Chapter Five

Imperialism, Anglo India and the Double Vision

Sara Jeannette Duncan was a colonial in Canada, but a colonizer in India. She was a believer in Anglo-Saxon superiority. Her Indian writings - rather it will be more appropriate to term them as Anglo-Indian writings - are full of stereotypes and cliches, as discussed by Bhabha, where the `other' is systematically looked down upon. These writings typify the economy of Manichean Allegory. Was she, then, a typical colonial? Edward Said in Orientalism (1978) points out that the Orient is a European creation and Orientalism represents a whole network of interests. A white man comes up against the Orient as a white man first and only secondly as an individual. When such people become writers, they produce mere representation, not the truth. Said calls it a `textual attitude', which means reality as visualized from a bookish angle. The white man looked at everything oriental from preconceived notions. Thus projections override the truth and the resultant discourse perpetrates the myth of the superior/inferior. Every European in what he could say about the Orient is, according to Said, a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric.

Duncan was a Canadian, a colonial. Even though she was white, she was not British. One would expect the writer who stood for Canadian independence against both the American and the British economic and cultural onslaught; the writer who championed the cause of a separate Canadian entity
and identity, to stand by other colonized even if she couldn't exactly come to their rescue. However, the way she capitulated before the institution of British imperialism is interesting. It is true that in the on-going power struggle between the individual writers and the institutions, the institutions ultimately prevail. However, Forster, Orwell and Conrad are writers who can be considered the iconoclasts who refused to succumb to the pressure of imperialist forces. They had the capacity to withstand this onslaught and question the imperialist policy.

Margaret Laurence, like Duncan, is another Canadian woman novelist who left Canada temporarily to live in British colonies - Ghana and Somaliland in Africa. She had a first hand experience of colonial society and her African experience cast a lasting impact on her psyche. But, unlike Duncan, Laurence takes an anti-colonial stance. In her travelogue *The Prophet's Camel Bell* (1963), she states that when she was addressed Memsahib she almost recoiled: "I could not face the prospect of being called "Memsahib", a word which seemed to have connotations of white man's burden" (15). This reaction is just the opposite of what Duncan feels and describes in her travelogue *A Social Departure* (1891). Duncan on her first visit to India gladly accepts this sobriquet, which according to her signifies dignity and honour. On her arrival in India, Duncan writes: "We had arrived at the dignity of Memsahibs. We felt this dignity the moment we walked across the gangway and stepped upon India - an odd slight conscious uplifting of the head and decision of the foot - the first touch of Anglo-Indianism" (S.D.: 244).
The use of this expression "memsahib" makes the difference in the attitude, approach and psyche of these two writers amply clear. While Laurence feels embarrassed, Duncan feels uplifted. Further, the almost opposite reaction of the two throws light on the calibre and timber of the two writers. It is her sensitivity as revealed in this instance, that has made Laurence one of the greatest Canadian writers, whereas Duncan's thoughtless reaction shows that she is just a run-of-the-mill Anglo-Indian Writer. Laurence's categorical refusal to surrender to the established imperial or colonial discourse and her sensitivity for the colonized puts her on par with writers like Forster, Orwell and Conrad; whereas Duncan, due to the lack of above qualities, flounders almost in oblivion and is considered as a minor writer of popular Anglo-Indian fiction.


Laurence uses Africa to understand the intricacies of the colonial situation. She successfully operates on two polarities and acquires a double consciousness. To change the metaphor, she experiences what Griffiths in his perceptive book on African and West Indian writing calls 'a double exile.' A colonial writer, he asserts, is 'exiled culturally from the sources and traditions of English as used in England' and 'linguistically from the landscape and people' he writes about (193).
A similar situation was faced by Duncan. In India, she was exiled both culturally and linguistically from England and its people. This exile in the case of Laurence has proved a stimulant rather than a disability says Juneja, as Laurence maintains a detachment from her time and place: "Without destroying her commitment to special values of both cultures, she thus not only escapes the poverty of a single focus or a mono-chrome lens, but brings freshness to her vision of human freedom" (193).

The double consciousness enabled Laurence to try and coalesce the two cultures to find fine human values in both the cultures. Duncan, on the contrary, dwells on the difference between the two, and fails to strike the requisite balance which would have helped in an objective evaluation of the differing cultures.

Juneja ends his essay by quoting Laurence, who, in spite of reflecting an anti-colonial consciousness in several of her African stories, feels that her African characters are not as authentic as she once believed them to be. Laurence confesses in her 1969 interview: "In the end, I was able to understand the Europeans best... even though my sympathy with colonial Europeans was certainly minimal or even non-existent" (Rpt. in Laurence 1983:82). This statement highlights the inability of an author to bridge the chasm between two cultures in spite of the best of intentions. Even Forster in A passage to India comes to a similar conclusion that social and cultural differences are extremely difficult to bridge. Both Laurence and Forster come to this conclusion after an authentic, unbiased and objective analysis of human dilemma in such a situation. But when the attitude is unsympathetic and the outlook is dependent on the
economy of manichean allegory, the analysis of such writers is not only unauthentic, it is also suspect. Duncan is one such writer.

Edward Said, in *Orientalism* (1978), presents an excellent critique of the love-hate relationship between Europe and the Orient. Said defines orientalism as a style of thought based essentially on the distinctions between the Orient and the Occident. A large number of writers have accepted this basic difference as a starting point of their writing. Their relationship with the Orient, thus, is a relationship of power and domination. The world these writers create is governed by a battery of desires, repressions, investments and projections.

Said argues that no writer can remain unaffected by social and cultural beliefs prevalent in the society of which he is a member. When such writers describe and interpret the Orient for the benefit of the West, they remain 'outside the Orient'. This exteriority produces representation, not truth. Their fidelity has to be to the established code, to the prevailing discourse, which is based upon institutions, tradition, conventions and agreed upon codes of understanding for their effect, and not upon the reality of the Orient. Such representation, adds Said, creates a stereotypical reality based on generalization and a few unshakable beliefs. The gap between the projection and the reality is stunning. The stranglehold of such a discourse over writers is all powerful. The pressures built up by the growing tradition of orientalism made writers judge things on the basis of an institutionalized, existing or ongoing field of knowledge; and their actual observations and spontaneous thought processes
took a back seat. What the writer exercises is his memory, soul and heart more than his eyes, mind or spirit (Said 1978: 178).

When Duncan came to India, a powerful colonial discourse was already in existence. She easily succumbed to the pressures of such a discourse which adversely affected her art. From being a balanced, objective and realistic writer of the Canadian scene, she became a biased, subjective and stereotypical Anglo-Indian writer. Her aesthetic honesty gave way to pre-conceived notions. The result was that whereas her two Canadian novels, The Imperialist and Cousin Cinderella, are considered masterpieces in craftsmanship, clarity of observation and objectivity of delineation (as discussed in the previous chapter), her Anglo-Indian novels are a mixture of stereotype and melodrama. Confusion in plot construction and inconsistency in characterization replaces vision and imagination.

Nineteenth century imperialism is the main theme of Duncan's writings about India. In earlier novels like The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib, Vernon's Aunt and The Story of Sonny Sahib, the theme appears to remain in the background. Duncan's fullest treatment of imperialism in the Indian context appears in three later novels - His Honor and a Lady, Set in Authority and The Burnt Offering.

Duncan's first book A Social Departure: How Orthodocia and I went Round the World by Ourselves (1890), a travelogue, is a compilation of her articles she sent to Montreal Star, in the course of her journey. A single woman, daring and adventuresome, who leaves her home to travel in search of new experiences is a theme which Duncan explores in nine of her novels.
including *A Social Departure*. In this travelogue, Duncan can be viewed as a wide-eyed tourist, curious about new and unusual experiences and describing them with fun and humour. Even in this innocent book, subtle glimpses of Duncan's sense of racial superiority and her contempt for the 'other' are revealed. It is clear that these feelings lay dormant in her sub-conscious, which explode later on in her Anglo-Indian novels. Duncan was extremely happy in Japan, full of admiration for the country and its people. The quaint Japanese customs proved to be a source of much delight for both the ladies. Although India fascinated and dazzled her, yet one can find subtle hints in the text to prove that even before she reached India, she had a racial bias and an inbuilt prejudice against the coloured people. She was happy in Japan, explains Fowler, because Japan satisfied her highly developed aesthetic sense, her hunger for beauty of colour and form, as she had a visual bias (1985:159). "Long happy days"; "the acutest joy was centered in the buying of a teapot, and all the dainty fantastic life about us pressed sharp upon our senses" (S.D.:108). The Japanese are referred to as equals: "Japanese Gentlemen"(68), "The grounds were full of Japanese ladies or gentlemen", "dignified old Japanese"(98). The Japanese are shown due regard, for instance: a little old woman, all in soft brown and silver gray silk, with her hair in wide, shiny black cushions radiating twenty wonderful hairpins"(99). All the colours of her dress are described, but the colour of her skin is not mentioned.

When they reach Ceylon, they behave like typical colonials to show a racial bias even in the first description: "He was a short, brown heathen, of the
Cingalese variety, with a round, shining countenance, radiating much guile"(202). The two expressions "heathen" and "guile" are thrown in almost nonchalantly, even as she looks at the man for the first time. Another term that is used indiscriminately by Duncan is "native". The term is not used for the Japanese even once; but in Chapter XXIII, it is used twenty seven times in ten pages. `Native' and `heathen' are derogatory expressions in colonial discourse, which Duncan uses without reason.

The moment she reaches India, she feels uplifted as she attains the status and dignity of a memsahib, speaking their stereotypical language: "Guileful Hindoo" and his "devious ways". Add to it the terms "native", "heathen", "black" and "brown", and one finds Duncan already familiar with the Anglo-Indian jargon. The attitude she shows towards Indians is very casual. Tausky writes that the condescension is evident wherever Indians are described in contrast to Duncan's admiring view of the Japanese among whom she lived on terms of greater equality. The Indians are to be respected to the degree that they approach the English ideal(1980:183). Duncan's anti - India bias is exposed in an interesting incident. Travelling through Calcutta, Orthodocia feels very sorry for the brown Bengali with his pathetic eyes and delicate features. "'He has no country' she said.' We have robbed him of his holiest emotion - patriotism. He cannot know any joy in living with our foot upon his neck'. Where upon I responded disdainfully of the brown Bengali's holiest emotion, and there came to be strained relations between Orthodocia and me"(S.D.:246). Duncan's journey from Canada to India symbolizes a journey from the margin to the centre of the Empire; she is a Canadian wanting desperately to come into
reckoning by trying to become as British as possible. Hence she is not willing to accept any criticism of the British even from a Britisher.

This was Duncan's first trip to India; she didn't know much about the country. Yet her criticism of Indians and India suggest that she was a victim of pre-conceived notions about India and was trying to fit in the country within the established canon. Her use of the term 'barbaric' is a case in point. Here are two examples of her description of garments worn by Indians: "Certain persons whom we took to be Rajahs wore a strange mixture of barbaric and British in their garment"(S.D.:271); and "Her single scanty garment under all this was of some barbaric embroidered stuff, chiefly gold and green"(286). Anything that is traditionally Indian or non-British automatically becomes 'barbaric'.

Once out of India, and in Egypt, a definite change is discernible in Duncan's attitude which is reflected in her style and language. The "natives" once again become "people", even "gentlemen", "Egyptians"; and other nationals are distinguished by their nationality. The women become "ladies of Cairo" and there is "a dainty young lady". The picturesque description of colours which invades her writing about India is missing in the Cairo episode, as are missing the terms 'brown', 'black', 'native', 'heathen' and barbarians'. Claudia Hill in her M.A. Dissertation(1973) points out that Duncan admitted in her journalism that the irony of her comments on various foreign cultures she encountered might be the result of the enormous contrast between her expectations and the reality of her experiences. (189). Hill adds: "Pride of race prejudiced her impressions constantly.... In her later novels, written after she
had left Canada to live in India with her English husband, this racial pride continued to be evident and was the most obvious expression of her imperialistic ideals"(190).

