Chapter One

The Colonial Discourse

Writing is not a free enterprise. An author is not a free agent. He is bound by the socio-political forces, the interplay of which circumscribes, influences, guides and controls his writings. Thus, any writing, or any discourse can be explained and understood within a context.

According to Michel Foucault, all communication is social. The meaning of discourse depends upon its context and its relation to other discourses. In other words, discourse is 'intertextual', i.e. dependant on other texts. There is no pure, unmediated, independent or unsullied text.

Foucault's theory of discourse presents a critique of a particular form of rationality which has dominated western thought since enlightenment. Foucault is not interested in explaining the sheer content of a text. In his analysis of discourse the emphasis is not merely on what is being said; his concern is why some things are said rather than others. Writing of a discourse means undergoing a process of rejection, selection and projection. Underlying this process is a complex relationship between desire and power. Foucault analyses texts in terms of 'socio-political context' of the production of knowledge, and not just their content. Discourse disseminates knowledge. It involves the process of inclusion/exclusion of certain concepts and thoughts. Writers are not free to create a discourse since discourses are a group of statements pertaining to a certain object of knowledge. The social
conditions responsible for such structuring of discourses have been investigated by Foucault in *The Order of Discourse* (1970).

In every society, discourses are controlled. Foucault links discourse that is a "will to knowledge" with a desire on the one hand and institutional constraints on the other. Discourse constitutes both the object and the manifestation of desire. It is also linked to power; rather discourse is the power which is to be seized. The struggle to control discourse takes place through discourse itself. Thus it becomes a power struggle.

Foucault conceives of power as a relation between forces; any or every relation between forces is "power relation". The individual desires an unrestrained freedom to express what he wishes (discourse); he wishes to exercise his power through "will to knowledge". But institutions would like to put constraints on such power; would like to control and manage him in order to appropriate power for their own purposes. There is a constant tug of war between these forces to exercise power which, according to Foucault, is a strategy, a technique, a methodology and not a property or possession of a dominant class, state or sovereign. It circulates through the social body and functions in the form of a chain in which all are caught.

The effects of the nexus of power and knowledge in society is explained by Foucault in "Order of Discourse", his inaugural lecture at the College de France, delivered on December 2, 1970. "In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organized and redistributed by a certain number of procedures whose role is to ward off its
powers and dangers, to gain mastery over its chance events, to evade its ponderous, formidable materiality" (1981:52).

The procedures mentioned above deal with those of exclusion/inclusion, practised for gaining mastery over discourse. It involves the legitimization of a certain perspective over the others and to fix norms for analysis of concepts. To think outside this order of discourse, then, is to be considered mad, to be beyond comprehension and therefore beyond reason. It is in this way that discursive rules are linked to the exercise of power.

The social control acting on discourse makes it imperative for us to locate discourse in its social and political context. Discourse is to be studied in relation to power, as a form of power and as a way of creating and maintaining social divisions. Discourse is also a power which may be seized to subvert these divisions (Tilley 1989:45).

The colonial situation was a happy hunting ground for the West to display and use its authority and discriminatory power through a subtle control over the colonial discourse. It is in the colonial margin, while exercising power through discourses, that the articulation of forms of difference emerge. It is when confronted with the question of the 'other' that the culture of the West reveals its true colours.

The idea of the 'other' in colonial discourse is a fixed one, denoting a cultural or racial difference. According to Homi Bhabha, in his article "The Other Question...." this 'fixity' is paradoxical as it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and demonic repetition. Similarly, stereotype which is the "major discursive strategy" of
colonial discourse, "is a form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place', already known, and something that must be anxiously repeated" (1983:18). It is this ambivalence that is central to the colonial stereotype, and is one of the most significant discursive and psychical strategies of discriminatory power (18).

Homi Bhabha believes that colonial discourse is an apparatus of power that revolves round the recognition and disavowal of social, cultural and historical differences. Its main strategic function is to create a space for "subject peoples' through the production of knowledges of colonizer and colonized which are stereotypical but antithetically evaluated. The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction (Bhabha 1986:154).

The two points that Bhabha stresses here are (a) colonial discourse emphasizes the differences between the colonizer and the colonized on racial/cultural/historical plane, and (b) the strategy used to highlight this difference is the stereotypical depiction of the colonizer and the colonized which is antithetically evaluated. This stereotype, Bhabha asserts, is dependent on ambivalence: "It is the force of ambivalence that gives the colonial stereotype its currency: ensures its repeatability in changing historical and discursive conjectures; informs its strategies of individualization and marginalization; produces that effect of probabilistic
truth and predictability which, for stereotypes, must always be in excess of what can be empirically proved or logically construed" (ibidem: 148-49).

The colonized is always represented as a fixed reality which is an 'other' and at the same time, knowable and visible. Bhabha disagrees with Edward Said's formulation that colonial discourse is possessed entirely by the colonizer, and terms it as an historical and theoretical simplification. The terms in which Said's Orientalism are unified - which is, the intentionality and unidirectionality of colonial power - also unifies the subject of colonial enunciation (ibidem: 158). Bhabha points out to a passage in Said where Said does recognize the double consciousness of colonial discourse:

One tends to stop judging things either as completely novel or as completely well-known; a new median category emerges, a category that allows one to see new things; things seen for the first time, as version of a previously known thing. In essence, such a category is not so much a way of receiving new information as it is a method of controlling what seems to be a threat to some established view of things.... The Orient at large, therefore, vacillates between the West's contempt for what is familiar and its shivers of delight in - or fear of - novelty (qtd. in Bhabha 1986: 159-60).

