Chapter I

Introduction: Fiction As History
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION: FICTION AS HISTORY

Ever since Aristotle, attempts to determine the distinction between history and fiction have been at best hazy, and appear only to have confirmed the similarities between the two. No historical account of the novel, or account of the novel in history can afford to shelve for long the complex question of the relations between fiction and history. This is to say that the perspective that takes novels as a resource for history must always at some stage acknowledge the uneasy overlap between novels and history as forms of narrative. Aristotle compares poetry with history:

It is . . . not the function of the poet to relate what has happened, but what may happen, what is possible according to the law of probability or necessity. The poet and the historian differ not by writing in verse or in prose. The work of Herodotus might be put into verse, and it would still be a species of history, with metre no less than without
it. The true difference is that one relates what has happened, the other what may happen. Poetry, therefore, is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular. By the universal I mean how a person of a certain type will on occasion speak or act, according to the law of probability or necessity; and it is this universality at which poetry aims in the names she attaches to the personages. (Butcher 35)

The historical novel may be considered a kind of poetry as permitted by Aristotle when he maintains that the essential criteria involved here are not prose or verse. It engages the universal and may therefore make the philosophic claims of poetry – if not the claim of higher dignity than history in our unclassical times.

R.G. Collingwood, the famous historian in The Idea of History has also established that there is not much difference between history and fiction. “As works of imagination, the historian’s work and the novelist’s do not differ” (246). History and fiction, then have affinities, and in many languages the words for story and history coincide. Italian storia, French histoire, Spanish historia, Russian ISTORiya, German geschichte – all demonstrate the linguistic tendency to observe the distinction between veracious and imagined narrative. At the most obvious level the historian
and the novelist have some of the other’s quality. The historian who is a grubber for facts and has no imagination is seriously handicapped. He must select his material. He must give it a meaningful order and analysis; he must convey its colour and drama to the reader. Such tasks require imagination – a properly disciplined and responsible imagination, to be sure. Similarly, the novelist who has nothing but imagination will be a mere spinner of tales; the serious author tries to convey to his reader what really might have happened – what in the novelist’s experience, is true.

The rationale of history, then, coincides with that of art, for each promotes a cultural self-knowledge commensurate with and complementary to that personal self-knowledge traditionally viewed as one of the major objects of humanistic study. But every culture expresses itself more definitely through its artists than through its historians. Homer and Sophocles do more to define their civilization than does Herodotus or Thucydides. Yet history and art, especially literary art, do not always exist as separate entities. History is always fictive and literature is often historical. In Conrad’s belief fiction is history, human history, or it is nothing:

But it is also more than that; it stands on firmer ground, being based on the reality of forms and the observation of social phenomena, whereas history is based on documents,
and the reading of print and hand writing – on second-hand impression. Thus fiction is nearer truth. But let that pass.

A historian may be an artist too, and a novelist is a historian, the preserver, the keeper, the expounder, of human experience. (Fleishman viii)

History is full of events and issues out of which a story could be made, and of adventures that are exciting enough. It is not wanting in incident, but these things are not stories, they have to be transmuted into a story; for these are the close intimate personal matters, the touches of direct experience that are needed in story making. But history, as it is, is not capable of producing an impressive fiction. The historian’s task is a delicate one. He is attempting to construct an account of the past that will be inclusive enough to accommodate these particular views and abstract enough to find patterns of meaning in this welter of particulars. Collingwood insists that the historian should follow three rules – that the historian, unlike the novelist, must localize history in time and place, that all history must be consistent with itself, since there is only one historical world, whereas fictional universes, being autonomous, need not agree, and cannot clash, and that the historical imagination is not completely free but is bound to work from evidence (The Idea of History 246).
Similarly Herbert Butterfield points out the shortcomings of history. History, as he puts it, “can seldom recover a given set of circumstances and make us see a definite situation, a particular knot of human action at a given place and a given time” (The Historical Novel 16). Steven Connor in The English Novel in History 1950 – 1995 also makes such an observation. “History”, Connor says, “as conventionally and institutionally construed, is not concerned with the intimate, the obscure and the idiomatic, but with the outward, the visible and the typical” (129). Thus history fails the romanticist. Its shortcomings become apparent when we try to particularize, when we say, we wish to see a definite picture. Margaret Scanlan in the Traces of Another Time: History and Politics in Postwar British Fiction also presents a similar viewpoint. History is not seen as a force compelling change along inevitable lines, but as the dispersed contents of the past, an outcome of ignorance, fanaticism, and accident. She further quotes and says that it “‘cannot be reduced to the general model of a consciousness that acquires, progresses, and remembers’” (6).