Duncan left Canada and migrated to India where, in December 1890, she married Everard Cotes, Deputy Superintendent of the British Museum and settled down to live in Calcutta. She did not go back to Canada, except for short visits.

The literary migrants who live away from their roots and culture develop a distinct sensibility. The impact of the migration and the resultant cultural shock usually colour their writing with nostalgia and lament which revolve round their mother country. Sara Jeannette Duncan seems to be a rare case of a Canadian who came to British India and was transformed into an Anglo-Indian, in spirit and sensibility.

Duncan was a product of two cultures: Canadian, in which she was born and brought up, and Anglo-Indian, in which she spent the best part of her writing career. She wrote in two genres; one is termed as the International Novel, which was popularized by Henry James, and deals with the American-European connection, in other words the old-world new-world juxtaposition. The second is the Anglo-Indian genre, which covers the writings of the Britishers who lived in India during the Raj. Due to her migration to India, Duncan was exposed to two very different cultures, but this did not coalesce into a synthesis of experience. Rather, the two cultures became two poles of Duncan's writings. Carole Gerson, writing a review of Duncan's volume of short fiction entitled Pool in the Desert(1985), comments: "In comparison to
India, the Elgin of *The Imperialist* is a fertile pond, characterized by social flexibility and a vision of the future, while in relation to Canada, Anglo-India is an arid, stifling desert*(104).* Gerson further says that the volume would apprise the readers of *The Imperialist* to a sense of breadth of the experience and vision of its author. Duncan's Canada vibrates with youthful vigour and promises; it is also naive and innocent; India, on the other hand, is sterile and decadent, incapable of projecting any positive values.

Misao Dean also notices this dichotomy. In her article "The struggle for the Ideal: Political change in Sara Jeannette Duncan's novels"*(1984)*, she observes that in *The Imperialist* and *The Burnt Offering*, Duncan dramatizes the process of social change in Canada and India as the two nations struggle to define independent national characters. For Duncan, Canada emerges as a model of social development, while India still struggles to define its future*(93-94)*.

The impact of immigration brought about a perceptible change in Duncan's vision. The consequence of living under these two cultures was the emergence of a "Double Vision" in Duncan's writings. This double vision can be observed in her depiction of Canadian and Indian societies, as also in the imperialism she practised and projected.

Nowhere is Duncan's view of Canada's place in the Atlantic triangle projected more forcefully than in *The Imperialist* *(1904).* As already discussed in the previous chapter, Duncan explores the nature of Canadian society through
an authentic, objective and sympathetic delineation of the town of Elgin which symbolizes English speaking Canada.

*The Simple Adventures of A Memsahib* (1893) documents Duncan's early personal experiences when she had come to India as a bride. The novel is very close to being Duncan's autobiography. In an interview she gave to G.B. Burgin (*Idler*: 1895), Duncan admitted that it was her house, her garden and her neighbours she had described in the book. The two female characters in the novel Mrs. Browne, the young British bride just arrived in India, and Mrs. Macintyre, the mature narrator, are two aspects of Duncan herself. Mrs. Browne's early experience, her wedding, her attempts to come to terms with the strange and rigid Anglo-Indian society are Duncan's own experiences. Mrs. Macintyre, the mature narrator, watches how Mrs. Browne transforms to become a memsahib. The novel is a sharp criticism of the life-style of Anglo-Indians, their hypocrisy and snobbery, parochialism and dullness (Fowler 1985:210). Frank Birbalsingh, in his essay "Sara Jeannette Duncan's Indian fiction" (1977), comments: "The author seems less concerned with analyzing the actual-psychological and intellectual-effect of India upon her heroine than with providing factual information about routine, everyday, aspects of Anglo-Indian society" (71).

*The Memsahib* is set in Calcutta, as *The Imperialist* was set in Elgin. We find Duncan's consciousness vertically divided in the description of these two places. Elgin is a happy place where people are debating the imperial question. Elgin shows a rare degree of maturity, foresight and confidence in its independent judgment, while Calcutta is a hell-hole, where the existence, the
very survival of the Anglo-Indian is a big question. "This country isn't fit for a
catholic to live in"(298); India is a "land of regrets"(306); these two sample
observations in The Memsahib show not only Duncan's but the average Anglo-
Indian's feelings about India.

In The Imperialist, Duncan belonged to a 'colonized' society, while in
The Memsahib her sensibility is inverted to act as a 'colonizer' here. The hope
that her belonging to a colonized society might make her empathize with India
does not materialize. Her observations, reactions and descriptions mark her to
be a mere Anglo-Indian.

Dennis Kincaid(1973), a social historian, has observed that India had a
curious effect on the Britishers or the Europeans - it either attracted or repelled
them. Duncan, on her first visit to India, was overwhelmed and excited by the
exotic India. However, as she settled down in India, her reaction and
observations became typically Anglo-Indian. In India, the Whites become
immediately conscious of their superiority, that they were the members of a
dominant race. England's prestige was great and had to remain so if it was to
continue to claim respect and obedience from the natives. This could be
achieved by maintaining certain distance from the Indians; thus Indians become
second class citizens in their own country. The opening of the Suez Canal in
1869 drastically reduced travelling time between India and England. This
resulted in British women coming to India in large members, and the era of the
memsahibs began. One major consequence of the emergence of the memsahib
on the Indian scene was a new barrier between the Sahibs and the Indians. The
lack of sensitivity and objectivity while delineating Indians that one encounters in the novel places Duncan firmly in the category of the memsahibs.

The Brownes did not have much social intercourse with the Indians and Helen's only link with the natives was through her servants. To her, native servants are all cheats, especially the Bawarchi. It is so convenient to use generalizations and cliches to describe Indians that there is no further need of any real analysis.

The description of the Browne's Syce and the Pony, though ironic makes one wonder at Duncan's lack of consideration for the Indians:

The same roof sheltered both of these creatures of service [The Syce and the Pony], a thatched one; but between them a primitive partition went half way up. On one side of this the pony was tethered and enjoyed the luxuries of his dependence, on the other the syce lived in freedom, but did not fare so well. The Pony's expenses were quite five times as heavy. His food cost more, his clothes cost more, his medical attendance cost more, to say nothing of his requiring a valet. He was much the more valuable animal of the two, though the other is popularly believed in England to have a soul. [emphasis added]

The callous indifference shown towards the Syce, a human being, is symptomatic of Duncan's attitude towards Indians who are less valuable than the animals owned by the British masters. Between the two "animals" - the Indian and the pony - the latter is better than the former. This highly prejudiced view treating human beings worse than animals dehumanized Duncan, the typical
colonial. Margaret Laurence, on the contrary, accepts colonialism as an opportunity to understand the human predicament. Unlike Duncan, she tried to understand the predicament of the Africans. She looked at them as human beings. Duncan, however, plays the role of a colonizer to the hilt. The natives for her are savages, 'things' or possessions. All references to them are derogatory.

In this novel, Duncan is more obsessed with the British and the Anglo-Indians rather than with the Indians. The first two chapters are set in England and the picture that emerges of the British women is hardly complementary. One gets a Jane Austenian kind of a glimpse of the British women's social life and attitudes. They are shown to be naive, ignorant and frivolous. Still, when compared to the Indian characters, they are portrayed as far superior and more intelligent.

However, Duncan is sarcastic about the rigid social life the Britishers had adopted in India. As long as there is no comparison between the Indians and the British, Duncan can afford to be critical of the latter. The Anglo-Indian social structure was based on hierarchy - first of money and then of position. When people don't call on the new bride Helen, her husband points out that Calcutta society bows to five hundred a month (that is his salary) but it doesn't hurry about calling. There are many people with superior claims - fifteen hundred, three thousand a month. Mr. Browne explains:

The valuation of people is done by the Government. Most people arrive here invoiced at so much... they are always kept carefully
ticketed and published, and Calcutta accepts or rejects them, religiously and gracefully, at their market rates. It's rather an uninteresting social basis—especially from our point of view—but it has the advantage of simplicity. You have a solemn official right to expect exactly what you can pay for (Memsahib: 106).

Anglo-India is a totally mercenary society and Duncan suggests ironically that it simplifies living and removes complexities about social expectations and obligations. To a caste-conscious India, the class conscious Anglo-India makes a precise parallel. As the Hindu society was divided along caste lines—Brahmin, Kshatriya, Vaisha, and Shudra, the Anglo-Indian society was similarly divided. Fowler explains:

Civil servants and administrators were Brahmins, sub divided into the Covenanted Ones, the Judges, Commissioners, Collectors, who got 'three hundred a year dead or alive' for their salary was paid to their widows, and the uncovenanted Ones, whose business was with education, science, engineering, and whose pension ceased when they died. The British Army came next corresponding to the Hindu warrior caste [Kshtriyas]. The merchant [Vaishas] caste included plantation owners, businessmen and European workmen. The lowest caste of Anglo-Indian society were the Eurasians (1985: 198).

Compared to the Anglo-Indian life-style at the turn of the Nineteenth century, the Hindu caste system makes more sense, as it is not based on the narrow considerations of money. The stagnation of Anglo-Indian life is aptly

205
described by Duncan. The British social whirl, "the current that changes every year and yet is always the same of English life in India. The old, old ambitions, the stereotyped political aims, the worn competitions, the social appraisements" (*Memsahib*: 129) - everything being done repeatedly ad nauseam!

It is a sad commentary on the directionless and purposeless existence of the British in India. Referring to the sad reality behind the glittering facade of Anglo-India, the narrator comments, "if only the glamour of India left people with eyes to see" (129). The suffering, the pangs, the sacrifice, the isolation, is all brought out.

The Anglo-Indian society had become very cynical about its position in India, which was made more vulnerable when the British perception of India in England differed from the Anglo-Indian perception of the Indian reality. The Anglo-Indians were gripped by a sense of insecurity; they felt trapped - they neither belonged to England nor to India. They had become so paranoid about their existence that any criticism of their functioning would force them to close ranks and present a passionate defence of their actions and attitudes. Duncan, very quickly accepted this view.

Duncan’s attitude towards Raj is already explained in her first Indian work *The Memsahib*. Though she satirizes the hypocrisy and snobbery of the social pretensions of the Anglo-Indian community, she however believes in the civilizing mission of the Anglo-Saxon race. While explaining Duncan’s attitude, Woodcock writes that besides being critical of the rigid social structures of the Anglo-Indian community, she disliked the Bengali ‘baboos’ as they had received
partial education in the English manners and belonged to neither the new Western
nor the traditional Indian culture. For her, Indian princes are fit material for
comedy; and when she portrays an Indian character convincingly and in depth,
he usually turns out to be something of a villain. An example of this type is
Ganendra Thakore in *The Burnt Offering*. Woodcock further adds that almost
everything that Duncan wrote about India spoke well of those Anglo-Indian
idealists who saw themselves as the carriers of the White man's burden. They
offered the Indians, despite their ungrateful opposition, the way to a more

Just how touchy were the Anglo-Indians about any interference from
Britain in their affairs is characterized in Duncan's portrait of the "Globe
trotter" British M.P., Mr. Batcham. "It was native India that he came to see and
report upon" (*Memsahib:* 172). Duncan plays upon the amount of ignorance that
the usual globe trotting M.Ps. show about India. She is very ironic about his
concern for the Indians, paints him as a silly nincompoop who has no business
to question the functioning of the Anglo-Indian administration. Mr. Batcham is
presented before us as an example of those ignorant Britishers who come to
India with fixated, stereotypical notions, and who exemplify what Edward Said
calls the 'textual attitude', i.e. reality as visualized from a bookish angle. The
Anglo-Indians hated such interfering lot as they wielded enough power in
England to alter the rules and laws which could make life more difficult for the
Anglo-Indians. Batcham becomes a prototype for another Globe trotter, Vulcan
Mills M.P., whom Duncan portrays similarly in her last Anglo-Indian novel,
*The Burnt Offering*. Like Mills, Batcham is all for the freedom of the Press. She
accuses Batcham of succumbing to the lies told by Indians. He and his ilk are responsible for encouraging disaffection and sedition. They embarrass the Government of India by her Majesty's loyal opposition. Duncan is very touchy about the criticism of the British administration. She believes that the British in India could do no wrong. This is not a 'balanced' approach, for which she has been praised because of the portrayal of a balanced picture of Elgin society in *The Imperialist*. Her vision, however, gets distorted in India.

