, gets eroded by Forster who, according to Howe, made his fiction a vehicle for his liberalism. Howe describes writers like Thompson who belong to the third category as Attackers because they
raise questions about the moral validity of the empire. Howe looks at the close interaction of imperialism and literature, trying to identify the causes and circumstances that inspired the British writers to write fiction about India. Since her work was published in 1949 historically she was in a position to examine closely the power structures of colonial India influencing the creative process. If Forster could produce A Passage to India that doubted the colonial establishment, Howe felt it was because he was a visitor and not a member of the ruling community in India. Howe's categories impose on the writer a strong political identity which tends to undervalue their aesthetic contribution.

The next critical piece to be written on Anglo-Indian fiction was by Allen Greenberger titled as The British Image of India: A Study in the Literature of Imperialism 1880-1960 (1969). Greenberger asserts that many of the authors of the Anglo-Indian literary tradition who cannot be acknowledged as serious, full-fledged writers, nevertheless reflect the general opinion of the particular class that ruled India. The image of India as presented by these authors had its effect not only on the British readers in
India but also on the British officers coming out to India, who often took the fictional stereotypes as reality, confirming the notion that the experience of literature can sometimes condition actual perception. Greenberger explains this situation thus:

It is events in England, and in the west in general, which determine the image held of India at any particular time. From this it follows that the images were not changed by the Indian reality. It is far more likely that the images have influenced the way in which the reality was seen. The changing images appear to have had little to do with development in India. 8

Greenberger divides the eighty odd years of colonial and post-colonial Anglo-Indian fiction into three periods: Era of Confidence (1880-1910), Era of Doubt (1910-1935) and Era of Melancholy (1935-1960) — which cover novels which show the difficult position of the colonial British who are isolated both from England and from India. Greenberger's claim that fiction determined the perception of the British about Indian reality implies that the British reading public relied more on imaginative writing for guidance than on actual happenings. This could mean again that literature was taken more seriously than real-life events. Greenberger does not fully validate this argument by illustrating clearly why the British reading public could not gather an objective view of India. By naming the last phase of

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imperial literature as "Era of Melancholy" Greenberger suggests that the general concern of the writers of this period was to sound the requiem of the empire. He denotes much less space to this section as compared to that of other periods. This could imply that very little significant writing was done in this period. Greenberger does not highlight sufficiently why Anglo-Indian fiction could not explore the new images and themes of Indo-British relationship after India's independence.

Benita Parry's book, *Delusions and Discoveries: Studies on India in the British Imagination: 1880-1930* (1972) focuses on Anglo-Indian narratives not in chronological order but in terms of "an ascending order in complexity of vision". Adhering to this conceptual framework Parry deals first with nineteenth century Anglo-Indian women novelists, like Mrs.F.E.F. Penny, Alice Perrin and Flora Annie Steel to show how these women distanced themselves from their subject and thus exposed their superficial understanding about India. Their writing, according to Parry, camouflaged their deep fear about India unsettling their personality. The next batch of Anglo-Indian writers, Edward J.Thompson, Rudyard Kipling, E.M.Forster are dealt with in separate
chapters. Parry stresses on how Thompson assimilated India into his art, a process that demanded not only an openness to adopt a new culture but also an assessment of his moral and political position. Kipling's art, Parry analyses, was precariously balanced between his emotional involvement with India and his ideological commitment to the British Raj. His narratives sometimes reveal the psychological strain of the white man who must remain aloof from his subjects in order to retain his hegemony. In discussing *A Passage to India* Parry focuses specifically on the metaphysical dimensions of the novel, rather than on Forster's portrayal of Anglo-Indian society. She argues that the novel transcends its topicality to probe into the fundamental issues of human existence. Benita Parry's perception of major twentieth century Anglo-Indian writers departs from the previous practice of grouping Thompson and Forster together in terms of their liberal attitudes, and of placing Kipling at the head of a tradition that glorifies the empire. By shifting her focus from these writers' attitudes to imperialism to their actual literary contribution, Parry evaluates Anglo-Indian fiction not primarily as an offshoot of imperialism but as serious imaginative work, albeit with a political background.
Stephen Hemenway's review of Anglo-Indian novels in *The Novel of India vol.1: The Anglo-Indian Novel* (1975) focuses chiefly on the eminent novelists generally considered representative of their times. Regarding *A Passage to India* as the chief landmark of Anglo-Indian fiction, he places other novelists into categories like pre-1924 and post-Forsterian. *A Passage to India* is seen as the great dividing line between imperialist and anti-imperialist writing. He does not place Thompson together with Forster but in a different category. George Orwell is clubbed together with Rumer Godden and John Masters. Instead of taking the writers' political ideology as a decisive factor, Hemenway studies the novels from the viewpoint of language and analyzes the readership that sustained these novels. He examines how the texture, and nuance of local languages are translated into English and how the audience determined the scope of these novels.