This vacillation between recognition and repulsion, feels Bhabha, is similar to the Freudian concept of fetishism that circulates within the discourse.
of colonial power. The link between the fixation of the fetish and the stereotype is even more important:

For fetishism is always a 'play' or vacillation between the archaic affirmation of wholeness/similarity - in Freud's terms: 'All men have penises'; in ours: 'All men have same skin/race/culture; and the anxiety associated with lack of difference' - again, for Freud: 'Some do not have penises'; for us: 'Some do not have the same skin/race/culture'. Within discourse, the fetish represents the simultaneous play between metaphor as substitution (making absence and difference) and metonymy (which contiguously registers the perceived lack)(ibidem:161).

The site of fetishism is also the site which gives rise to the subject's "primal fantasy" - the desire for pure origin" that is always threatened by a fear of its division. Thus the stereotype becomes the focal point of subjectification in colonial discourse for both colonizers and colonized, as it is the scene of similar fantasy and defence - the desire for originality that is endangered by the difference of race, colour and culture"(ibidem:162).

Bhabha, adding to his analysis of stereotype in colonial discourse, further identifies fetishistic representation in the Lacanian scheme of the Imaginary. The Imaginary is the transformation that takes place in the subject at the formative mirror phase, as the subject finds or recognizes itself through an image which is simultaneously alienating and hence
potentially confrontational (163-64). This is the basis of the close relation between the two forms of identification complicit with the Imaginary: narcissism and aggressivity. It is precisely these two forms of identification that constitute the dominant strategy of colonial power exercised in relation to the stereotype which, as a form of multiple and contradictory belief, gives knowledge of difference and simultaneously disavows or masks it (164).

Analyzing colonial discourse, Abdul JanMohamed, in his essay "The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonial Literature" (1985), states that a majority of critics ignore the domination, manipulation and exploitation built in any cultural artefact or relationship. He finds fault with Bhabha in this respect. Bhabha's criticism, JanMohamed asserts, is based on two assumptions: the unity of the "colonial subject" and the "ambivalence" of colonial discourse that are inadequately problematized and finally unwarranted and unacceptable. In rejecting Edward Said's suggestion that colonial discourse is possessed entirely by the colonizer, Bhabha projects the colonial discourse as belonging both to the colonizer and the colonized. The problems of such a unity of discourse and its inherent contradictions are termed as the 'problematics of an "ambivalence"'. "By dismissing 'intentionalist' readings of such discourse as 'idealist' quests", Bhabha implies that "its 'authority' is genuinely and innocently confused, unable to choose between two equally valid meanings and representations" (JanMd.1985:60). An examination of such an 'ideological discourse' in relation to 'actual imperial practices' reveals that any evident "ambivalence" is in fact a
product of duplicity, operating very efficiently through the economy of its central trope, the manichean allegory (ibidem: 61).

A correct appraisal of colonial discourse can be made, argues JanMohamed, with the help of Fanon's concept of 'Manichean Allegory'. Fanon, in *Wretched of the Earth* (1968) writes: "The colonial world is a Manichean world... As if to show the totalitarian character of colonial exploitation the settler paints the native as a sort of quintessence of evil. Native society is not simply described as a society lacking values. He is, let us dare to admit, the enemy of values and in this sense, he is absolutely evil" (41). Manichean allegory is an economy that is based on a transformation of racial difference into moral or even metaphysical difference. The origin of the manichean transformation may lie in the "neutral" perception of physical difference (skin colour, physical features etc.), its allegorical extensions came to dominate every facet of imperialist mentality (JanMd. 1985: 61).

The relationship of power and interest in a colony is based, according to JanMohamed, on the manichean opposition between the supposed superiority of the European on the one hand and the supposed inferiority of the native on the other. This manichean code of representation consists of a series of fixed oppositions such as white/black, good/evil, superiority/inferiority, civilization/savagery, intelligence/emotion, rationality/sensuality, self/other, subject/object. The power relations underlying this code of recognition are so strong that even writers who are
very critical of imperialism succumb and are forced to conform to the existing racial and cultural preconceptions.

JanMohamed divides colonialism into two phases: the "dominant" and the "hegemonic". The "dominant" phase begins at the time of the first establishment of the colony and lasts till the colony becomes politically independent. This is a period of direct physical control, and the "consent" of the native is primarily passive and indirect. The native is not subjected, though his land is. His culture also remains fairly integrated because the colonizer labels both the native and his culture "savage". "By contrast, in the hegemonic phase (or neo-colonialism) the natives accept a version of the entire system of values, attitudes, morality, institutions, and more important, mode of production" (JanMohamed 1985:62). This phase depends on the native's "active and direct consent. By the time a colony enters the 'hegemonic' phase (i.e. when it becomes independent) the colonized "internalize" all the forms of Western social and cultural attitudes.

JanMohamed points to the exploitative nature of colonialism, when he explains the nexus between the "material" and "discursive" aims of the colonizer, which helps us "to understand more clearly the contradictions between the covert and the overt aspects of colonialism. While the covert purpose is to exploit the colony's natural resources thoroughly and ruthlessly..., the overt aim is ...to justify imperial occupation and exploitation" (62). By depicting the native as evil, if it can be shown that his "barbarism is irrevocable, or at least deeply ingrained", the exploitation under the guise of "civilizing" mission can go on indefinitely. The real purpose of
colonial fiction, thus, is dependent on the needs and demands of the colonizer's politics, and the colonized is accorded no importance in this scheme. In this way the nexus between the material and discursive practices becomes crystallized. "Just as imperialists "administer" the resources of the conquered country, so the colonial discourse "commodifies" the native subject into a stereotyped object... negating his individuality, his subjectivity, so that he is now perceived as a generic being that can be exchanged for any other native (they all look alike, act alike, and so on)"(64). The variety and diversity of images is determined simply by using the binary opposition of Manichean allegory.