Mr. Batcham is appalled at the inhuman working conditions in the factories, long working hours, meagre salary, and no legal protection in the absence of a factory act. The workers get only eight annas a day, a pittance as compared to what the British workers get. Duncan very sarcastically comments: "His business was with the poor, the down trodden the victims of the rapacity of the capitalist" (180), as if there is something unnatural with the concern. To counter Mr. Batcham's criticism, Duncan points out that Mr. Batcham failed to notice "that a factory operative is paid twice as much as a domestic servant and three times as much as a coolie, though the cost of life weighs no more heavily upon him than upon them" (181). Duncan's definer of the perverted logic of the Anglo-Indian life style is highly biased, and therefore totally wrong. All those who criticize the Anglo-Indian administration become the butt of Duncan's attack, be they the British members of Parliament, the Indian patriots or the Indian National Congressmen. Beneath her satire and irony lurks the friend of hate which is born out of perceiving the 'Other' on a
lower plane. It can thus be argued that like George Browne Duncan also believed that India belonged to the Anglo-Indians.

Several critics have pointed out to the note of pathos on which the novel ends. This pathos is mixed with a sense of longing for India which she would miss once Helen Browne retires in England. All the lament of suffering and sacrifice appears to be a facade; all talk of white man's burden in reality is the white man's privilege of ruling and lording over the blacks, heathens, browns as Duncan calls them. Not once are they called Indians. India, most of the Anglo Indians believed, belonged to them. Duncan, the Canadian, who transformed into an Anglo-Indian, appears to believe firmly in this concept.

Vermont's Aunt (1894) is an inane book, which Mckenna in her Ph.D thesis (1980), terms as an "example of lack of taste on Duncan's part, an error that must have embarrassed her deeply, considering her convictions about the necessity for discrimination" (149). It appeared serially for Idler before being published in a book form. The British were ignorant yet curious about exotic India, always willing to lap up anything that would enlighten them about India. Duncan took this opportunity to open a window on India for the British to see all the colour and darkness that was India, and make some money in the process. It is Duncan's first attempt to avoid the personal voice in which she had spoken in the previous books. Mrs. Macintyre in The Memsaibh, though a third person narrator is, in fact, Duncan herself. Duncan wrote mostly from personal experience. Her characters are also usually based on some real person. In this book, however, she chose a character, a middle-aged unmarried woman, who was far removed from her own person. Here she attempts to present a world in
which manners are more important than the men and women who practise them. This has trapped Duncan recurrently into writing insubstantial novels like *The Memsahib* (Mckenna 1980:215).

*Vernon's Aunt* is another travelogue, fourth in a series, which details the Indian experiences of Lavinia Moffat, as she goes through unfamiliar terrain and faces impossible situations, some naturally funny, others ridiculous and exaggerated. Miss Moffat's nephew, Vernon Hawkins, lives in India. Like a typical colonial, she decides to pay a visit to India to find out to "what extent the natives actually were adopting our civilization, our clothes and the Thirty Nine Articles" (V.A.:2).

To make her Indian adventure more interesting, she decides to give her nephew a surprise by arriving unannounced. On her arrival in Bombay, an impossible situation develops. She is received by a person whom she mistakes to be her nephew, and for fifteen pages a stupid charade is played between the two, when at last it is revealed that the young man had mistaken Miss Moffat to be his wife who had lost her memory. The whole affair is too melodramatic to be credible. On her train journey she meets all sorts of people but none is able to satisfy her curiosity about India. She remarks cryptically: "Nothing is more annoying in India than the persistence with which people lament their fate in living there, and shut their eyes to the blessing, not to say the luxuries they enjoy" (62).

Her nephew lives in a forest, where she is taken on an elephant. She has come out to gather up remarkable experiences"(112) in the quaint Orient.
Living in a tent in the middle of a forest, surrounded by wild beasts, an elephant ride, a tiger who turns out to be a cat, and the misadventure with Mr. Bux, Miss Moffat has a basketful of experiences of her journey from civilization to savagery.

The novel is one in a string of works by Anglo-Indian writers who dwell upon the difference between the two societies—the difference in language, customs, traditions, outlook and attitude. It also shows there is hardly any communication between the two societies; the British remain aloof and refuse to mingle with Indians. Ms. Moffat is surprised when she notices that "Vernon himself had not Orientalized in the slightest degree. He was even more British than when he left home"(167). This lack of communication between the two communities resulted in mutual suspicion and ultimately in the alienation of the British. Fowler comments:

- It is Redney [Duncan] on her favourite theme of a single woman going in search of adventure, but it is also Redney on her worst behaviour, trying very hard to be funny, and not succeeding. There is no irony to leaven the lump; nor any of her fine natural descriptions and her major failing as a novelist is starkly revealed: her inability to weave plot and character together so that they are naturally dependent.(1985:216).

The plot of the novel is contrived and implausible. Perhaps the gullible British public loved such puerile stuff. The inevitable snake—a python in this case—centipedes and other such creatures also make an appearance.
The story of Sonny Sahib (1894) is a children's book, which Duncan entered in a competition sponsored by the Youth's Companion, a Boston magazine. She didn't win the competition but the story was accepted for publication (Fowler 1985: 215). This is Duncan's only work which is directly linked with the events of the Mutiny of 1857. The idea was perhaps suggested by an old ayah, who had been through the Mutiny and used to weep as she described how children had been killed before her eyes in that terrible time (Donaldson qtd. in Mckenna 1980: 150).

The novel begins during the Mutiny. Sonny Sahib is a little white infant, who is saved by his Indian ayah, when his father is away and his mother is critically ill. During the evacuation of Cawnpore, Tooni, the ayah, is informed that the English convoy will be attacked. Sure that Sonny's mother would anyway die, she escapes with the child, takes him to her homeland, and thus saves his life. He grows up at her house, without being aware of his true identity, but later events prove the superiority of his race and blood. Duncan's depiction of the Mutiny is one-sided as the emphasis is focussed on the cruelty of Indian sepoys and treachery of Nana Sahib. It was customary in Anglo-Indian writing to paint the Indians, especially the Indian nationalists as blackguards and villains. Writing about forty years after the event, Duncan describes some of the gory details with perfect composure—even with a bit of grim irony. The boy has to be different, but in a superior way, and Duncan gives several examples to establish Sonny's superiority. The blue eyes and white skin of Sonny Sahib who learned the language of the "little brown boys" (20). He was sharp in his bargain, always got more for his money and "invariably divided his purchase.
with whoever happened to be his bosom friend at the time... in which he differed altogether from the other boys and which made it fair perhaps" (21).
The boy is white, better and fair - these are explicitly racial propositions. When Sonny Sahib was six years old, "He wanted to pretend. It was his birthright to pretend" (21). But the other boys were not interested in play acting. Only Sonny had imagination, the native boys lacked this quality. He had more of the spirit of adventure, as "he was the only boy in Rubbulgarh who cared to climb a tree that had no fruit on it, or would venture beyond the lower branches even for mangoes or tamarinds" (22). Thus, Sonny Sahib’s superiority is established beyond a doubt.

The four novels discussed above form a group. In these early Anglo-Indian works Duncan explores, with curiosity and enthusiasm, the Anglo-Indian world, their life, their hopes and despairs. She is, at times, quite critical of their way of life and their rigid social structure. At times, the Anglo-Indians become a butt of her satire. The novels reveal another key pattern - Duncan’s indifference towards Indians. The Indians hardly figure in these works, they are always in the background; and if they do, they are mostly lowly servants and ayahs. Karim Bux in Vernon’s Aunt and the Maharajah in The Story of Sonny Sahib are portrayed more as clowns than as serious characters. But with the passage of time, Duncan’s attitude hardened. In her last three Anglo-Indian novels, which are a serious comment on British imperialism, Duncan is very defensive about the Anglo-Indian community.
A new pattern that emerges in her fiction shows Duncan as a firm believer in the civilizing mission of the British, and in trying to achieve their aim, Duncan feels, the Anglo-Indians can do no wrong. Britain had nothing to give Canada except the so-called tradition and history; it was sick and decaying. A country which makes Graham Trent and Lorne feel grateful for their lucky and timely escape to Canada has, surprisingly, the right to rule over India due to its supposed racial superiority. The cause of the Anglo-Indian administration was so close to her heart, and her dislike of the brown natives was so intense, that she was extremely critical of even those Britishers or Anglo-Indians who showed some concern for the Indians. Equality of justice for Indians, better job opportunities for them, India for Indians were causes she strongly and vehemently opposed. Perhaps inherent in this attitude was a lurking fear that any concessions to Indians might ultimately lead to the end of the British Raj in India. India for the Anglo-Indians was not only Mr. Browne's creed in *The Simple Adventures of A Memsahib*, it very much seems to be Duncan's own creed. Consequently the Indians, to whom little attention was paid in the earlier novels, are now portrayed as villains and traitors, especially those who might vaguely suggest the removal of the British from India. Her vision undergoes such a transformation, and she appears so much sold out to the British cause in India, that even the liberal Anglo-Indians and Britishers who would like to meet the Indians half-way are termed as traitors to the British cause.

*His Honor and a Lady* (1895) is Duncan's first attempt to tackle political issues concerning the governance of India. John Church, the commissioner of Hassimabad, is appointed the acting Lieutenant Governor of Bengal, which is an
extremely prestigious position. He is the His Honor of the title. The glory of the position, money, status, facilities - these come immediately to the fore in Judith Church's mind - the `lady' of the title. The official circle in Bengal is not particularly enamoured of Church, who, culturally, may not come upto their expectations. "He's the sort of fellow who likes sanitation better than Sanskrit. He's got a great scheme on for improving the village water supply for Bengal, and I hear he wants to reorganize the vaccination business. Great man for the people!"(H.L.:27). It was felt that the new Lt. Governor would be more favourable to Indians; but the Indians, who are illiterate and ignorant, superstitious and orthodox, wouldn't even be grateful. Rhoda Daye comments: "They'll never know. They are like the cattle - they plough and eat and sleep; and if a tenth of them die of Cholera from bad water, they say it was written upon their foreheads"(28). Church, who wishes to do his duty following the Methodist conscience, is named "Radical" and a "low Churchman" by Doyle. In his effort to reform the existing educational system, Church is generally opposed by the Anglo-Indian officials. But the Secretary of State Lewis Ancram, is specifically against such a reform, and comments "Church is an ass; he ought not to attempt it"(47).

Mckenna points out that the Anglo-Indian attitude is typical - prejudiced, ignorant and wrong headed. The Englishmen who oppose Church (Ancram and Doyle) represent the usual attitude of those who want things left alone, so long as they survive comfortably; they are blind to their surroundings. Mckenna feels that Duncan utilizes Church to demonstrate the real needs of Indians in the field
of education (1980:169). The question which should however be discussed is that if Duncan did feel the need for reform, why is she so unsympathetic towards Church? If she is opposed to the method of this reform, than why doesn't she suggest a better alternative?