Shamsul Islam's *Chronicles of the Raj: A Study of Literary Reaction to the Imperial Idea Towards the End of the Raj* (1979) begins its assessment of Anglo-Indian literature with Kipling who has perpetuated the myth of the British raj through fiction, and thus fortified the concept
of British racial superiority. The other authors - Forster, Thompson, Orwell, Masters - studied in his book are, according to Islam, indebted to Kipling for they echo in their writings some of his values and ideas. Islam tries to prove this deep influence by showing that the political ideology of the later group of writers was not as liberal as is generally believed. Forster, Islam argues, was a conservative at heart who could not accept the idea of India's political independence. Islam substantiates his point thus:

... As late as 1945, when he (Forster) visited India for the last time, he refused to commit himself on the issue of Indian independence. In his essay "India Again" (1946) he records his impressions of his trip, and in a Kipling-like manner, he dismisses the Indian preoccupation with politics.

In a similar vein Islam demonstrates that even though Thompson opposes the prolonging of the empire, he is silent about complete independence for India. This shows a division of sympathies, and an inability to apply his liberalism to India's political crisis.

Orwell, Islam feels, was primarily a political and social thinker and commentator, and an artist later. Orwell, according to Islam, is not as clearly opposed to the empire as he is generally thought to be. Islam's opinion
about Masters is that he too suffers from a similar adherence to the imperial idea in a conservative fashion. Thus, all these four writers despite their veneer of liberalism, actually fall into a Kiplingesque category. The ambivalence, the mixed sympathies that Islam attributes to these writers was fairly common among many British officials who were serving in India towards the end of the empire. Islam, in determining these four writers' ideological indebtedness to Kipling does not render full justice to their creative output and distinguish their individual contributions.

Martin Green's approach in Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire (1980) highlights the basic conflict between the adventurer's dream of exploration and the propaganda about the hard-core bureaucratic establishment of the empire. He also explains that serious and committed writers felt inhibited by the colonial theme because of the aggression and exploitation associated with it. They turned instead to the courtship theme and the domestic novel because not only was this an ideologically neutral terrain, but also turned out to be a popular staple of their audience. Green explores the ramifications of the adventure tale and other
literary models which popularised the concept of the empire not only in the context of British imperialism in India but also of the colonial enterprise of other European nations. His analysis acquires a much wider significance because he traces the subtle psychological links between the adventurers like Clive, Napoleon, Cortez and the adventure writers who idealized such figures in literature. He implies that imperial literature came into existence as a corollary to the lives of these heroes and colonisers. He established his point further by pointing out that once the colonial period came to an end literature about the colonial period questioned the motives of conquest and imperial subjugation.

The fictional modes of the late 70's, which Green terms as the post-imperial and anti-imperialist age, acquire more complexity than the monodimensional anti-adventure novels written by Graham Greene and Evelyn Waugh. According to Green, some of the significant writers experimenting with the history of the colonial experience and its aftermath are Doris Lessing, Paul Scott and V.S. Naipaul.