This attitude of inherent moral superiority forecloses the options of colonialist literature to honestly explore and portray the 'Other'. Thus what is achieved is the reflection of the Europeans' own mentality, an echo of their own thoughts. JanMohamed terms such literature as "essentially specular: instead of seeing the native as a bridge toward syncratic possibility, it uses him as a mirror that reflects the colonialist's self image"(65).

Accordingly, colonialist literature is divisible into two broad categories - the "imaginary" and the "symbolic". In the "imaginary" texts, JanMohamed explains that

the native functions as an image of the imperialist self in such a manner that it reveals the latter's self-alienation... in the "imaginary" colonialist realm, to say "native" is automatically to say "evil", to evoke immediately the economy of Manichean
allegory.... The writer of such texts tends to fetishize a non-dialectical, fixed opposition between the self and the native. Threatened by a metaphysical alterity that he has created, he quickly retreats to the homogeneity of his own group. Consequently, his psyche and texts tend to be much closer to and are often entirely occluded by the ideology of his group. Writers of the "symbolic" texts, on the other hand, are willing to examine the specific difference between Europeans and natives, and to reflect upon the efficacy of European values, assumptions and habits in contrast to those of the indigenous cultures(1985:65-66).

Thus both Homi Bhabha and JanMohamed dwell upon the importance of "difference" between the 'self' and the 'other' in colonial literature.

Analyzing the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized from a psychological point of view, O.Mannoni in Prospero and Caliban: The Psychology of Colonization(1964) points out the error in seeing this difference between the whites/non-whites or occident/orient on an hierarchical basis. The difference is surely there but it does not make the European/colonizer superior and the non-European/colonized inferior. Difference occurs because the structure of the personality is different in the two cases.

Mannoni observed the Malagasies of Madagascar to point out the differences in value systems, in social outlook and individual behaviour of the Malagasy colonized on the one hand and the European colonizers on the other.
Commenting on difference in the behaviour, Mannoni opines that the Malagasy suffers from a dependence complex, because he belongs to a static society. If a person does a favour to a Malagasy, he sticks to him, considers him his master and expects more from him without showing any gratitude. The Malagasy behaves as if he had established a right on him and that person owes him a duty. This is not so in case one does a favour to a man belonging to the Western society (which Mannoni terms as a 'competitive society'); he would either pay back, or if he is unable to pay back, he would avoid him. How this difference in behaviour occurs is explained by Philip Mason in the Foreword to Prospero and Caliban:

the structure of the personality is different in the two cases.
In a static society ... the individual is safely dependent on a complicated social system which, in the case of the Malagasy, usually includes not only the living members of the group but dead ancestors and unborn posterity. The arrival of even one representative of the competitive society - immune from local forms of magic... - threatens the peace of this primitive but complicated structure; the dilemma is admirably expressed in Victorian romances... in which the white man among an unknown African people must either become king or be sacrificed to their God(1964:10).

If after being accepted the native is abandoned, he feels cheated and betrayed and turns to animosity. If the whole society is thus rejected, same emotions
erupt on a wider scale. This dependence complex is the key to understanding the personality structure of the Malagasy:

He does not say 'Thank You' but attaches himself as a dependent. And this meets exactly the psychological need of the 'Colonial European'. Everyone in a competitive society is, to some degree, the victim of an inferiority complex, which may be expressed in a manly determination to make good, in a desire for perfection... in a tiresome aggressiveness, in a hundred other forms. To the spirit convinced of its own inferiority, the homage of a dependent is balm and honey and to surround oneself with dependents is perhaps the easiest way of appeasing an ego eager for reassurance. Mannoni suggests that the colonial administrator, the missionary and the pioneer show themselves, by choosing a colonial career, particularly prone to this weakness, of which the germ is present in every member of a competitive society and flourishes with peculiar luxuriance in the warm broth of the colonial situation(ibidem:11-12).

This mentality, Mannoni claims, is an integral part of human nature and not an outcome of the colonial situation, as proved by the fact that Shakespeare understood and delineated the colonial type in Prospero, "the escapist deeply reluctant to give up his magic, to leave his desert island and return to the society of people who would argue with him"(12).
Prospero avoids Ariel, the good native, but is very harsh on Caliban, the bad native. Prospero is a leader among the weak, the unequals, an upstart and a harsh dictator; qualities typical of a colonial ruler. Mannoni brings to light the fact that the dependence complex and the inferiority complex are present in some form in almost everyone; the difference is that most Europeans repress one and most Malagasies the other. Although Mannoni confines his analysis to Madagascar, much of what he says has much wider application, to "India in the nineteenth century and Africa in the twentieth"(13).

Edward Said, in *Orientalism*(1978) also dwells on the importance of the concept of 'difference' in colonial discourse. Defining Orientalism, Said writes, "Orientalism is a style of thought based upon an ontological and epistemological distinction made between 'the Orient' and (most of the time) 'the Occident'"(2). A plethora of writers - literary, philosophical, political and even imperial administrators have accepted this basic difference as the starting point for elaborate theories, epics, novels, social and political accounts(ibidem:2).

Foucault maintains that in every society discourses are controlled, and there is a constant clash between personal desire for uninhibited discourse and institutional constraints which control and restrain individual freedom. In a similar vein, Said compares institutional restraint with the controlling influence the concept of orientalism had on authors writing about the Orient. The concept of orientalism, according to Said had such a hold and power that

no one writing, thinking or acting in the Orient could do so without taking account of the limitations on thought and action imposed by orientalism. In brief, because of
orientalism, the Orient was not (and is not) a free subject of thought and action... it is a whole network of interests inevitably brought to bear on (and therefore always involved in) any occasion when that particular entity "the Orient" is in question (1978:3).