The overall impression is that Duncan is certainly opposed to John church and his scheme. Both Ancram and Doyle don't consider the education system impractical, they find Church's benevolent intention impractical. Ancram, surprisingly, is not in favour of higher education either. He complains: "What has it done out here? Filled every sweeper's son of them with an ambition to sit on an office stool and be a gentleman! created by thousands a starveling class that find nothing to do but swell mass meetings on the Maidan and talk sedition that gets telegraphed from Peshawar to Cape Comorin" (H.L.: 46).

A great deal of discussion takes place among Anglo-Indians on the question of educating Indians. In fact, Indians don't matter, they remain pawns in the hands of their rulers; their opinions, if any, are ignored. This is a typical stance of Anglo-Indian writers. Though Church is conscientious, upright and honourable, yet it is Ancram who is the more interesting character of the two. Ancram is identified with 'expediency', still he appears to be a more powerful and lively character when compared to Church, who is portrayed as a dull and boring person.

A major portion of the novel deals with Ancram - his love affair with Rhoda, his role as chief Secretary, his relations with Judith, his conspiracy in league with Mohendra Lal - Church doesn't get as much attention. Ancram is
shown as an unprincipled, immoral and untrustworthy person, yet Duncan
doesn't condemn him outright. Who then is the hero of the novel and what is the
main theme of the novel - the political problem or Ancram's romance? This is a
problem one finds in several of Duncan's works, the centre of interest in several
instances is not clearly delineated. She doesn't seem to be sure of her moorings.
Church is a good man, but he doesn't have the sympathy of the writer. Church
dies a miserable death in a far away place - Bhugi, and Duncan has no
comments to offer. By removing Church from the scene, the focus shifts to
Judith. It doesn't appear to be a balanced narrative. The novel opens with John
church, the hero and his principled stand on educational reforms, but slides to
an unsubstantial issue - the affair between Ancram and Judith.

It renders the whole narrative out of focus. The issues of principles,
morality and expediency are left unexplored by the sudden removal of Church
from the scene. Surely, the political dimensions in the novel should have proved
more weighty with the writer. From the stately questions of State policy,
 imperial administration, reforms and their effects, the narrative nosedives to a
petty love affair; Duncan's handling, thus, is lop sided. When conventions and
traditions of discourse come into conflict with actual observations and questions
of ethics, such confusion is bound to be there.

The interlinking of political and romantic stories is not as successful as it
was in the case of The Imperialist. Mckenna feels this is so largely due to the
character of Church who is admirable but dull and rather unconvincing. Fowler
thinks that the novel is most interesting for its exploration of the theme of
thwarted love. In this novel Duncan introduces a love pattern which she would repeat in three later novels - a woman falls in love with a man who, for one reason or another, is unattainable.

It has often been suggested by critics that in *The Imperialist*, in spite of her belief in the imperial ideal, Duncan's artistic objectivity and aesthetic honesty made her show Lorne a defeated visionary. Such honesty and objectivity is missing in her Indian works, as she views the Indian situation from a different perspective. Although she felt the necessity of educational reform in the novel (something which had not been taken seriously till the arrival of Lord Curzon as Viceroy of India, in 1898, two years after the publication of *His Honor and A Lady*), yet she obscured her personal observation in preference to following the official Anglo-Indian position. This is a pity that she gave up her objectivity and principles to expediency. In objecting even to the British interference in the day to day Anglo-Indian administration of India, she had become a pucca memsahib. That's why she doesn't condemn Ancram's villainy outright and makes him the Lt. Governor of Bengal. Expediency in politics as dramatized in *The Imperialist* is what Duncan hates absolutely. But in her Anglo-Indian fiction, she becomes a votary of expediency provided that it is for the British cause. It is acceptable only to perpetuate the British rule, but deplorable when used against the British. Duncan, however, is not very eloquent in her support for expediency in *His Honor and a Lady*, though the principle of expediency gets Duncan's full-throated support in *Set in Authority*.

In *Set in Authority* (1906), Duncan plunges deeper into the theme of morality and expediency. The central event of the novel is based on a series of
real incidents where the brutality of the British army towards Indians was almost condoned by courts of enquiry and English judges, thus making a travesty of the fairness of administration of British justice. David Dilks in *Curzon in India* (1969) refers to two such incidents. In 1899, soldiers of the West Kent regiment stationed in Rangoon raped an elderly Burmese woman, and the military authorities, instead of bringing the culprits to book, tried to hush up the matter. In 1900, a coolie was killed by a soldier with a dumb-bell, and the soldier was acquitted (198-99). Nicolson refers to a case in 1902, involving the Ninth Lancers, a prestigious regiment. Some troopers in a drunken state beat up a native cook Atu, who later on succumbed to the injuries. A court of enquiry on which nobody but officers of the regiment sat, reported that they were unable to identify the culprit (qtd. in Mckenna1980:290-91). Curzon, under whose viceroyalty all the above incidents took place, was furious. Convinced that this was a deliberate cover-up by the officers, he ordered the punishment of the whole regiment, as the guilty could not be found. In the earlier cases also, Curzon imposed his own punishment, as he found that justice was not done.

As long as the Anglo-Indians were confident of their sway over India, their literature neglected, if not totally ignored the Indians. At the turn of the century, Indian national aspirations forced the Anglo-Indians to view the Indians as a threat to their dominance. So the Indians gained an entry into their fiction, though references to them were generally negative and derogatory. Duncan, in her last two novels introduces Indian characters, especially *The Burnt Offering*. The uneasy Britishers had become almost paranoid about their existence and
safety. Anything even remotely affecting them adversely was bitterly opposed.
A case in point is the 'Ilbert Bill', which another good intentioned Viceroy, Lord Ripon had introduced in 1883, to enable Indian magistrates to try Europeans in criminal cases. The Bill was so vociferously opposed by the Anglo-Indians that its clauses had to be watered down. The English proclaimed that Indian judges were incompetent to try the whites. The Indians, in a spirit of revenge, may pass harsher sentence on the English. Dilks quotes Curzon's Private Secretary, who felt "it is impossible to have an exactly equal law for Natives and Europeans" (1969:200).

*Set in Authority* opens with the announcement that Anthony Thame has been made the Viceroy of India. He is quite radical in his views. He appears to be the right choice at the right time to set matters right in India. One thing that is close to his heart is to reconcile the natives and the English. There is no reason why there shouldn't be a better feeling. Lord Thame firmly believes that England should govern by 'moral force' alone.

The Mutiny created a chasm between the British and the Indians. It bred suspicion, doubt, fear, hostility and scorn in the British heart towards Indians. The British became claustrophobic and led a separate and more exclusive existence. There was a clear divide between the two communities, which is repeatedly reflected in Anglo-Indian fiction as psychological and geographical division. Duncan too shows this division in the description of Pilaghur, the capital of the province of Goom. "We must call Pilaghur two capitals" (S.A.:23). One is the English Capital - spacious, clean, with public buildings, gardens and parks, neat houses. "The other Pilaghur crowds upon the
skirts of this, a thick embroidery" (26). This is the native section, crowded, featureless, with narrow ways, dirty and smelly.

The British sections of towns were usually called civil lines implying that the areas where the natives reside were uncivil. This nomenclature not only establishes the inherent sense of British superiority and contempt for the Indians, but also points to the racial divide between the two communities. Thus the task before Lord Thame to bridge this racial divide appears insurmountable.

Colonel Vetchley complains against Thame's "bias" for the natives against his own people, and feels that "he's made more bad blood between the natives of this country and the army than can be wiped out in one generation, or two either" (43). He refers to the dispensation of justice in the army, and Thame's unwarranted interference in the process, as he insisted on harsher sentences for crimes against the natives. In Vetchley's opinion, the Tommy was a better man than the native, and the native knew it and kept his place.

In such a scenario, a dramatic event takes place. An English soldier named Henry Morgan seduces a native's (Gobind's) wife Junia. Gobind in anger cuts her nose, and Morgan in rage shoots Gobind dead. This happened at a critical time, when the government took stern cognizance of and vigorous initiative in such cases, and the Anglo-Indian community was quite sore about this attitude:

221
the man dropped dead; the Mir Bux case of a native forest-ranger, damaged so that he died, by a shooting party of three soldiers... were fresh in the minds of all Englishmen, and it might be supposed of all natives too, since the vernacular press rang even louder with the claims of equality than the Anglo-Indian newspapers with other considerations in each instance (80-81).

Morgan's trial is scheduled to take place before a native judge, Sir Ahmed Hussein. In the regiment, Morgan was widely condemned for foolishness in getting into trouble, but the general concern of the Anglo-Indian community was as to how to get him out of it. The case became a family affair and Morgan's defence became the concern of every man. Sir Ahmed had just taken over from Mr. Lennox and the general feeling was that "it was sanguinary rotten luck that the case should come before a sanguinary black nigger" (100). The exchange of ideas among the soldiers establishes their point of view and the chief refrain among them is that "no native of this country can try such a European British subject for his life... the law don't allow 'em to do any hanging—any white hanging, be it understood" (101). The possibility of a native judge taking revenge was very ripe. Racial feeling might naturally be expected—rightly or wrongly—to interfere with the ends of justice (106).

Sir Ahmed however had different ideas. He thought this was a chance to build bridges of understanding between the two communities, so Morgan is given a very light sentence—two years for culpable homicide. The Anglo-Indian press, in anticipation of a severe sentence, was "ready to proclaim the
impossibility of accepting the decision, and the necessity for appeal.... The
native journals were, no doubt equally ready to defend it; but the event left all
parties without a word"(122). As a reward for such leniency, Sir Ahmed is
elected to the Pilaghur Club- the first native to be allowed in the hallowed
precincts of the all - white club. Duncan seems satisfied with the sentence and
offers a justification for Sir Ahmed's act, as he is shown to be kind even to a
scorpion. He comments: "Better let one man off too easily than inflame the
passions of thousands"(132). He is thus a fictionally unconvincing character.

The Anglo-Indian community is shocked to know that the Viceroy was
extremely dissatisfied with the verdict and had asked for a full report.
Overlooking the conventions being followed by Anglo-Indians, Thame insists on
racial equality in the operation of laws, a principle that Lord Curzon had
upheld. Even Eliot Arden, the Chief Commissioner of Ghoom, who is a
reasonable, wise and ideal bureaucrat, protests.

Charles Cox and Colonel Vetchley are portrayed as representatives of
two extreme views, with Arden maintaining a precarious balance. Through
them, Duncan has faithfully reproduced the Anglo-Indian point of view:
Military, Bureaucratic as well as personal. If persons like Thame are misfit in a
society, the fault lies in the perception of such a society. Cox's discriminatory
comments make Thame's position crystal clear: "The Viceroy doesn't want
necessarily to "hang" Morgan; he only wants to get him adequately punished.
And it isn't only his rectitude that's involved -it's the honour of England"(224).
Those who have a moral conscience feel that injustice and expediency will do
more harm to the image of England, but such people are vehemently opposed by the average Anglo-Indians.

When Arden is summoned to Calcutta by Thame, the visit raises expectations of high drama. Two strong willed and conscientious characters, holding diametrically opposed views, come face to face. The situation promises fire-works. Such expectations however are belied. Duncan never tackles a problem in a straightforward manner. The discussion between Arden and Thame could have been very crucial to develop the characters of both the men as also the problem they are involved in. The immense dramatic potential of the situation is not exploited by Duncan; she glosses over the matter - informs the reader in a very oblique way of Arden succumbing to pressure, and hints at his reasons for doing so. But we don't witness the discussion, the arguments, face to face encounter between the two. Obviously Duncan believes more in telling than in showing. The discussion would have accorded some depth to the characters, teeth to the plot and insight to the readers to form their own judgment on the issues. The author need not interpret everything, thus leaving no scope for the reader's own assessment. Duncan avoids presenting in-depth studies of characters and situations, perhaps because she is incapable of a psychological analysis of the state of affairs. She does the same thing with Dr. Ruth's letter to Arden. It is a very crucial document wherein she rejects the idea of marrying Arden, as he had not come up to her expectations. But Duncan interprets it and comments upon it instead of presenting the contents of the letter before the readers. Similarly, the all-important trial in *The Imperialist* is indirectly referred to instead of being directly described. It is not as if giving
details is not part of her style of writing. She does give detailed conversations on small and petty matters, like discussions among the soldiers in the garrison and the talk in the club. We get enough of the juvenile prattle of the ladies directly reported, but details of substantial issues are evaded.