In his next book, *The Doom of Empire* (1984) which in some ways forms a sequel to *Dreams of adventure*, Green
divides English literature into the product of "Imperial England" and "Ex-imperial England". He claims that Kipling has been a much more pervasive and powerful influence in English literature since 1918 than has been recognised. Despite Virginia Woolf's ideological position as anti-imperialist she borrows, according to, important novelistic material from Kipling. Lawrence's fiction, Green argues, can be studied as a retaliation against Kipling's fidelity to the cause of the empire. Even Waugh and Kingsley Amis try to defy and suppress the values of Kipling but these get revealed in their wish to turn their art public for general entertainment. Lawrence, Joyce and Lessing are exempted by Green from this category of writers who imbibed Kipling's influence. Green links Kipling with the writers in the mainstream British tradition. His credit lies in demonstrating something not acknowledged before: Anglo-Indian fiction and the mainstream British fiction are often interconnected. Green refers to the inner dilemma of an artist who respects his art, knows the scope of his talent but cannot rise above the subtle exhortions of the establishment. Martin Green argues that Kipling, despite his greatness as artist, could not avoid the influence of the strong imperialist sentiment of his time and glorified the empire.
Udayon Misra's work *The Raj in Fiction: A Study of Nineteenth Century British Attitudes Towards India* (1987) studies Anglo-Indian fiction spanning the period 1820-1870, as it reflects British reaction towards India. Misra asserts that during this period as the empire consolidated itself the Conservative British policy towards India was replaced by Liberal Utilitarian viewpoint which ran parallel with the Evangelical current. According to Misra, texts of early nineteenth century Anglo-Indian fiction are important not only as works of art but also as social documents.

William Brown Hockley's writings reflect the imperial viewpoint that reforms along western lines would only distance the Indian from British rule. Hockley therefore urged that the British should promote the cause of Indians without compromising on their imperial mission.

Misra names Philip meadows Taylor as undoubtedly the most important Anglo-Indian novelist of the pre-Kipling period. In his fiction can be seen consummate artistry as well as a clear absence of racial feelings and prejudices. Taylor was primarily interested, Misra points out, in exploring human relationships but his thoughts on race and culture do not receive a complex treatment.
W.D. Arnold's *Oakfield or Fellowship in the East* (1853) projects the spirit of mid-Victorian liberal thought, according to Misra. He explains that this novel explores the hero's crisis of faith and his total disillusionment with British bureaucracy in India. The value of the book lies in placing forth ideas such as those of cultural incompatibility and the white man's soulless commitment to duty in India.

Iltudus Prichard's *The Chronicles of Budgepore or Sketches of Life in Upper India* (1870), is, Misra claims, a fine satire on the Anglo-Indian bureaucracy and their Indian collaborators, whose combined opportunism to help maintain British rule in the country, is brought to light. Misra points out that Prichard was not prejudiced like Kipling and could expose the plight of the common man who had no access to the white bureaucrat.

D.C.R.A. Goonetilleke's survey of Anglo-Indian literature *Images of the Raj: South Asia in the Literature of Empire* (1988) begins with the inadequacies in the representation of South Asia in 18th century English fiction. The unique feature of his survey are his focusing of attention on two little-known Anglo-Indian novels of the
1850's and on Leonard Woolf's novels of Ceylon. The first two novels - William Arnold's *Oakfield or Fellowship in the East* (1853) and William Knighton's *Forest Life in Ceylon* (1858) - are not artistically remarkable, but are important as valuable exposure of Anglo-India in mid-Victorian times. Leonard Woolf is remarkable for choosing both indigenous setting and Sinhalese characters in his fictions. *Stories from the East* (1921) and *The Village in the Jungle* (1913). For the first time an European looks at the Asian reality exclusively through the minds of Asians without introducing white characters as chief narrators.

Apart from these chapters on unusual Anglo-Indian novelists Goonetilleke gives a broad survey highlighting figures like Kipling, George Orwell, E.M. Forster and Paul Scott. He defends Kipling's ideological position and its influence on his creativity.

But when we consider the work in which he (Kipling) contemplates relationships between British and Indians in the ordinary world of Anglo-India, we ought to grasp how extremely difficult it is for an Englishman to get beyond the mental habits of his people, whether he is based in England or in India. For this was the age of Joseph Chamberlain and Cecil Rhodes. 10

Goonetilleke does not attempt to categorise writers. He deals with Kipling, Orwell, Forster and Paul Scott
separately and chronologically while implying simultaneously that imperialism as a concept has undergone some amount of transformation over the years. Therefore this concept should be judged in the context of specific time-periods and not as a fixed ideology. Hence, he argues that liberalism in writers in the 1950's is more a result of the changing political atmosphere and less of their personally acquired convictions.