It is interesting to see just how much the historian has in common with the novelist. Both are concerned with originating and sustaining a narrative with consistency of character, and combining episodic immediacy with overall coherence. This is, indeed, the rediscovery of an
old truth that has been lost sight of, for it was once taken for granted that historiography is a form of literature. In this analogical sense history can certainly be called a fiction, that is to say, histories are like novels in their formal organization; and like novels too, in the way in which the historian’s feelings and attitudes and values will inevitably colour the narrative, however much he aims at objectivity. Avrom Fleishman has aptly put it:

Both the novelist and the historian are trying to find meaning in otherwise meaningless data, to rethink and complete the rationale of covert and often duplicitous behavior, to reconstruct the nexus of past actions. But the historian’s ‘formula’ is distinct from the novelist’s ‘glimpse of human nature’. (The English Historical Novel xv)

The relation between history and fiction is a matter of serious discussion to many writers. In Butterfield’s opinion, history and fiction “cannot be disentangled in these novels, and a separate role, a particular function in the combined work, be assigned to each: they grow into one another; each somehow gives its character to the other” (The Historical Novel 63).

The boundary between fiction and fact, romance and reality, is crossed and re-crossed repeatedly in novels without much visible concern
for philosophical or generic consistency. If history subverts romance, then romance, in turn alters history, not merely softening and blurring its harsh outlines, changing its colour slightly but actually re-inventing the past, making a new story out of history. Novels are, undoubtedly, part of the history of social life; but they are so largely because they provide evidence of the ways in which others have themselves constructed history or historical relations. Novels are therefore, in both senses, ways of making history: they belong to the history of events and they contribute to the historical narrative of those events. But the inter-relations of history and fiction do not end here. The historian generally meets with several problems. What actually happened, and how does he know that it happened? Since the past no longer exists, the historian can never observe it directly. He infers what happened in a vanished world by the evidence that has chanced to survive. Since in the postmodern period artists, audience, critics – none is allowed to stand outside history, or even to wish to do so, history is to be relevant to the world we live in. So we cannot afford to be content with conventional documents. We need to ask whether useful materials for understanding the past may not be found in works of fiction.

Traditionally, then, history and fictional story telling confront and challenge each other at opposite poles of narrative practice. The actual
development of each, however, reveals both great similarities and some significant tensions. But the tension between the requirements of the system and those of change, between order and adventure, will usually persist in all kinds of narrative practice and may at certain moments become acute enough to become itself the principal theme of narrative works.

At such times history may come to be associated, as it was in the *Poetics*, with the singular, the unexpected, the uncontrollable, the unsystematic, and fiction, on the other hand, with the ordered, the coherent, the general or universal. We may then discover that while historians are striving to achieve maximum narrative coherency and to approximate to the forms of fiction, certain novelists are trying to undercut these very forms and conventions by an appeal to "history". Despite the claim seemingly made in the name of the form, the novel has never been able wholly to abstain from historical aspiration. The attraction between the novels and history may in fact be unavoidable, given the close association between narrative and time.

Yet the novelist looks at life from a special viewpoint. He differs from other people in his creative impulse, his imaginative powers, and his verbal skills. His writing is more like portraiture than photography, because it suppresses the less important details to emphasize dominant
qualities. Manipulating his treatment of people and events, the novelist heightens the impact of his story. He is also likely to be a person of strong opinions and biases, liking or disliking and his biases often colour his writing. Above all, of course, the novelist injects imagination, and his imagined episodes have a symbolic quality, differing radically from drab reality. The writer of fiction is a man who has put his imagination to work. He creates people, names them, describes their appearance, reveals their personalities and manufactures their thoughts and speeches. He puts these imaginary people into imaginary streets in imaginary towns and cities. He describes their imaginary experiences. Like the Calvinist God, the novelist predestines his creatures to salvation or damnation.