The echoes of the case are heard in London too. Henry Morgan became a touchstone for the character and feeling, the principle, prejudice, and politics of the British nation, as reflected in the metropolitan press. But what they thought in England was a matter of indifference in India. Anger was brewing in Anglo-India. People had full faith in the independence of Calcutta courts. But the revisional Bench ordered a re-trial. "The trial has been described as the most sensational in the history of Calcutta. It lasted a fortnight"(250). Once again, the trial is reported, not shown. "In the case of the Emperor versus Henry Morgan the Jury had brought in the verdict of wilful murder, and the prisoner had been sentenced to be hanged"(252). While Duncan herself proclaims the trial to be the most sensational, she fails to exploit inbuilt tension in the situation. By preferring to tell rather than show; Duncan avoids the opportunity to make a deeper analysis of persons and motives, while, at the same time, neglecting the psychological and ideological implications inherent in such situations. This anti-climax robs Duncan of an opportunity to make an ironic assessment of the grievances and responses put forth by the two sides. The verdict is pronounced straightaway. In the absence of any information regarding the fundamental principles involved on the basis of which the judgement is passed, the verdict appears manipulated and hollow. Duncan was perhaps aware that ladies gossip
and puerile discussion alone was her forte, so she refrained from venturing directly into more serious matters.

The native press hails the decision, but the Anglo-Indian community could not accept such a precedent. They want the sentence to be commuted. It is interesting to note how the pendulum of Anglo-Indian opinion swings. When Morgan is given a light sentence, they are all for accepting the court verdict and are unhappy at the Viceroy's interference in the working of the courts. Now, ironically, they go against the court verdict, and desire the Viceroy's interference to get the sentence commuted. Their self-interest makes them blind to everything else.

Earlier, Arden opposes the Viceroy's interference because he felt that only the courts have the right to hang a person and not the Viceroy. The same Arden now writes a letter to Lord Thame to request for leniency. This reduces Arden's character to the superficial level of being a mere Anglo-Indian and a mere white man. Duncan's prime for his conscience and principles, therefore, does not convince. It reduces Arden to a stereotype.

Thame is relentless in his approach. He orders that the regiment should witness the hanging. This is reminiscent of Lord Curzon again; he had punished the whole regiment when it couldn't punish the guilty soldiers. This order is the last straw on the regiment's back. The Barfords are in a mutinous condition. They are wild and abusive, indisciplined and nasty. Vetchley wants the regiment moved. "Anything might happen', said the colonel. 'A rush - an attempt at rescue - any blessed thing. The men are dangerous'"(303). He adds: "There's the seeds of future trouble in it worse trouble than ever between the soldier and the
native. Anything may happen"(303). The build up to the hanging is like a rising crescendo of suspense, conjecture and expectation. All the build up, excitement, possibilities however come to naught. Henry Morgan commits suicide. Once again, Duncan shies away from facing a situation head on as she shows her incapacity for analyzing the psychological impact of action. This not only exposes chinks in her artistic ability to tackle sensitive and complex issues, it also amounts to taking the reader for a ride. After raising expectations of a high-powered, action-packed denouement, one feels robbed by Duncan's confidence trick. It is anti-climactic and self-contradictory.

One would presume that after his death, the Morgan affair would come to an end. But Duncan has other ideas. Gobind the man who was sworn as murdered by Morgan, is found alive. This is a bizarre twist given to the tale, which till now is a serious study of British situation in India. After having failed to take the turmoil within British ranks to its logical conclusion, Duncan ends the novel with a melodramatic flourish. To gladden the hearts of the angry Anglo-Indian community, what better method than to turn on the Indians and paint them in the blackest possible colour. That Indians are sly, devious and low was a popular strain in Anglo-Indian literature. Duncan ultimately selects this racist angle to reiterate this belief. The situation looks so contrived that it properly places Duncan in the category of a second rate novelist. Such tricks are worthy of a cheap detective novel. Using such a blatantly racist ploy in a work which has pretensions of dealing seriously with the dichotomy between moral action and expediency weakens the artistic fabric of the work. It proves, in
effect, that Duncan is no better or worse than the average run-of-the-mill Anglo-Indian writers, who were very prolific without having any artistic pretensions. Duncan's novels too turn out to be propaganda sheets for the cause of Anglo-India.

The reason for this deceit is also formula-based - it was personal revenge taken by Afzul Aziz for an excess done by the English Army at Cawnpore. Ruth reports this sensational discovery to Arden who, in order to preserve order, takes a practical decision in keeping the matter under wraps.

But the novel doesn't end even at this point. The last turn of the screw is yet to come. Ruth, who had been given a letter by Morgan to be delivered to Trings, is shocked to know that Victoria, Morgan's sister, was getting married to Thame, Morgan's murderer, because Morgan in reality was Herbert Tring - Victoria's long lost brother, who for "family reasons" wanted to inform them of who was responsible for his death.

Ultimately Morgan also appears to have some heroic characteristics to his credit. He had refused to disclose his identity to Ruth: "That must be because he had the decency not to make the appeal of disclosing his identity. Well, it was a good deal to have had that decency" (339). 'Decency' is used twice in succeeding sentences, perhaps insinuating that it is not Morgan then, who is the real villain but Thame, who lacked among other things, a sense of decency.

Like *His Honor and A Lady*, this novel also has a romantic sub-plot. Ruth Pearce loves Arden, but is disappointed when Arden succumbs to the
Viceroy's pressure to reopen the Morgan case. Ruth was sure that Arden would stick to his principles. Arden, however, saw the whole thing differently:

He saw it in as lofty a light as may shine upon a question of serious expediency- and those may criticize expediency in a theory of oriental administration who feel qualified to do so but he did not see it to be a doubt in which his conscience was sole and predestined arbiter, with results gravely critical to himself(228).

One recalls that expediency is not so warmly applauded when it is presented as Ancram's misguided self-justification in *His Honor and A Lady*. Tausky comments:

Ruth Pearce rejects Arden, just as Judith Church rejects Ancram, on grounds of an ethical failure, but in *Set in Authority*, we are not given a clear indication that Ruth's judgment is correct [as her views are shaped by her emotional involvement with Arden]. We are given considerable evidence about the central ethical problem, but the crucial piece of the jigsaw puzzle is left out. Vetchley is wrong, Cox is wrong, Thame is probably wrong, Arden was probably right initially but was also right to reverse himself, Ruth has no capacity for objective judgment. So even if Morgan is spared, the reader is left hanging(1980:240).

Tausky's exasperation at Duncan's handling of plot and theme is justified. Consistency, as has been pointed out earlier too, was never Duncan's strong point. The confusion indicated above is a result of the double vision operating in
Duncan’s point of view. Duncan observes and shows the excesses committed by
the Anglo-Indians; she does not interpret them in accordance with her own
conscience, but in accordance with the established and accepted colonial
discourse of Anglo-Indian writing. This phenomenon is what Foucault calls the
power struggle between the individuals and the institutions. Duncan’s heart
seems to be at war with her head. That is why she refrains from psychological
analysis of characters and situations and has to resort to melodramatic and
conventional techniques to solve a crisis.

*Set in Authority* is one of Duncan’s most successful works. It was a best
seller not because it was a great novel, but because it was a good piece of
imperial propaganda. The imperial question in this novel becomes more
important than what is right or wrong.

Susan Minsos (1989), in her Ph.D thesis on three novels of Duncan says
that *Set in Authority* is a treatise on mature choices, whereas *The Imperialist* is
about adolescence. Lorne, the young protagonist, has to `learn'; Arden, the
mature man, `knows'. Duncan uses the phrase - Arden the `mature
administrator' - to illustrate the moral conduct of a wise and dutiful civil
servant(176). She indicates that personal choices should be sacrificed at the altar
of the Empire, as Ruth Pearce does at the end of the novel when she burns
Morgan’s letter, as she chooses to honour the social and political order of the
time. In playing the Empire game, Minsos points out, the English must rely on
the traditional British belief in a biologically inherited moral sense(182-84). But
`order' here is being looked at from the British point of view alone. The British
brought civil laws and codes to India. These laws didn't operate equally on the British and Indians. As long as the Indians are at the receiving end, all is fine with the Empire, the 'Order' is maintained. The moment the British are adversely affected, 'Order' is threatened. So long as the British high-handedness is accepted, it is 'Order'; the moment it is challenged, the spectre of 'chaos' appears on the horizon. When Thame is 'Set' in 'Authority': that is he becomes rigid or stubborn in his authority not to allow discrimination against the Indians, the very roots of the Empire in India are shaken - so precarious is the British hold over India.

Certainly, there are a few good Britishers in the novel. But what are the parameters of being good? In *Cousin Cinderella*, Peter and Barbara Doleford are the 'good' Britishers, because they are principled and idealistic, not practical. They don't compromise, they show no expediency. They are the salt of the nation, they demonstrate the character that has made England great. But in India, the principled and the idealists are portrayed negatively as they don't suit the Empire game plan, and also because Duncan uses double standards. In *His Honor and A Lady*, John Church who wouldn't compromise on his principles and ideals, who is not practical and doesn't bow to expediency, is bitterly criticized by Duncan herself. We have already seen how Duncan denigrates Thame who otherwise is as principled and idealistic as was Peter Doleford. The heroic figure of *Cousin Cinderella* becomes a much maligned character in this novel. In *The Burnt Offering*, Vulcan Mills and his daughter, who are humanitarians, who talk of universal principles and threaten to transcend the British interests in India, are painted almost as villains simply
because their actions pose a threat to British perception of 'order'. The rules of
the game, thus appear very simple - 'order' is what keeps the British in power,
disorder is what threatens their rule. This is how Duncan's double vision
operates.

Thame is criticized by Arden, the 'mature' administrator on two counts.
One, that he should not interfere in the functioning of the courts, and second, by
insisting that justice should be done. Thame, ironically, has negated the process
of bringing the two communities closer. Is Duncan implying that injustice to
Indians would have brought them closer to the British? Obviously, she is
thinking only of the Anglo-Indian reaction. One is tempted to ask as to what
would have been Anglo-Indian's reaction if Sir Ahmed had given a heavier and
proper sentence; or conversely, if a native guilty of a White man's murder had
been given the same sentence as was given to Morgan? Would they have
accepted both the sentences without a whimper of protest, as they accept and
justify the sentence in Morgan's case, or would they have forced the Viceroy to
either overrule the Judgment, or reopen the case? The answer is not difficult to
find, and herein lies the rub. All the talk of morality, principles, justice,
fairness, friendship and ethics is meaningless in the Anglo-Indian context.

In setting up the plot, Duncan makes every event ironic, claims Minsos,
who adds: "Using plot to spin-the-tail of irony, Duncan creates a political novel
which is a sociological gyroscope, a novel where any simple answer to the
above paradox is in itself a neoplatonic form" (1989:253). This is a tall claim.
The novel is a straightforward Anglo-Indian work, its purpose being to
perpetrate the myth of the white man’s superiority. Melodramatic coincidences are being termed as having moral significance, petty tricks as irony of situation. The so-called moral dilemma is resolved by resorting to a well-worn trick used by Anglo-Indian writers - death. The novel is built clearly on the principles of power and domination.