Dilip Chakravorty's book *A Passage to the Orient* (1988) attempts an assessment of the works of Kipling, Conrad, Forster, Myers, Maugham and George Orwell as documents rather than as works of art. Chakravorty claims that these novelists' works on India are 'novels of ideas', which ought to be judged in terms of the attitudes reflected towards British imperialism by their authors.

Focusing on *Kim*, Chakravorty comments that Kim at the end of the novel becomes a bridge between two aspects of Kipling's personality - his love for India and her people and his allegiance to the British empire. The background of Conrad's Malayan novels is not the immediate colonial world but the universe and the vast, unknown *Nature*. According to him the final message that emerges from Conrad's fiction is
that man's character is his real destiny. Chakravorty compares *Howard's End* with *A Passage to India* at length, emphasizing their continuity. The two symbols used in the first novel - the wise elderly woman represented by Mrs. Wilcox and the basic emptiness in reality - recur also in *A Passage to India*. Mrs. Moore becomes the repository of mystic wisdom in *A Passage to India* and the 'boum' in the Marabar Caves indicates the meaninglessness of reality.

Chakravorty tries to revive an interest in L.H. Myer's historical tetralogy *The Near and the Far* which suffered from neglect both by readers and by critics.

Chakravorty's assertion that these works of Anglo-Indian fiction are documentaries rather than works of art automatically reduces not only the range of these works but also curtails the critic's capacity to explore their significance. By analyzing these literary works as documents, Chakravorty limits his own scope and fails to contribute any new perception to the ongoing discourse on Anglo-Indian fiction.

fiction into three categories 'explicit imperialism' represented by Kipling, 'imperialism in doubt' dominated by Forster and 'Demise of imperialism' upheld by Paul Scott. Modelled on the categories provided by Howe and Greenberger, the distinction of Bose's book lies in his focusing on Paul Scott as one of the finest authors who rendered into fiction the final phase of Indo-British history. Bose analyzes Kipling's works in terms of their literary quality and as they reflect the author's attitudes towards Indians. Kipling insisted that western kind of education was a privilege that ought to be granted to only those sections of Indians who were completely devoted to the British.

Bose argues that Forster's stance is not really anti-imperial but one of doubt. The author corroborates his argument with examples from A Passage to India. He states that this attitude of Forster's could imply his tilt towards favouring the extension of British rule in India, but with the condition that it should not be based on authoritarianism, but rather on liberal and friendly relations.
Bose claims to analyse *The Raj Quartet* in terms of its historical dimensions and literary value. He focuses chiefly on the characters of the white officials and their opinions about the Indian nationalist struggle. Indian characters like M.A. Kasim and Hari Kumar are analysed by Bose more as victims of circumstances rather than as individuals struggling against their fate. His analysis of *The Raj Quartet* does not focus properly on the intricate problem of individuals confronting their destiny, bereft of the privileges of their social position or racial identity.

The pattern of criticism that Howe set, of judging Anglo-Indian literature chiefly from the perspective of the ideology that shaped it, is adopted by many of the later critics. Martin Green, Greenberger, Shamsul Islam, Hemenway, Bose, Chakravorty look at colonial literature primarily as an offshoot of the imperial regime, with varying success. By accepting literature as subsidiary to the political movement that sustained it, these critics assume that the literary texts are heavily imprinted by the ideology of their authors. This assumption has its validity, but in my opinion, it has the danger of treating literature merely as historical or sociological data. It is
true that almost all these novels have an ideological base - overt or implicit - but when the critic focuses on this particular aspect exclusively he tends to miss the creative principle involved in the text.

Goonetilleke's views differ from this group as he tries to show that imperialism as an ideology transformed itself significantly over a whole century. Goonetilleke's conceptual approach makes him defend Kipling's art, present Forster as a doubter rather than as an attacker and assess Paul Scott's liberal attitudes as indicator of a changed ethos. Benita Parry's work takes a diametrically different position from these critics because she attempts at reading Anglo-Indian novels as literary texts rather than as documentary records of imperial rule. In some ways her study is a landmark.