Thus the relationship between the Occident and the Orient, according to Said, is a relationship of power, domination and hegemony. This further exemplifies the Foucauldian concept of the nexus between power and knowledge, how power is seized through control over discourse. A white man, imbied with this spirit comes up against the Orient as a white man first, and as an individual second. He considers himself as part of a dominant power structure, and is willing to go along the established tradition or discourse. This relationship is such as nobody can or wants to forget. Thus, orientalism is a
distribution of geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts; it is an elaboration not only of a basic geographical distinction... but also of a whole series of "interests"... it is, rather than expresses, a certain will or intention to understand, in some cases to control, [to] manipulate what is manifestly different (or alternative or novel) world (ibidem:12).

The hold of "political imperialism" on the entire field of study, imagination and scholarly institutions is such as to make its avoidance an
intellectual and historical impossibility (ibidem:13). For example, Said mentions John Stuart Mill who, in his treatise *On Liberty and Representative Government*, explicitly states that "his views there could not be applied to India because the Indians were civilizationally, if not racially inferior"(14).

Those writers who interpreted the Orient for the benefit of the west, remained essentially "outside the Orient". This exteriority produced only representation, not truth. Said says that the "Orient makes sense at all depends more on the west than on the Orient, and this sense is directly indebted to various Western techniques of representation... and these representations rely upon institutions, traditions, conventions, agreed upon codes of understanding for their effects, not upon a distant and amorphous Orient"(22).

As the Europeans were always in a position of strength, they perpetuated the concept of difference of 'self' versus the 'other'. Inbuilt in this division is the concept of power and control. The representation of the colonial subject is based on the supposed strength of the West against the supposed weakness of the East. Said calls this attitude a 'textual attitude', akin to the one followed by Don Quixote, "Reality as visualized from a bookish angle." Such a reality gets the backing of scholars, institutions and governments, helping it become more authoritative and successful. Such works thus create not only knowledge, but also the very reality they appear to describe. In time such knowledge and reality produce a tradition, or what Foucault calls a discourse, whose material pressure or weight, *not the*
originality of a given author is really responsible for the texts produced out of it (Said 1978:94).

Thus, the projection overrides the truth and the discourse perpetuates the myth of superior/inferior. Such ideas were exploited for political purposes, and these resulted in the stereotypical "cultural, racial or historical generalizations" (ibidem:96). The stranglehold of such a discourse over the writers is all-powerful and unbreakable. The individual or personal reaction is suppressed by the pressures of an established, ongoing discourse.

Even a thinker of the calibre of Karl Marx, says Said, succumbed to the pressures and definitions that analysed, explained and monopolized the Orient, generalized and stereotyped the Oriental, and left no scope for any individual writer to deviate from a tradition of self-esteem and domination. Instead of sympathizing with the Orient on the destruction of its heritage and culture, Marx felt that through the traumatic transformation, Britain was instrumental in pushing forward a real social revolution:

England, its true, is causing a social revolution in the Hindustan was actuated only by the vilest interests and was stupid in her manner of enforcing them. But that is not the question. The question is, can mankind fulfil its destiny without a fundamental revolution in the social state of Asia? If not, whatever may have been the crimes of England, she was the unconscious tool of history in bringing about that revolution (qtd. in Said 1978:153).
Marx does show some sympathy for the poor Asians, but it seems, ultimately submits to a greater force operating over the reality of the East. This force, this concept of orientalism, is what Foucault has termed as the power of the institutions which want to seize the discourse for their own purposes. Consequently, 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; 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 (ibidem: 178). Said further adds:

It is therefore correct that every European in what he could say about the Orient was consequently a racist, an imperialist, and almost totally ethnocentric... human societies, at least the more advanced cultures, have rarely offered the individual anything but imperialism, racism and ethnocentrism for dealing with "other" cultures.... My contention is that orientalism is fundamentally a political doctrine willed over the Orient because orient was weaker than the West, which elided the Orient's differences with its weakness" (1978: 204).

With the concept of the white man was associated the idea of being great, glorious, powerful. In the colonies it entailed a certain behaviour and a particular code of conduct, a smug sense of superiority. Social Darwinism provided a 'scientific' basis to racial inequality. Hence the native was typed, categorized and consequently dehumanized:
The truth about distinctive differences between races, civilizations, and languages was (or pretended to be) radical and ineradicable. It went to the bottom of things, it asserted that there was no escape from origins and the types these origins enabled, it set the real boundaries between human beings, on which races, nations and civilizations were constructed (ibidem: 233).

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The colonial encounter between the Europeans/Whites and Asians and Africans/Non-Whites and blacks, was a direct result of the imperialist/expansionist plans of the Europeans which coincided with their growing scientific and technical advancement, coupled with growing military might. The motives were, to begin with, purely and simply economic and exploitative. They remained so till the end. European historians, thinkers, philosophers and sociologists have tried to camouflage this basic truth by clothing it in various layers of concepts, ideologies, philosophies and justifications. By such manipulations, they were able to distort the reality under a barrage of extremely sophisticated propaganda: the myth of white man's superiority, the white man's duty and responsibility as God's chosen, and the white man's burden. These myths got so concretized in the white man's psyche that these became the gospel truth and remained so for
generations, while reality and truth became a martyr to a distortion, a manipulation, an image. Colonial discourse is a manifestation of this distortion, this manipulation, this image.

The British - Indian encounter was an encounter between two totally different cultures. And no two cultures can really understand one another or appreciate divergent social nuances when their viewpoint is clouded by prejudices. Thus, when the British and Indian races, with different ethnic backgrounds and diverse philosophies came in contact with each other, it was only natural they failed to comprehend each other. This lack of comprehension resulted in biases and misunderstandings.

A genuine desire to understand the 'Other' and an honest effort to bridge this 'difference' can perhaps yield positive results. A genuine and thorough comprehension of otherness is possible only if the self can somehow negate or at least severely bracket the values, assumptions and ideology of his culture (JanMd. 1985:65).