*The Burnt Offering*(1909) is the last and most crucial of Duncan’s Anglo-Indian novels, as it is the only work which deals with the rise of Indian nationalism, and has Indian characters in the real sense of the term. Teresa Hubel, in her article "Love, marriage and the Imperialist Paradox in the Indian Fiction of Duncan and Kipling"(1990), calls Duncan a child of the empire. As a Canadian she was essentially an outsider to the Anglo-Indian society, but she adapted herself quickly to become an advocate of the imperialist doctrine. Comparing Duncan with Kipling, Hubel observes:

> For Kipling, colonial life constituted a huge moral enigma. While accepting and even admiring Indian culture and tradition;...he nevertheless would not grant India the capacity for self-government. Nowhere in his writing do we see him affirming the legitimacy of the Indian nationalist aspirations. Instead, we are more likely to find sardonic declarations of Indian incompetence,... Duncan’s Indian fiction shares with Kipling’s this problematic dissonance(4-5).

It is difficult to accept this assertion. In fact, Duncan does not at all share this problematic. Kipling did have a love-hate relationship with India, but it is not so with Duncan. She simply did not like India. Her dilemma is confined
to being alternately critical of and loyal to the Anglo-Indian society. She does criticize the rigidity and stratification of the Anglo-Indians in the *The Memsahib*; she laughs and lashes out at the frivolity of women in *The Pool in the Desert*; she does talk of the waste of human life and effort regarding the British presence in India; yet when it comes to leaving India to Indians, or allowing them any semblance of self-governance, she is unequivocally on the side of the British. The narrator of *The Memsahib*, Mrs. Macintyre fulfils this role admirably. "But when the narrator is not condemning Anglo-Indian society, she is its loyal supporter", comments Hubel. "Although she often disparages government administration and the type of Englishman who is likely to be found there, Duncan seldom, and never explicitly, calls into question the fundamental fact of 'British' India"(1990:5).

Nowhere does Duncan have a word of praise for India, except in the description of her very first journey to India. In *A Social Departure*, as a tourist, she perhaps was fascinated by the exotic India. Tausky very aptly comments," when she matured into a veteran and somewhat cynical memsahib, Sara may have regretted the gushings of the Indian section of *A Social Departure*. In most of the book, a fresh and lively viewpoint compensates for the absence of profound knowledge of the country under discussion"(1980:182). Duncan does compensate for her ignorance about India with a vengeance in her later Anglo-Indian novels.

Duncan comes out with flying colours as a true British imperialist in *The Burnt Offering*, her only novel that deals with the tensions generated by the rise
of the national movement in India. Indian nationalists were never given their due by the Anglo-Indian writers. They were painted as trouble makers, traitors and even terrorists who, for some personal reasons of enmity against the British, had donned the garb of patriotism. According to Kipling, the national movement was the work of a limited class, a microscopic minority. The real people of India, the majority consisting of the peasants, workers and the Princes were least interested in independence from British rule. Duncan also views the nationalists in the novel, especially Ganendra Thakore and Bepin Dey, in a similar vein.

The novel reflects an extremely turbulent time in India. Bhupal Singh states that "The Burnt Offering is not so much a story as a presentation in dramatic form of the political situation in India" (1934:198). The two protagonists, one Indian and the other British, are also modelled on historical figures. Ganendra Thakore, the fiery nationalist, is modelled on Bal Gangadhar Tilak, a great and powerful leader of India's struggle for independence. Vulcan Mills is modelled on Keir Hardie, a Radical M.P. from England who paid a visit to India in 1907. However, Duncan's portrait of these two leaves much to be desired. In tune with the established Anglo-Indian discourse, Ganendra Thakore is projected as an extremist and a villain; and Mills as a foolish, interfering globe-trotter. Unfortunately, Duncan is not a detached observer, or a disinterested Canadian who should describe the reality objectively. She is very much an Anglo-Indian, who uses the Foucauldian techniques of discourse dominance through rejection, selection and then projection of the reality to suit her point of view. Thus, truth is distorted to suit a predetermined ideology—the Anglo-Indian ideology.
The novel opens on a very dramatic note, and we at once realize how Indians are the victims of racial arrogance and discrimination. Bepin Behari Dey is refused entry into a first class Railway compartment by a couple of Englishmen, even though he has a first class ticket. Addressing him as 'Baboo', which was a derogatory term used by the British to address educated Indians, they tell him there is no room in the compartment.

"'I must insist upon coming in here', he said' you are but two passengers'.

'No you don't'," said the Englishman barring the entrance with his leg. The second young man gets into the act; "'Get out of this', he exclaimed 'or damn it I'll hoof you out'"(2). They object to his entry as they can't have him spitting in the compartment. Bepin replies:

'Sir, I do not expectorate'.

Oh yes, you do, Baboo. You expectorate all right. Anyhow' - and the door finished the sentence with a bang.

The young native certainly showed self-control...The resentment and dislike in the face he turned upon the occupants of the carriage seemed rather a settled and habitual thing than any outcome of his present treatment(3).

While Bepin was 'Sirring' them, they kept 'Babooing' him, which symbolizes the feelings they had for each other. The above comment suggests that such behaviour was customary and Bepin was quite used to it.
The whole drama is witnessed by a "tall English Girl", Joan Mills, who very gallantly offers Bepin room in her compartment, while her voice trembled with anger as her glance at the two Englishman carried a message of contempt for her race. Her father Vulcan Mills, welcomes him saying "We should be sorry to take up more than we've paid for"(5). Joan feels agitated at the monstrous and brutal behaviour of the Europeans; "We had heard such things happened, but we could hardly believe it"(7), she added.

By showing the Mills as decent, polite and considerate, Duncan perhaps suggests that all the English people are not alike. True, those living in India have become arrogant, indecent and unreasonable, but the ones who come from England still show good breeding. This distinction is essential to understand the level of degradation of the Anglo-Indians.

Being thrown out of a railway carriage is an act of racial discrimination reminiscent of what happened to Gandhi in South Africa. This one act made Gandhi a determined fighter against such discrimination and set him on the path to liberate India. It seems as if Duncan is quite conscious and critical of such behaviour. But soon we find her caught in the racial net when she uses racial stereotype in describing the Eurasian station master: "he said in the clicking, doubling talk of the mixed race"(3). Bepin turns out to be a Post-Graduate from Cambridge, having also studied in London and Paris. The Anglo-Indian writers looked down upon the educated Indians. This was the class which was most capable of holding its own, who were most conscious of the atrocities committed by the British and best fitted to replace them as the rulers of India.
Bepin tries to make light of this incident as it was nothing new, and speaks of worse humiliation which his father had to suffer in a railway compartment - he had to pull off their boots. Joan is horrified to listen to this story.

"'In your own country!' she exclaimed. 'How can you bear it!'

'I think you are strangers', young Dey replied, always with the laugh which defended him from sympathy. 'Only strangers would ask that. We have no alternative'"(9). The Indians are helpless victims of British brutality in their own country. This chance meeting between Joan and Bepin, and Joan's sympathetic outlook, forms a very natural basis of future friendship between them.

It is a very promising beginning of the novel. It gives an impression that here is a writer who has selected to project reality very objectively; who is out to cut the British down to size, who would expose the reality of British imperialism, who would tear off the mask of a civilizing mission, who would show the naked effect of colonization, and one who would perhaps stand up for the rights of the Indians. Here at last, is a white person who has the courage to call a spade a spade, who would not close her eyes in the face of the bitter truth even if it meant criticizing her own race, her own people. Here perhaps was a messiah who would deliver a telling blow on behalf of the exploited Indian masses by exposing the imperialist propaganda. But all such hopes are belied. Duncan, very quickly, falls into the conventional groove.
Vulcan Mills, who approached issues from an humanitarian angle, had decided to visit Calcutta after "The Prevention of Seditious Meetings Act" was made applicable to Calcutta. Both Mills and his daughter have come to crusade against British high-handedness in India. Duncan's ironic comment makes her position clear, "I think they made courageous figures standing there in the mantle of their ignorance and the fire of their enthusiasm"(25). She, like Michael Foley, feels that Mills is bound to create trouble and make a nuisance of himself. Although Mrs. Foley observes: "He has heart... and he's quite honest(15), her husband thinks Mills could be dangerous if he takes up the cause of Indians, which obviously will go against the British interests. Foley is concerned about the fact that when Mills sees the reality of the empire, he will see the suppression and exploitation being perpetrated by the British. "The point is whether Mills will keep his indignant mouth shut till he gets home again, or whether he'll let himself go out here"(17).

Visiting British M.P.s were always considered trouble-makers and a nuisance by the Anglo-Indian bureaucrats. Duncan had already ridiculed Jones Batcham M.P., in The Simple Adventures of a Memsahib, as these ignorant globe trotters who come to India to take stock of the situation always stood contrary in their perceptions to the local British Governments. Duncan has been very unfair to Keir Hardie, as the portrait of Vulcan Mills is highly unflattering. Keir Hardie who visited India in 1907 and wrote his own impressions in his book, India, Impressions and Suggestions(1909), in which he made a sympathetic and intelligent assessment of the Indian scene, and offered a number of suggestions to improve the administration and bring it closer to the
people (Nagarajan 1975:79). Duncan must have read Hardie’s book – as the opening scene of the novel is definitely based on the account that Hardie had given – he describes three such incidents at length in his book (Tausky 1980:249). Nagarajan gives an instance from Hardie’s book of a Muslim Gentleman, of handsome, refined appearance, descended from an illustrious family, educated at Cambridge. On his return from England, he entered a first class carriage in which two Englishmen were travelling. He was at once ordered out and in the end, for his own comfort, was forced to go out to escape the studied insults of his travelling companions (80). The opening scene of the novel bears a strong resemblance to this episode. Although Duncan used this episode in her work, “she distorted his [Hardie] opinions and weakened his credibility in her portrait of Vulcan Mills” (Tausky 1980:249). Hardie had advocated self-government as a solution to the racial problem. Self-Government was an anathema to the majority of Anglo-Indians, including Duncan, and her view of Hardie, in fact, reveals much about her own politics and preferences. Anybody advocating self-Government was to be ridiculed, as this suggestion struck at the very root of Anglo-India’s vested interest of perpetuating the British rule in India. This distorted projection exposes Duncan’s narrow views, and her hostility towards any idea of Indian independence. Tausky points out that the moral neutrality and leisurely pace of the earlier novel is gone. *The Burnt Offering* is a quick paced narrative whose main objective seems to be to justify the conservative and traditional attitude of the Anglo-Indian community. It is impossible to avoid the conclusion, feels Tausky, that Duncan in the novel finally allows herself to
accept-virtually completely - the attitude and values of the Anglo-Indian official world (1980:248). One can only add that even Set in Authority shows equally forcefully how Duncan had totally accepted Anglo-Indian ideology. The dividing line between the good and the not so good characters is their attitude to the Raj. The villains - obviously those who oppose the Raj - are Indians like Ganendra Thakore, Bepin Dey and the English Vulcan and Joan Mills. The heroes - those favouring the Raj - are John Game, Michael Foley and other English officials, along with Indians like Sir Kristodas, Rani Janaki and Swami Yadava.

At times one gets the impression that Duncan did register the excesses and atrocities committed by the British, but was afraid to go against the established Anglo-Indian discourse. She consequently surrendered her literary instincts, her intuition and her honest observations to the stereotype of accepted discourse. This phenomenon is explained by Ashis Nandy in The Intimate Enemy (1983) as "the suppression of one's self for the sake of an imposed imperial identity - inauthentic and killing in its grandiosity"(4). But one only gets some fleeting glimpses of this possible objectivity. Duncan was a Canadian, herself a colonized, but her role reversal as a white colonizer was so complete that she played the role with a vengeance. Margaret Laurence's African experience made her more acutely aware of her Canadianness, as she didn't lose her sense of balance, but Duncan gave up all pretenses of being a Canadian, and gleefully accepted the Anglo-Indian mantle celebrating colonial discourse. The initial impression that one gets of Thakur is quite encouraging. He is portrayed as a thoughtful and gentle person. However, this impression does not last long.
Thakore, the fiery nationalist is shown as motivated against the British by a feeling of personal revenge. His only son had passed brilliantly the Civil service exam, but could not qualify, as he failed the riding test, and subsequently died. To impute some personal motive to the nationalists' disaffection against the British was a popular method among Anglo-Indian writers to denigrate them. Duncan uses this ploy very effectively, as with one stroke the hero is turned into a villain, his cause is falsified and, in the process the British are justified.