Martin Green's contribution is also remarkable because he places colonial writing in a much broader literary canvas than the other critics. Greenberger's work has been quite influential, but it would have been even more comprehensive if he had not been so cursory about the post-colonial age. Goonetilleke adopts a broad conceptual framework that incorporates at its two extremes Kipling and Paul Scott.
Howe, Hemenway and Islam, despite the limitations of their perspective, have occasional insights about the correlations between literary models and power structures. Researching into a lesser-known area of Anglo-Indian fiction, Misra points out how the novels of Taylor, Arnold and Prichard, despite the inherent political structures are significant works of art. Bose and Chakravorty have similar aims but fail to capture the nuances of this nexus between politics and aesthetics.

SECTION 4: THE POST-COLONIAL SITUATION

The critical studies mentioned in the earlier section deal mainly with British fiction about colonial India written during that period or afterwards. But the end of the empire did not necessarily mean a total severance of connection between the two countries. The post-colonial period witnesses a continuation of the trade and diplomatic links, pursuit of academic and cultural programmes. These activities, to some extent, manifest the kind of transformation that is taking place in our attitudes towards our shared past. These attitudes are reflected in Anglo-Indian literature written after 1947. Novels continue to be written that focus on Indo-British relationship of the
post-colonial era at different levels of complexity, and explore personal relationships, cultural and interaction and historical readjustments.

In the post-colonial age, Paul Scott, Ruskin Khabvala, Rumer Godden, have contributed significantly to Anglo-Indian literature. Among the lesser known writers G. Hanley, Deborah Moggach, Valerie Anand, Hugh Atkinson, Jon Thurley used as the subject-matter of one or two of their novels, the situation of the westerners in post-colonial India.

Nostalgia for the past, confusion about the turbulent present are worked out in novels like The Household Gods (1987) by Jon Thurley, Staying On (1978) by Paul Scott, The Journey Homeward (1961) and Noble Descents (1982) by Gerald Hanley. The British characters, mostly elderly and leading marginalized existence, find themselves exiled in India. They long for the lost glory of the colonial days as they see the Indian elite replicating the power hierarchy of British rulers.

Jhabvala's novels - Heat and Dust (1976), A Backward Place (1965), Three Continents (1987), A New Dominion (1972), Esmond in India (1958) - produce certain western
stereotypes who come to post-colonial India to seek solace from turbulent interpersonal relationships or to pursue religion as an alternative to their western culture. At a lesser scale, Deborah Moggach, Valerie Anand, Hugh Atkinson, in their novels Hot Water Man (1982), To A Native Shore (1984), and The Pink and the Brown (1957) respectively, write about young British people in India who find themselves confronting a reality quite different from the image they had constructed about this country.

Although India may shatter the dreams of those who had hoped to find a utopia yet to the discerning fictional character:

What emerges in this country is not necessarily jumbled up facts and images but an order of reality that awaits reflection. Certain conscientious British characters in fiction try to see India objectively in terms of historical and political significance and its previous connections with Britain. These characters attempt to understand the post-colonial situation in terms of the psychological impact it has or has not been able to create in the minds of the British or the Indians. In A Division of the Spoils (1972) by Paul Scott, an aspiring history scholar named Guy Perron,
decides to witness and record the birth of modern India. Janette Hospital, a Canadian writer, presents a fictional sociologist David in *The Ivory Swing* (1988) who in his sociological study of Kerala analyzes the way India is impervious to the onslaught of time. India incorporates into herself the old and the new, Marxism and mythology, morality and primeval passions.

There is evidently a greater diversity of themes and fictional modes in the post-colonial age. Social and historical circumstances have changed, and the possibilities of how reality can be represented in novels have also expanded considerably. As far as Anglo-Indian novels are considered, the nature of the readership has also altered, and it is no longer confined to the British readers in England.

SECTION 5: FORM AND FOCUS OF THE THESIS

In this thesis I would like to examine whether the patterns and perspectives of colonial texts influence the novels written subsequently. The examples will be taken from novels written by British novelists that are set in India between 1939 and 1989. The chapters will be thematically
arranged to delve into different aspects of the post-colonial encounter between two races and two cultures.