In any non-totalitarian social system, "certain cultural forms predominate over others; the form of this cultural leadership is what Gramsci has identified as hegemony" (Said1978:7). This hegemony is the signpost of Western cultural thought that identifies the Europeans as "us" (self) and the non-Europeans as "those" (others), wherein lies the concept of superiority of the European peoples over non-European peoples. There is, in addition, the hegemony of European ideas about the orient, which reiterate European superiority over oriental backwardness, usually overriding the possibility that a more independent or more skeptical thinker might have had different views on the matter (ibidem:7).
Juneja, in his essay "Towards a Theory of the Novel of Colonial Consciousness" (1990), referring to the exploitative nature of colonialism comments: "By circulating the myth of the inferiority of the colonized and getting it reinforced through the education system, the colonizer gets it internalized by the colonized. The internalized myth of the inferiority of the colonized eats into the fabric of the social, religious and cultural life of the colonized" (22). Consequently, the colonized is forced to accept the myth of his inferiority as truth.

Thus, we find inbuilt in the concept of "self" and the "other" an hierarchical relationship between the superior and the inferior. This difference becomes the basis of a distinction, a gap, a chasm which just cannot be bridged. What "I" am, the "other" is not, and what the "other" is, "I" cannot be. This becomes the "mantra" of the colonizer. Colonial discourse, thus, is a celebration of this difference, which was assiduously cultivated and at no point forgotten.

The colonial discourse which the British wrote in India reflects the Anglo-Indian encounter, its high and low points, its hopes and despairs. A large part of this literature, which consists of memoirs, reminiscences, travelogues, commentaries, short stories and novels, was written by British officers, their wives, visitors and sometimes by those who had not even visited India but based their writings on heresy and existing stereotypes. These people were neither keen observers nor did they possess sensitive perceptions. Thus, what we get is a one sided picture of the times - full of cliches, pre-conceived notions, stereotyped images, a set system of beliefs, retrograde ideas, and home
cooked philosophies. These people and their writings were products of their culture and politics, which is a natural corollary of the Western consciousness and the importance attributed to its centrality in the scheme of things. Said, in *Orientalism* maintains: "Too often literature and culture are presumed to be politically, even historically innocent; it has regularly seemed otherwise to me" (1978:27).

As a consequence the picture frame is full of Britishers: Indians barely make their presence felt. And when the Britishers do notice Indians, they look at them through coloured glasses - glasses coloured by prejudice, a sense of superiority, a notion of being privileged. An offshoot of this attitude was that Indians were looked down upon. Such delusions, says Benita Parry, in *Delusions and Discoveries* (1972), aborted discovery, encouraged generalizations, nullified the value of truth and precluded an appreciation of what could just be "different", not necessarily inferior. The Anglo-British relationship was a confrontation between philosophical systems, ethical doctrines and different styles of life, which imperilled mutual understanding (Parry 1972:3). The British failed to understand Indian customs and traditions, which to them seemed mysterious as well as obscene.

The British had come to India to fulfil their imperialistic goals. India was to be a good source of raw material and a ready market for British manufactured goods. "British rule was hardly the altruistic undertaking advertised by mission - happy Anglo-Indian officials. The cost of foreign rule and of Britain's imperial ventures in Asia and middle East was borne by the Indian people" (ibidem:10).
The Indians were viewed as a degenerated people, with a decaying culture. A reforming impulse then, became a very important part of the British creed. The British became the self-appointed guides and philosophers for the uncultured Indian masses, with a firm conviction that, in Parry's words:

India would always require British benevolent despotism....

In effect, the attempt was to save Indians from their own customs and traditions, which were considered barbarian and uncivilized, and to revolutionize Indian ideas and institutions, in the light of what the British thought was correct. It was not a government by consent, but by conquest, and its task was to introduce the essential parts of European civilization, i.e. peace, order, supremacy of law [etc.].... The alternative - to leave India in its original condition was abhorrent on moral and economic grounds(1972:15).

All this changed after 1857. A rethinking about Indo-British relationship took place. The British felt that the mutiny was a result of British interference with customs and traditions of Indians, which had alienated the land-owning classes and the Princes; in some areas it had generated hostility among the peasantry(ibidem:13). Their policy towards Indians underwent a change. The British decided to avoid direct interference in the Indian social system, and to cultivate and encourage the 'natural' leaders - Princes and landlords - to run their show. The policy of reform was abandoned. But every measure undertaken by the British even after 1857, though based on British
evaluation of what was necessary for India, still did interfere with Indian society (ibidem: 13). Hence the literature they produced, its strong and weak points, revolved around the British point of view. An understanding of the Anglo-Indian society can help to account for the limitations on empathy and the poverty of imagination which characterize such writing (ibidem: 5).

Greenberger, while discussing the Anglo-Indian works from 1880 to 1960 in his book, *The British Image of India* (1969) divides this literature into three periods or Eras: the Era of Confidence: 1880-1910; the Era of Doubt: 1910-35; and the Era of Melancholy: 1935-60. Though these divisions are arbitrary, Greenberger however claims that these periods are different in tones, attitudes and points of emphasis.

The Era of Confidence, according to Greenberger, projected an image of a confident and secure empire, and the authors of this period all shared a common faith in the value of British civilization. Their confidence made them behave as superiors, look at Indians as subordinates, thus dominate all spheres of their activity. Two important aspects of British Indian life that the writers of this era remain silent about are the problems of racial relations and the rise of Indian nationalism.