In order to undermine the position of Vulcan Mills, Duncan establishes Mills's prejudice and calls his crusade as "one-sided banner"(84). Mills business was not to approve the right but to expose the wrong as "he found more in a perjured policeman than in the justice of the courts"(85). The earlier hesitation of Duncan has been replaced by a firm resolve to stand up for the British cause.

An interesting episode which illustrates Duncan's prejudice takes place between Joan and Game. Joan and Vulcan Mills have been taken to a famine - hit village. Keir Hardie was similarly taken to a famine hit district by Tilak. The memory of an old man who died of hunger before her very eyes fills her eyes with tears, but Game's instant and rough reaction is: "I hope to God you didn't photograph him"(89). Game, Duncan's ideal administrator, is only conscious of bad publicity it might evoke and shows no concern for the human tragedy of such serious proportion. Game also informs her that it was a stage managed show, that Thakore had played a trick by bringing people together from different places to create an impression on Joan and Vulcan. The final reply that
Game gives is very arrogant and highly unprincipled, such as where there is famine, starvation is inevitable; those dying were always on the verge of starvation, and last but not the least, "We are only a Government - we are not God almighty" (92). As usual, the Anglo-Indians can't do any wrong. Ironically, the British did strut in India as little Gods. Though Hardie was a reasonable, intelligent and perceptive individual, Mills is shown to be superficial and one who is easily misled, and his daughter Joan as a gullible kind. Through such figures, Duncan stresses the central message of her book: "that India's problems must be solved by those who know the country and have brought it forward into the nineteenth Century, and that benevolent intruders from outside who do not realize the complexity of the situation are likely to play into the hands of forces which under the cloak of patriotism will turn India back towards its dark ages" (Woodcock 1983:225). So, according to Duncan, the Anglo-Indians know better how to deal with India and Indians. Of course, the Indians don't matter. What both Duncan and Woodcock perhaps forget is the fact that the Britishers were as much intruders in India as were the Mills in British India. Why shouldn't the same yardstick be applied to them by the Indians? And how do you throw out an intruder who has forcibly come and occupied your house - by love or by force? Force and violence also have their legitimacy in a particular context. If the British become brutal in order to preserve their rule, that is called civilizing mission; and if Indians use force to liberate themselves, that is sedition, that is villainy. It is all a question of 'means' and 'ends'. But here too the double vision prevails which leads to the practice of double standards. The British aim or 'end' in India is to perpetuate their rule for which they can adopt any
'means' - expediency, suppression, compromise with principles or ideals, injustice - they are all acceptable. The 'end' of Indian revolutionaries is to get independence, and they can adopt any means - even violence. But violence is repugnant to the British, so the aim also becomes repugnant; hence the Indian revolutionaries are villains. This is the 'objectivity' that Duncan and other Anglo-Indians practised.

Duncan was a woman who stood up for the cause of her own country - Canada - against the claims of Britain and the U.S.A. She had established, through her writings, Canada's supremacy over both the other countries. She was a woman who was a Canadian nationalist through and through, who rejected every kind of foreign hegemony over Canada - economic, social or cultural. But when in India, she forgot all the precepts she stood for and only remembered that she was a white Anglo-Saxon, far superior to the coloured Indians. The Indians, she thought, should feel 'lucky' that they had such superior and competent rulers and should accept without a murmur, the justice and law administered to them by the British. They should gratefully accept the crumbs which fall into their laps due to the charity of their great rulers.

As Fowler points out in Redney, Duncan's life in India was unhappy, a waste in the arid cultural desert. Her writings are a cry of anguish, a desire for freedom from the cruel life of India. Yet she wouldn't let the Indians have their freedom, wouldn't let the British go. One may ask why did Duncan live in India, a cultural wasteland? This is characteristic of the Anglo-Indian double-speak. The reason the British were in India was economic - the reason Duncan
stayed on was mercenary - yet they lament their alienation, suffering and exile. The lament perhaps indicates that they were not being allowed to loot India 'comfortably' - Indians were becoming violent, so life in India was becoming risky. Still, they would not go. Was India, then all that bad? It becomes apparent how much of this lament was propaganda and how much was fact. There is a basic dishonesty in this whole approach, the dishonesty symbolized by the white man's burden.

"Two tides that did not mingle"(B.O.:120), is an apt description of the two communities who lived in India but never mixed with each other. Though attempts are made, they remain separate. In the "Ladies League" party, where Indian women are also invited, refreshments are "Our kinds and their kinds"(110). They sit in separate groups and eat different food. There seems to be very little in common between the "ladies of the zenana and the ladies of the Gymkhana"(113). The two classes, the two races, cannot and should not mix. Mrs. Foley objects to Joan being seen together with Bepin, which is an unnatural union, but Joan is not bothered about the colour of their skin - she is conscious of "What is in the hearts and the minds of these people"(121). The division between the two races is so complete that the Viceroy's band does not play Indian music because "Our instruments aren't adapted to it "(122), says Mrs. Foley.

When Vulcan goes to see Thakore in prison, Thakore is worried that his incarceration might turn Bepin to violence. Thakore's was always the restraining influence on him, but Bepin's burning heart and his passion for 'ganges mother' might make him ruthless. Thakore asks Mills to give Joan in marriage to Bepin,
as he loves her passionately, and "with your daughter to guide him, restrain him and inspire him, to what point might he not carry the cause? My friend, let us make this political marriage" (136). After due hesitation Mills agrees: "She is my offering to your cause and she is all I have" (137). But this marriage will just not be a political marriage. In Anglo-Indian discourse, such marriages were unthinkable. They were very conscious of their superior race, their pure blood, which couldn't be tainted by mixing with the natives. In the rare cases, whenever such a marriage is shown to take place in Anglo-Indian fiction, it is always the white man and an Indian woman. But a marriage between an Indian man and a white woman - which would mean yielding superior status to the Indian - is unheard of, and totally unacceptable. Duncan's suggestion of such a marriage is iconoclastic and not in tune with the conventional pattern. The marriage, ultimately, doesn't take place.

Thakore's case is to be heard by Sir Kristodas, a westernized Indian. It is particularly desirable from the British point of view for a Hindu judge to pass a sentence against him, so that the British wouldn't be accused of bias. Kristodas is troubled at the prospect of trying Thakore in his court since he is a friend as well as a patriot, an Indian fighting for India's cause. Kristodas is one of the Indian loyalists, better drawn than Ahmed Hussein in Set in Authority; he is not shown as an unqualified total sycophant of the British; he is capable of independent judgment of issues, although the sentence he passes is much harsher than expected or deserved. Ultimately he does feel the injustice of his sentence, which produces confusion and even a guilt complex in him. Without the
artificiality attached to Ahmed Hussein, the other pro-British judge, he is more
convincing and genuine; his dilemma of choosing between traditional Indian
values and western ways is more sympathetically portrayed.

Game accused Thakore of ‘mania of hate’, one who "feeds his anger
with his religious fervor"(147). But nowhere in the novel is Thakore shown
angry or spewing hatred! This is just the stereotypical image of any nationalist
that is fixed in Game’s mind - to him, Thakore is just a criminal, a dangerous
agitator.

In response to the question whether he was guilty or not guilty, Thakore
replies: "That I uttered the words complained of I admit, but they constitute any
crime against the law by God or man I absolutely deny"(239). The trial ran for
four days. Thousands stood on way everyday to pay respects to their guru,
"The city had one heart"(241).

Thakore is found guilty and is transported for ten years. He justifies his
conduct in a speech which makes Nagarajan comment that Miss Duncan never
wrote anything finer(1975:81). Thakore specifies that he has no wish to defend
himself, he would like the charges against him to remain associated with him.
He speaks not for himself but for his offence: "I am accused of exciting to
hatred and disaffection; but I submit that these harsh words do not truly describe
the new emotion which is beginning to thrill the hearts of my countrymen"(245).
This emotion-an aspiration for freedom - has given life to people and to him: "I
know that before I found it, I was dead"(245). If the charge is spreading hatred
and disaffection, it is "Not hatred of any person or disaffection to any potentate,
but hatred and disaffection toward the political conditions which were numbing
the manhood, and silencing the voice and destroying the traditions of my own
great and ancient people"(246). He seems to have got divine inspiration against
Pax Britannica. He chose the word of the Lord: "Having found my soul I
looked, my Lord, with the eyes of my soul, for the soul of the Mother. I saw it
dumb and dying in the souls of her sons"(247). From that moment Thakore felt
it to be his sacred duty to deliver the message again and again that Indians must
come out of political bondage; they must tear themselves away from all
dependence on an alien power. This freedom of soul is only the first step; others
will follow; "for God is Mukta - free. He is budha - enlightened. He is suddha -
pure. those who would be clothed with this mission must be all three, but
freedom comes first"(247). The purpose of this emotion-choked and passionate
appeal is not to defend himself, but to stir the conscience and consciousness of
his people to rise up for the cause of freedom of the motherland - whatever be
the cost or sacrifice.

Bal Gangadhar Tilak, on whom Thakore is modelled, seemed to be
fittingly cut out for the role of an inspired prophet of new nationalism in the
country. He was arrested on June 24, 1908, on charges similar to the ones
levelled against Thakore - inciting hatred and exciting disaffection and at his
trial held in Bombay in July, 1908 he fearlessly condemned the British rule and
upheld India's right to independence. In June 1908, two draconian laws, the
Press Act and the Explosives Act were passed, the purpose of which was to gag
the Press. Tilak protested vehemently against these laws through his newspaper
Kesari, in which he criticized the autocratic, unrestricted and irresponsible
behaviour of the English bureaucracy in India. To a question as to what led Indians to commit terrorist acts, Tilak answered that it was "owing to the exasperation produced by the autocratic exercise of power by the unrestrained and powerful English bureaucrats" (*The Times of India*. June 27, 1908). He stressed the point that the Bengali terrorist acts were caused mainly by Lord Curzon's reactionary partition of it in 1905.

In an article dated June 9, 1908, related to the bomb outrage in Muzaffarpur by Khudiram Bose, Tilak defended him and wrote:

> Muskets and Guns may be taken away from the subjects by means of the Arms Act... but is it possible to stop or to do away with the Bomb by means of laws... The Bomb... is a kind of witch-craft, it is a charm, an amulet.... In India it is still a secret knowledge (knowledge of bomb manufacture) but when the number of turnheaded persons increases owing to the stringent enforcement of the policy of repression, what time it takes for the charms and the magical love of Bengal to spread through out India (qtd. in Ahluwalia 1965:329).

For this article, Tilak was arrested and tried. He was assisted by three counsels, though he conducted his own defence. He was transported for six years. Duncan changes the tenor of this defence by infusing religion into Thakore's speech, thus making its effect more emotional but legally less defensible. Still one gets a feeling that the speech is written by a person who is sympathetic to the cause of India's freedom. At least for the duration of the speech the Anglo-Indian bias is missing. There is a spontaneity in the flow of the emotions expressed. But this is
a short respite. Still one wonders, after having written this admirable defence for the need of freedom, how could Duncan condemn these emotions? Even Kristodas is upset after passing the sentence.