History, then, is not merely a taskmaster to the novelist. Too often the historical novelist has been spoken of as being hampered by history and tied down by chronological tables. He has been regarded as a novelist working under limitations and with one hand tied, history restricting his imagination, and setting him a boundary. But history is not merely the chain that ties the novelist down, rather it is the wing that helps him to soar into a new range of problems and experiences. The novelist does not try to outdo history by invention, or to round off the true historical position by a kind of idealization; at least the significance of the text does not lie in any of these things. What is important is the fact that
here the same historical material is given to the reader in a different way, and is treated with a different aim. Max Beloff remarks:

For these reasons, the role of novelist in exploring the relationship between the two peoples has always been a crucial one; and novels are an historical source that we are only now beginning to exploit. For the novelist has the freedom both to present the circumstances of the case, and through his personages to evoke either directly or through symbolic reference the complex of feelings, physical and moral, that go to make up the experience as a whole. (The End of the Raj 66)

Fictional writing is constantly questioning existing conventions, and for centuries it did so by appealing to history. But historical writing operates in the same way: every attempt to devise an order different from that of pure chronicle involved an appeal to the order of art – of fictional narrative or of drama. Good novelists have a fine sensitivity for observing the right things and putting their observations into appropriate words; they capture the quality of events. This gives their testimony a vividness that material culled from more prosaic sources often lacks. The resemblance between the historian and the novelist here reaches its culmination. Collingwood states:
Each of them makes it his business to construct a picture which is partly a narrative of events, partly a description of situations, exhibition of motives, analysis of characters. Each aims at making his picture a coherent whole, where every character and every situation is so bound up with the rest that this character in this situation cannot but act in this way, and we cannot imagine him as acting otherwise. The novel and the history must both of them make sense; nothing is admissible in either except what is necessary, and the judge of this necessity is in both cases the imagination. Both the novel and the history are self-explanatory, self-justifying, the product of an autonomous or self-authorization activity; and in both cases this activity is the a priori imagination. (The Idea of History 245-46)

The history that we expect from such works with imagination is not a chronological account of mere political and military events or occasionally, some other kind of extra-ordinary happening; but a more general representation of the human condition, in a time and place naturally more circumscribed than that in which works of history, in the more usual sense of the word, ordinarily unfold. The public life of great men is before our eyes. Some of their private life is open to us; but the
life that fills the street with bustle, that makes every corner of a slum a
place of wonder and interest, the life that is a sad and gay, weary and
thrilling thing in every hillside cottage is a dim blurred picture in a
history. Because of this history cannot come so near to human hearts and
human passions as a good novel can. Meanwhile, at the other end of the
spectrum, the novel is giving itself an air of history and offering itself to
the reader as reportage, the order of what is prescribed by events as they
occur. When the historian uses novels as sources, he must always
remember that the novelist has his own angle of vision. The novelist is
blind to many prosaic aspects of life, yet what he does see, he sees with
striking clarity. He senses the pettiness of village society, the
demoralizing tendencies within the great cities, the restlessness of modern
women, the mercenary goals of the ruling class, the sullen anger of the
colonised people, etc. The novelist is never a neutral observer. He feels
life with intensity. His emotions range the whole width of the spectrum
from anger to compassion.

Modern history and modern literature have both rejected the ideal
of representation that dominated them for so long. Both now conceive of
their work as exploration, testing, creation of new meanings, rather than
as disclosure or revelation of meaning, already in some sense "there", but
not immediately perceptible. What the postmodern writing of both history
and literature has taught us is that both history and fiction are discourses, that both constitute systems of signification by which we make sense of the past. In the course of this change of orientation, according to Lionel Gossman, "literature has come to be increasingly preoccupied with language as the instrument of meaning, whereas history may well dream of escaping from ordinary or natural language to the highly formal languages of the sciences" (Between History and Literature 255 - 56). But the increasing prominence of historical themes in current fiction suggests that the novels’ perennial valence for history has acquired new strength in recent years. There seems to be a new desire to think historically, and "to think historically these days", according to Linda Hutcheon, "is to think critically and contextually" (A Poetics of Postmodernism 88).