In the Era of Doubt, these two topics became the major areas of interest and the points of main emphasis. Three groups of writers are marked by Greenberger, who react differently while sharing a common feeling of doubt. The supporters of the Raj reacted in an aggressive manner to the loss of confidence. They attacked anything and everything that threatened the continued British control of India. The second group of
writers doubted and disliked the value of British civilization. From this point of view, they carried on an attack on the entire civilization of the Empire. The third group of writers chose a middle path, "oscillating between opposition to, and support for, the existence of the Empire in India"(6). They doubted the possibility of a successful British-Indian relationship. The writers belonging to the Era of Melancholy came to the conclusion that the Empire was coming to an end, so to them the position of the Empire in India was no longer a living question. More than this, they were interested in the personal position of the English in India(6). Greenberger adds: "Through each of these periods, certain generalizations concerning the relationship between the image and reality stand out.... It is more likely that the images have influenced the way in which the reality was seen. The changing images appear to have had little to do with developments in India"(6-7).

The images don't stand in isolation; there exists a whole network of these. Rashna B. Singh in her book The Imperishable Empire (1988), refers to Maud Diver's portrayal of an Indian in the novel entitled Far to Seek (1921); the characteristics of the Indian mentioned are his "sullen mouth and shifty eyes". These are coded terms. Singh points out:

They instantly provide information about his character as well as his features. Indeed they do more. They instantly confirm the reader's conception of the Indian character in general....

The images were not created by these writers, they were
embodied by them. Anglo-Indian fiction supplied the rhetoric of colonialism, legitimized its claims and dramatized its events. Writers and readers shared, to a degree impossible in this age of multiple media and cultural interchange, a common context and a common consciousness. Add to this the common source of information and the correspondence becomes complete (1988:6).

Thus the image became more important than reality. The Anglo-Indian writers were the main pillars of this kind of image making. Singh quotes Leonard Woolf, who, writing about his experience in Ceylon, says: "The white people were also in many ways astonishingly like characters in a Kipling story. I could never make up my mind whether Kipling had moulded his characters accurately in the image of Anglo-Indian society or whether we were moulding our characters accurately in the image of a Kipling story" (46).

Literature reinforced life and validated it, so representation was accepted as reality. This representation created the myth of superior/inferior, following Edward Said's definition that the Orient was a European invention which tells more about the European than about the Orient. The main concern of the Anglo-Indian writers was the British themselves. They were so enamoured of themselves that they wrote solely about their own life, its high and low points.

The discomforts of India are always detailed in Anglo-Indian writing, writes Parry. The authors reminded their readers of disease, heat
and dust, and terrible monotony of life. Boredom and lack of social life leading to melancholy were important elements of Anglo-Indian memoirs. "The Anglo-Indians held it an achievement to survive India. However, in producing a literature of bombastic self-advertisement and cloying self-pity, they were not simply reporting in their existence but manufacturing their own legend and demanding adulation from the British at home" (Parry 1972:40).

Stereotype was the mainstay of Anglo-Indian discourse. as the British had fixed notions about India and Indians. Not only Indians, but the Anglo-Indians were also portrayed in a stereotypical manner. The only point of difference - and herein lies the key to understanding the British attitude was that the British stereotype was projected positively, whereas the Indian stereotype was a negative projection. While discussing the stereotype as the "major discursive strategy" of colonial discourse which, according to Bhabha, is an apparatus of power as

> It seeks authorization of knowledges of colonizer and colonized which are stereotypical but antithetically evaluated.

The objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonized as a population of degenerate types in the basis of racial origin; in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction (1986:154).

The stereotype of the British hero, as it emerges from the British colonial discourse in India, is that of a gentleman, who is honest, brave, manly, fair,
mature, duty-conscious, dependable, trustworthy and born to rule. The British believed that the natural qualities of leadership were ingrained in them because of their superior race and their blue blood. Numerous instances are available in Kipling, Henty, Maud Diver etc. where the British characters are portrayed as natural leaders. Greenberger gives examples from Kipling's *Namgay Doola* and G. A. Henty's *At the Point of Bayonet: A Tale of the Mahratta War* in which two characters who are unaware that they are of British descent have been brought up as Tibetan and a Mahratta respectively demonstrate the superiority of British blood and British race by being stronger, braver and more capable. Hence they emerge as natural leaders of their groups: "The keystone to maintaining their position of leadership is not to be found in the treatment of the Indians. It is, after all, in the English *blood* and the important thing is to keep the blood pure" (Greenberger 1969:15). For this reason, inter-racial marriage is never approved of. The British have also to be 'culturally pure', so no Indian customs and traditions can be adopted. The British are made of sterner stuff and nobody should give up the British heritage in the face of any adversity. "Death before dishonour" was their motto. Under no circumstances should a Britisher give up his culture, tradition and heritage; as it would be construed as a sign of weakness. As the Britishers were extremely confident of their superior culture, they thought they had nothing to take from India and Indians. In order to retain their superiority and identity, anything and everything that was Indian had to be totally and completely rejected. "In addition there is an element of fear - fear of Indian powers which could conquer the English if they allowed themselves to go
even part of the way towards accommodating themselves to the Indians" (ibidem: 19).

The British stereotype is partially questioned by a couple of rare writers like Forster and Orwell, who were, in their own right, much greater writers than the run of the mill average Anglo-Indian who was putting his pen to paper. The writings of these two belong to the category of what JanMohamed terms as 'symbolic' texts, where the writer shows a capacity to effectively evaluate European values and culture as against those of indigenous cultures. Interestingly, these two also don't object to the existence of the Empire, they merely question the manner and the method of the Empire builders. Characters in even Forster and Orwell are unable to resist the forces and codes of Anglo-Indian society. If characters in Forster and Orwell are unable to identify with the established mores of Anglo-Indian society, that doesn't mean they can identify with India. They are Englishmen. But they are not Pukka Sahibs. Without being a Pukka Sahib, existence in India was almost impossible. They had to choose one of the alternatives, and most Englishmen found it easier to put up with Anglo-India than to attempt an integration with India(Singhl988:157). Even if they would want to, they could not resist the pressure for conformity to Anglo-Indian norms. Forster and Orwell portray different Englishmen, who are unwilling captives of the system and society they despise. They focus on the individual's struggle against society; in this case, Englishman's struggle against Anglo-Indian society. The inability of the characters portrayed by these two
authors to "resist the forces of Anglo-Indian society illustrates not so much their inherent weakness, as the strength and virility of the former" (ibidem: 159).