This introductory chapter has attempted (i) a brief overview of how India has figured in British literary imagination in the past and (ii) a summary of how critics have analysed and classified these literary texts. Chapter II entitled "Passage to India after A Passage to India" will depict how this particular novel by E.M. Forster becomes a paradigm for some subsequent novels dealing with Indo-British relationships. A Passage to India has several themes and motifs interlinked in such a complex manner that singling out elements will prove reductive. Nevertheless there is a metaphor of power encased in the Aziz-Adela conflict, complicated by Ronny Heaslop who epitomizes the racial arrogance of the white community. Some of the subsequent novels use this metaphor of power as a point of departure, differing radically in their depictions of racial and gender hierarchy. The social, political and metaphysical dimensions of the novel, the tropes of sexual assault and courtroom trial, and the motifs of the cave and the echo reverberate through the later novels in different and indirect ways. The final message of A Passage to India 'no, not yet' and 'No, not there' seems to have been
overtaken by time. Forster's inheritors can depict personal relationships between the British and the Indians as a frequently attainable though not easy goal.

While the second chapter deals with the temporary and transient relationship between men and women of differing races, the third chapter entitled "Marriage Across Boundaries" will analyse Indo-British marriages as represented in post-colonial fiction. The myth of white superiority may not be an insurmountable barrier for these couples, but their relationships are fraught with other kinds of tension. Some of the common motifs are the bewilderment of the partners about their cultural identity and the difference in the basic assumptions that guide their daily action, sometimes leading to psychological crisis.

The fourth chapter "Varieties of Exile" will analyse the novels which either centrally or peripherally deal with the English men or women who stayed on in independent India. These sad exiles who find themselves historically dislocated both in India and Britain, can be seen as victims of history. After investing their youth and service in India they reap no substantial harvest; they slowly turn into relics of a colonial past whose memories and reflections
become raw material for the chroniclers of the British empire.

The fifth chapter "The Historical novel" focuses on the use of such a chronicler as a fictional character. Several novelists have deployed the double-edged device of using a historian as a character in novels that themselves attempt to reconstruct contemporary history. The historian in the novel who is studying India sometimes posits an alternative narrative different from the one that the novelist is unfolding. This double focus can become a strategy for handling diverse interpretations of historical events simultaneously. Sometimes the fictional historian's limited understanding of the situation is counterpointed by the author's position of vantage. The novel as a genre that can imbue the movement of history with subjective and individual perceptions offers a range of possibilities whereby the figure of the historian can be put to ironic use.

The sixth chapter "The Missionaries and the Questers" will focus on the novels depicting missionaries' lives in India. It is surprising how often these novels deal also with madness, neurosis and even suicide, indicating perhaps
the marginal status of the British missionaries both in Indian as well as British communities. The missionaries have always had a hard time in India because they were never protected by the government machinery. Some of the post-colonial novels examine the final phases of the lives of these missionaries only in order to highlight the privations and loneliness they have had to suffer. Although very different from the missionaries in their aims, attitudes and strength of character, another group of westerners figure in post-colonial fiction as peripheral and lonely. They are the seekers of spiritual solace, the hippies, the flower children and the non-conformist drop-outs from Europe and America. The missionary assumption of the civilizing and salvaging function of Christianity gets reversed in this counter-movement in which the religion of India is seen to contain the answer to the discontent and restlessness of the west. Both groups - the Christian missionaries and the seekers of Hindu wisdom as portrayed in fiction ought to be tranquil and at peace with themselves, but a close look reveals their disoriented, even disintegrating lives. However, radically different and diachronically disparate these two groups may be, at least in fiction they demonstrate similar predicaments of loneliness.
What position do these novels occupy in this interlocking cultural spheres of Britain and India? Despite the proliferation of themes is there a qualitative difference in these texts when compared to their predecessors? Are there residual feelings of race hostility that still complicate human relationships in these novels, or is it the cultural problem of grappling with 'the Other'? In capturing the mood of the recent past do these writers rewrite history to foreground certain events? This thesis will attempt to answer some of these questions in the different contexts and perspectives of the six chapters that deal with different thematic issues.

Our link with Britain extends beyond a shared past into a present, filled with trade and political links, cultural communications, that requires a definition. The British image of India is no longer patterns of dominance, but of withdrawal and resilience, reaction and scrutiny. The process of decolonization in contemporary history is still continuing and gets reflected in the fiction to be analyzed here.