It is Duncan's only novel where three Indian characters play an important role. Sir Kristodas' daughter Janaki is the second such character. A child widow, she was later on sent to England and was educated at Oxford. Having come back to India, she along with her father holds liberated westernized views, but because of her inability to erase totally the past traditions remains in a state of continual self-doubt. In Tausky's words: "Duncan has given to a Indian character the moral uncertainties and sensitive if not always successful responses to difficult situations that in the previous works she had reserved for her most cherished English ladies" (1980:255).

The most startling of not only Indian characters, but of all the characters in the novel is Swami Yadava, an ascetic and a spy rolled into one. It is usually the Anglo-Indians who defend the British rule very earnestly. Duncan makes an Indian spiritual Guru Swami Yadava take up the cause of the British and defend their presence in India. She adopts the marriage metaphor popular in Anglo-Indian novels - i.e., the marriage between England and India, which makes England the husband of India - as an effective strategy to justify the continuance of British presence in India. Swami Yadava is totally against the nationalists who wish to throw the English out of India, as it would tantamount to killing the father and making their country - their mother - a widow. The Victorian concept of the superiority of men over women, or masculinity over femininity explains
the evolution of this metaphor. Masculinity became synonymous with dominance. Thus England masquerading as a husband fits in with the accepted image of the colonizer - that of manliness, aggression and control. Nandy points out: "The Brahman in his cerebral, self-denying asceticism was the traditional masculine counterpoint to the more violent, 'virile', active Ksatriya, the latter representing - however odd this may seem to the modern consciousness - the feminine principle in the cosmos"(1983:10). When Swami Yadava calls the British the "white kshatriyas", the warrior class/caste of India whose function is to defend and protect the land, it appears that even Duncan is not aware of this role-reversal, as the comment, ironically, places the British on the feminine plane. The Swami is simply a plant by Duncan, her own spokesman, who thinks India is a pit which the English have, at a considerable cost, administered and developed. They have faced disease, ingratitude and rebellion in the process: "We have drained England of her best blood and her best brains"(B.O.:168). Kipling, or any other imperialist couldn't have done a better job in putting forth so forcefully the concept of the white man's burden. The Swami attacks Mills, calls freedom a "wild vision", and claims he has come to stop all this shame being heaped on the mother. The Swami along with other British characters hates violence, but never once questions the circumstances which give birth to it.

He is a pseudo-Swami, a willing tool in Duncan's hands to break the spirit of Indian resistance and a wry and diabolical trick to make an Indian fawn before the English. He is also successful in swaying Kristodas against the nationalists. Later on, the Swami becomes a police informer. Woodcock
comments that "Yadava is the least authentic of all characters... and this is perhaps because he is so obviously derived from the Tibetan Lama who played a similar role in Kipling's *Kim*" (1983:225).

"The plot of *The Burnt Offering* is exceedingly melo-dramatic, more so than the events on which it is modelled" (Tausky 1980:248). Duncan could not write any work without melodramatic effects. Joan's attempt to get married to Bepin along with the denouement of the novel are treated melodramatically.

The character Duncan despises most is that of Joan Mills, observes Tausky, on the authority of Greenberger who states, "the giving up of any part of the British way of life was believed to be the worst thing that one could do" (qtd. in Tausky 1980:259). Joan is a woman, who otherwise would have been favoured by Duncan. She is liberated, modern, adventurous, one who knows her mind. Despite all her fine traits, her one drawback - sympathy with the Indians - outweighs all her virtues.

To marry an Indian was itself a folly, but to marry an Indian nationalist was the greatest blunder of all. Both Beauchamp and Game decide to stop the marriage between Bepin and Joan by arresting Bepin in connection with a dacoity. Although there is no warrant for Bepin's arrest, Beauchamp personally sends a request to the Magistrate for the Warrant as Bepin ought to be arrested before he marries Joan. After an unnecessary chase and some melodramatic excitement, Bepin is arrested and thus the marriage does not take place. The honour of the British Empire, which was at stake, the purity of the white people's blood, which was on the point of being contaminated, and the ideals of

252
a superior race which were on the point of being compromised, all are saved by the timely arrest of Bepin. Duncan saves herself from showing the unpalatable situation of the solemnization of a mixed marriage. She doesn't break the taboo, consequently the two tides do not mingle. Later on, Bepin commits suicide, thus foreclosing future options too.

The last of the melodramas is yet to be played out. The Viceroy at the University function announced some unlooked for concessions, "bringing the university into relation with examinations for certain superior grades of the Bengal Civil Service" (312). And what an astonishing effect it had on the audience. They leapt upon chairs to cheer the Viceroy, "It was England and the man they cheered, even more than the concessions-then, as ever, England and the man" (312). The most melodramatic of all scenes is when the students, who were in the forefront of the national agitation sang "God save our noble king!" and the Viceroy replied by saying "Bande Mataram" (Hail, Motherland), the clarion call of the nationalists: "It was the watchword of the nascent nation, unloved by authority, dear to the people, and as they caught it from him his audience laughed and sobbed together, and would have carried him out like a Krishna image at the festival of Vishnu, the Preserver of men" (313).

There is no record of a Viceroy ever saying "Bande Mataram". And if the reference is to the Minto-Morley Reforms of 1909, they were much wider in scope and much more elaborate than what Duncan has hinted at.

There can be two explanations for Duncan resorting to this gimmick. First, it is a message for the Anglo-Indians—that Indians being childish and emotional, can be easily won over even by the smallest of sops, so a little more
consideration to them could solve many problems. Second, there is a message for Indians - that peace and harmony can only be had by bowing to England, only then, in its magnanimity, will England dole out some concessions. Duncan is being very naive as she suggests that one can choke the soul of India, yet make her happy by offering her some gifts.

The title of the novel has been variously explained and analysed. In Dean's opinion: "Duncan attempts to modify the popular nineteenth-century marriage metaphor using the topical issue of Indian suttee - in a sense, she sees India as a widow willing to throw herself into the flames of social chaos after the death of her marriage with "Father England" (1984:103). This, however, is not the basic philosophy of suttee as it is not the death of the marriage, but the death of the husband that necessitates the sacrifice. Fowler feels that "The Burnt Offering" of the title, that is the sacrifice on the altar of empire of such finely principled men as John Game, is a metaphor for Redney's own burnt offering, the sacrifice of her talent in India's burning sands (1984:281). The title, in fact, refers to the futile sacrifices people make for various causes. Mills offers his daughter Joan as a sacrifice to the cause of Indian nationalism. The offerings of Thakore and Bepin for the nation are also burnt, turn futile, as they are unable to bring in any changes. If we accept that the title symbolizes the marriage metaphor, i.e. marriage between India and England, it becomes a burnt offering, as marriage without love is not really a marriage.

Nagarajan (1975) opines that the agitation against the English failed because it had several ambiguous features, and the title reflects this ambiguity.
But the significance of the title is clear as it refers to the plethora of useless sacrifices. At the end of the novel Bepin and Joan are permanently separated and humiliated and nationalism is trivialized. The superiority of British imperialism is established through the glorification of the British characters and the disgrace of the Indian characters. One recalls how true is the picture of Canada painted in *The Imperialist* and how false is the portraiture of the Indians in *The Burnt Offering*. Duncan's approach in *The Imperialist* was balanced and aesthetically objective, whereas in *The Burnt Offering* it is one sided, biased and stereotypical. There is a historical authenticity of ideas and principles in the former novel, as against a blatant disregard of the feelings and aspirations of the Indians in the latter.

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It can thus be concluded that Duncan ultimately achieved the aim of her life: to establish her superiority over others. When she couldn't achieve this aim in Canada, she migrated to India. From the beginning one can sense the strains of this feeling of superiority in her journalism, though critics have described it variously. Goodwin(1964) terms it as "a conscious aristocratic feeling", Tausky (1980) calls it "a tone of amused superior detachment", while Mckenna(1980) thinks it is `a defense of taste'. However, the most revealing comment also comes from Tausky when he observes that the real subject of both Duncan's journalism and fiction is "I". The preoccupation with "I" suggests an obsession with `self', which is essentially a colonial trait. What appears to critics as `a
defense of taste' or 'conscious aristocratic feeling, is in fact, the seed of a colonial mentality which sprouts into full bloom in India, where Duncan turns out to be a true colonizer, a *pucca* memsahib. That she remained a Canadian till the end, or that she was different from other Anglo-Indians is a mis-conception.

Misao Dean, in *A Different Point of View*(1991), asserts that Duncan was consciously a Canadian as she had adopted the Canadian ideal of reconciliation. Further, the moral constant in Duncan's portrayal of political rivalries was preservation of affectionate ties between races and nations. While making these claims, Dean fails to perceive the fact that both the ideal of reconciliation and the moral constant of affectionate ties are not uniformly applied by Duncan. These concepts do not percolate to India. The analysis of her Anglo-Indian novels makes it amply clear that while dealing with the Indian reality, Duncan consistently displays a 'Double Vision' and practises double standards. The British ideal of the Empire could not be reconciled with the Indian reality, as the British interests were contrary to the Indian aspirations. Infact, her Anglo-Indian works move in the opposite direction - towards establishing `difference'. In *The Burnt Offering*, Duncan describes the two communities as "Two tides that did not mingle"(120). In none of the Anglo-Indian novels does one discover Duncan as a Canadian. Whereas *The Imperialist* and *Cousin Cinderella* celebrate Canadian supremacy over British claims of importance, her Indian novels sing the praises of the British Empire.

Duncan rejected the idea of Canada as a dependency of England; she considered the Canadians and the Britishers as equals; yet she accepted and
propagated the myth of British superiority in India. A microscopic minority among the Anglo-Indians dared to question the basis of this sense of superiority, doubted the veracity of this belief, and proposed a harmonious and humanitarian concept of co-existence and co-operation. Duncan did not belong to this group. She was a fully convinced and converted imperialist. In Canada she had to always contend with the standards set by the British and the Americans; Once in India, this struggle came to an end, as the standards of the white race were pre-established. It was perhaps with a sense of smug satisfaction that she looked at the Indians. In her movement from the margin to the centre of the empire, she had achieved what she had always aspired for - a sense of self-importance.

While evaluating Duncan as an Anglo-Indian writer, Tausky, in *Novelist of Empire* (1980), observes several features that Duncan shared with contemporary writers. However, he points out certain differences too. She wrote about urban rather than rural India; Anglo-Indians have been writers of romance, but Duncan is a writer of realism; and Duncan would seem to have been the only novelist of her time who wrote in satiric terms about Anglo-Indian urban bureaucracy. One must point out that Duncan's realism is marred by her use of romantic notions and melodrama as well as by her bias against the Indians. The Indians are not portrayed truthfully - they are represented stereotypically, in an arrested, fixated representation. Further, her satire is directed only against those bureaucrats who, by word or deed, oppose British high-handedness and injustice, and thus appear to be favourably inclined towards India. When ideologically she was one with the Anglo-Indians, any differences that are discernible become insignificant.

257
Birbalsingh presents by far the most authentic assessment of Duncan as a novelist. While discussing her serious Anglo-Indian works in "Sara Jeannette Duncan's Indian Fiction" (1977), he faults them for their perfunctory plots, undramatic action and hollow characters. The novels provide only generalized information and popular opinions; personal reactions and definite Indian responses are not conveyed. The neglect of psychological implications makes these works interesting as social documents, not as works of fiction. Hence, Birbalsingh contends: "Duncan's role as a novelist must be taken essentially as that of a publicist... But where a coherent theme - Imperialism - is involved... the author's role as a publicist is artistically damaging" (75). It leads to confusion, uncertainties and contrived denouements, as is borne out by the analysis of the texts in this chapter.

Essentially, then, Duncan turns out to be a publicist, a propagandist for British imperialism. Her literary effort in India was obviously in line with the established British colonial discourse; consequently, her achievement is equally superficial.