The virility mentioned above is the power which, according to Foucault, is exercised by institutions or governments through discourse. The complex relationship between the individual's desire and the institution's power can be seen fully in play in the Anglo-Indian discourse. Ample evidence of the control exercised over the production of discourse can be found in the use of stereotype, which was a way of creating a division between the Anglo-Indians and Indians in India.

Most of the Britishers who came to India had very little or superficial knowledge of India. A desire which is expressed very frequently in Anglo-Indian fiction is to see India, not to know it. According to Singh, "the wish to see 'the real India', reveals three aspects of the Western approach to the country which persists to the present day. First, it indicates prior ignorance of the country; second it makes an assumption; and third, it makes a generalization" (1988:93). The effort to know the real India was never made because, as Singh points out, the British lived a life of total isolation. They either met the upper class Indians, or their own Indian servants, but hardly ever came in contact with the Indian masses. The educated and Westernized Indians were hardly representative of real India. The masses were filthy, dirty and miserable, so no contact with them was possible. "So they then twisted their argument around and justified their isolation from the real India, by pointing out that it was terribly unpleasant... educated Indians could be ignored because they were not 'real' and uneducated ones because..."
they were disgusting.... The desire to see India was therefore only a pose" (ibidem: 94).

This isolation was a palpable reflection of their attitude of superiority. If we add to it the difference in language which made communication almost impossible, the difference in cultures, traditions and outlook, it made it impossible for the English to understand the significance of things Indian. India was there, but the Indians were aliens, thus every beautiful picture of India is devoid of Indians (ibidem: 96). Singh adds a telling simile, "The Anglo-Indian novel can be compared to the British architecture in India. The buildings are superimposed structures, separate and remote from their surroundings" (87).

This lack of assimilation, generally, results in a lack of depth or subtleties in the Anglo-Indian description of India. And the course which appeared safest to adopt was to follow the established norms and perpetuate the already established myths about India and Indians "as a superstitious, intensely fatalistic, fawning, dissembling lot of idol-worshippers became a part of the common knowledge, as easily accepted as the assumption of British superiority" (ibidem: 101).

The concentration in describing rural India and the deliberate neglect of city and city-dwellers fitted well with the overall image of India, as anticipated and projected in their discourse. In such a setting, a few stock Indian characters would suffice: "the loyal servant, the trusty guide of the passing salaaming villager" (Greenberger 1969: 38).

Indians thus play a very insignificant role in these writings. And when they are portrayed, they are drawn as types, not as individuals. Once again, it is
the stereotype that comes to the fore. The fixed ideas that the British had about India prove more pertinent than the proof of their eyes.

"No image of India was more treacherous than the British image of India" argues Singh. Indians were not considered as human. They were considered worse than animals: filthy, disgusting, squalid, repulsive and last but not the least, evil. The authors may differ in their description, but never do they waver in their intention to run down the Indian in every possible way, to consider him as a negation of all that is good. A typical example from W.D. Arnold's *Oakfield* should suffice; "Well, I do detest the native; they are a mean, lying, fawning, sordid race; and after ten years experience I say that to call a native 'a man and a brother' is a lie. He is not a man. I repudiate the fraternity of a scoundrel who lies at every word" (qtd. in Singh 1988:121). This was a feeling common among most of the Anglo-Indian writers. In every act of the Indian, they would find one or the other of their pre-conceived notions justified. Ultimately, the British discourse on India and Indians became just an exercise in fitting the Indians into pre-existing slots or stereotypes. Singh observes:

The image, conscious, sub-conscious or unconscious, of an Indian as a species of animal, or as a lower form of human life at any rate; was primarily, perhaps, a manifestation of racial feeling. It was a repugnance felt towards a people of different colour, features and habits.... Just as the English attempted to disguise the material motives for their Empire by
moral justification, so did they excuse on ethical grounds what was essentially a physical distaste (1988:125).

Certain fixed characteristics became parameters within which the Indians were portrayed. The first of these was the portrayal of Indians as children. This thinking was common to almost all the British writers of the time. "The image of the Indian as a child fitted in very nicely with the British[er's] image of himself as a strong all knowing leader.... Among people of a child like 'race' he was the leader by race and he had obligation to play the father to their child" (Greenberger 1969:42-43).

The British found in Indians all the characteristics commonly associated with children. They lacked self-discipline; they were governed more by emotions than by reason, they lacked confidence and understanding. Curiously enough, alongside being childish, the Indians were taken to be dangerous too! "These Asiatics are at any time ready to turn traitors, and join the stronger" (Henty in *With Clive in India*, qtd. in Greenberger 1969:43). These two opposite characteristics are never reconciled because it was not the truth the Britishers were concerned with, it was the stereotype they wanted to fit the Indians in. Half devil half child is how Kipling described the Indians.

There was a lovable aspect of this image too. "They were such affectionate creatures, once you had won their trust and loyalty. And as with both children and pets, you had to have a way with them" (Maud Diver in *Far to Seek* qtd. in Singh 1988:127). Beneath this consideration one could always notice the paternalistic and patronizing attitude of the British.
The loyalty of the Indian is mentioned and praised along with his servility which is often despised. There is a doublespeak evident here. There were certain Englishmen, whose ego could only be pleased through gestures of servility, and a lack of it was taken as disrespect for which the Indian was maltreated. "To despise those whom one has rendered prostrate, for being prostrate is not an uncommon perversion. Nor is the tendency to ascribe to others traits one dislikes in oneself" (ibidem: 129). This happens because, according to Philip Mason, the colonial situation offers us expiatory victims at little cost (foreword 1964:4). The British in India lived in a highly stratified society, where hierarchy in the social order commanded great consideration:

There was necessarily a good deal of bobbing and curtseying to high officials like Governors or the Viceroy and their wives. When the Indian was obliged to do the same, however, the British immediately assumed it was something intrinsic in his character and described it, among other choice phrases as 'oriental slithering and dithering' (Singh 1988:130).

Different sections of Indian people attracted varied responses from the British. The Muslims, the Sikhs and the Rajputs, 'the fighting races', were found far more acceptable than the passive supine 'Hindus'. The Muslims are presented as being masculine, active, more resourceful and capable compared to the Hindus. They were good fighters and physically strong, qualities that the British appreciated. The image of the Muslim was that of a conqueror, as they had, like the British, captured India from the majority Hindus. Singh points out:
Islam, being monotheistic and similar to Christianity in many doctrinal and structural aspects, was far easier for the Westerner to comprehend and accept, than Hinduism with its huge pantheon, esoteric belief, and social practices. The Hindu also bore the image of the archetypal oriental - devious, cunning, complex and passive (142).

Hindus in general and Bengalis in particular are portrayed in very bad light. Hindus were not forceful, thus could not be given any respect as this went contrary to the British image of man as manly and forceful. Even in passing, the words used to describe occasional Hindus are negative, says Greenberger; and gives examples from various writers, such as "'repulsive looking... evil face', 'crab like old personality with greed and cunning stamped on every malignant countenance and in every gesture of his shrivelled little hands'" (1969:49). After the Muslims, the Rajputs and the Sikhs were the preferred lot, again because these were 'fighting races', active, physically proficient and manly:

They bred warriors, not writers or worse voluble clerks and seditious students. [These could be found among Hindus, especially Bengalis]. The Rajputs had a tradition of royalty and chivalry that was as old as England's own. In the Sikhs, the English valued more than anything else, beside their loyalty, their supreme courage and skill in battle (Singh 1988:138).
The British didn’t like the Bengalis, the proffered reason being that they were effeminate and lacked the manly qualities associated with Muslims, Sikhs and Rajputs. But the real reasons of their dislike were different. Singh says:

But that is only half the story - the half the British revealed, as the reason for their prejudice. What they preferred not to admit was that... from Bengal also came a cadre of lawyers, doctors, political leaders and administrators who could seriously rival their own. The British representatives in these fields, while usually capable and hardworking, were seldom brilliant or even highly intellectual(139).

The British could expect competition from them and the Bengalis, it was feared, had the capacity to ultimately replace the British and rule the country. It was this fear which made the British hate the Bengalis the most. This fear also explains their preference for uneducated rural Indian and the distinct dislike for educated class. The educated Indians threatened their self confidence and composure. The Brahmins too were the butt of attack - it was feared that this class too was capable of overthrowing the British - not with their brawn but with their brains and with the hold they had over the masses.

Their self-interest made the British either to ignore the Indian nationalists, patriots and freedom fighters, or painted them as evil and traitors. And as Bengalis were in the forefront of the freedom movement in
the beginning, the English came down heavily on them, deriding and mocking them as traitors and instigators. So the maximum caricatures are found of the Hindus, especially the Bengalis, nationalists and patriots.

"The Anglo-Indian writers' approach to the issue of nationalism was similar to their approach to India in general. It was emotional rather than rational. It focussed on individuals rather than ideologies or even issues"(ibidem:185). Indian nationalists are nationalists not because they love India, but because they have same personal grudge against the British. "Colonial relations do not stem from individual goodwill or actions", comments Albert Memmi (qtd. in Singh1988:188). Almost all these writers, feels Singh, believe that they do: "An imperialist who displays personal decency is not, however, much different from a racist with good manners and such rationalization is little more than "double think" to borrow Orwell's own term from Nineteen Eighty Four. Even when the Empire is being criticized, rather than defended, the terms remain personal"(ibidem:189).

Another belief that had become deep-rooted was that the nationalists were a few misguided people who did not have the support of the Indian masses. All the problems were being created by a few highly ambitious leaders who had only their personal advancement at heart, "[the] emphasis on personal humiliations being one of the major reasons for anti-British sentiment is a part of the idea that what the Indians really wanted was to be friend with British"(Greenberger1969:144).

As the nationalists were perceived as a threat to the Empire, the Anglo-Indian writers defended their rule by painting the nationalists as
shady and devious, by drawing them only as caricature. Even a sympathetic writer like Thompson could not resist making fun of the nationalists. According to Singh, Diver's nationalists are not only raving idiots but are also seditious and vile. The British were peace loving, harmless people even though unduly provoked, while the nationalists go round shooting British officers and even English women. "If, however, no Anglo-Indian novel succeeded as polemic, many succeed as propaganda.... The case for the Empire is expressed in rational, ordered, factual terms. The case of freedom, however, ...[as presented] is emotional, rhetorical, even incoherent" (Singh 1988:193-4).

Thus it becomes clear that in the British colonial discourse, truth operated under pressure and vested interest. The decision to celebrate the difference between the British and the Indians was the major strategy of the British to maintain control over the Indians. This, according to the Foucauldian formula, was the procedure to seize power, and with the help of discourse organize the society in specific ways as per their own needs.

Sara Jeannette Duncan's writings neatly fit in the above mentioned genre. All the ingredients that constitute colonial discourse, namely: the concept of power and domination of "self"; a stereotyped, fixated representation of the "other"; emphasis on "difference" along with transforming this into moral or even material difference; superficial observation of society and an outlook prejudiced by pre-conceived notions
are present in abundance in her Anglo-Indian novels. The following chapter explores how Duncan evolved this colonial discourse, initially through her journalism.