The origins of historical consciousness extend back to the nineteenth century and perhaps back to the Enlightenment or the Renaissance. But only in the twentieth century has change become truly vertiginous. After the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century rejection of historical fiction by the realist, naturalist and modernist movements, an interest in history was not renewed until the 1960s. It was only in the 1960s that a serious interest in historical fiction was renewed, and new life was breathed into the ailing body of postmodernism. The use
of history in fiction was effectively re-discovered, as Linda Hutcheon shows, as postmodern theory has challenged the traditional attempts to explain the separation between literature and history. Recent critical readings of both history and fiction have focussed more on what the two models of writing share than on how they differ (Hutcheon 105). Thus in constructing and developing the commensurability of individual narratives and the larger movements of history, the novel performs many of the same functions as official history.

The fictional creations, which discuss history are generally called historical novels and defined in different ways. To quote Avrom Fleishman’s words:

The historical novel is distinguished among novels by the presence of a specific link to history: not merely a real building or a real event but a real person among the fictitious ones. When life is seen in the context of history, we have a novel; when the novel’s characters live in the same world with historical persons, we have a historical novel. *(The English Historical Novel 4)*

But David Cowart has another viewpoint:
I myself prefer to define historical fiction simply and broadly as fiction in which the past figures with some prominence. Such fiction does not require historical personages or events . . . nor does it have to be set at some specified remove in time. Thus I count as historical fiction any novel in which a historical consciousness manifests itself strongly in either the characters or the action. (History and the Contemporary Novel 6)

However, Harry E. Shaw in The Forms of Historical Fiction: Sir Walter Scott and His Successors, seems to agree with Cowart:

A simple but accurate answer is that the term the historical novel denotes a kind of novel which can be differentiated from other groups of novels not in terms of a defining compositional technique (the picaresque novel), nor through its power to evoke a set of emotions (the gothic or sentimental novel), and certainly not in terms of the period in which it was written (the eighteenth-century novel). Instead, the principle of differentiation involves the milieu represented, which makes the closest parallel in our list the industrial novel. (20)
Thus, in the opinion of Cowart and Shaw, the presence of a real personage is not essential but the creation of an historical consciousness is the major characteristic of historical novel.

In the postmodernist view, the historical novelist's role is not to portray the past as past, but to include the present in the portrayal of the past. In other words, historical fiction is one of the means whereby the present can know itself, know the forces that have created such a dangerous age, and this relevance to the present is especially important in our own. Contemporary historical novelists conceive of history as something whereby they can judge and assess and understand the present. In the words of Steven Connor, "novels dealing with historical events and themes cannot avoid conscious or unconscious reflection on the relation between the narrated past and the present that narrates it" (The English Novel in History 140). We can grasp the present only by looking back to the past, and can seize the past only with the recognition that it is gone. The multiple time shifts, characteristic of modern fiction, in an historical novel similarly tend to keep both past and present visible, thus preventing the comfortable escape into the past that is characteristic of romantic fiction. This literary form is pre-eminently suited to telling how individual lives were shaped at specific moments of history, and how this shaping reveals the character of these historical periods. In doing so it is
both a dramatic and a social fiction, but is distinguished from them by the balanced weight it attaches to the personal and the collective experience of man in history:

What makes a historical novel historical is the active presence of a concept of history as a shaping force – acting not only upon the characters in the novel but on the author and readers outside it. In the course of reading, we find that the protagonists of such novels confront not only the forces of history in their own time, but its impact on life in any time. (Fleishman 15)

What is perhaps most interesting is the way this kind of fiction thematizes its own interaction both with the historical past and with the historically conditioned expectations of its readers. If as these novels suggest, language in a sense constitutes reality, rather than merely reflecting it, readers become the actual and actualizing links between history and fiction, as well as between the past and the present. One aspect of a transferential and dialogical relation to the past returns us to the question of how one is to read novels in history. And it displaces our focus from analogies between the novel and history to the question of the relation between historiography and literary criticism. Historiography is a poetic construct; fiction is historically conditioned. Therefore, to write
history (or historical fiction) is to narrate, to re-present by means of selection and interpretation. History is made by its writer, even if events are made to seem to speak for themselves. There is a link between the novelist and the historian in their shared emplotting, strategies of exclusion, emphasis, and subordination of elements of a story but the difference in their tasks lies in the historian’s confrontation with a veritable chaos of events already constituted. While a fictional work appears to attempt a more consistently accurate evocation of a particular historical period, it too relies on intertextuality to signal both its oblique relations to historical fact and its essentially literary nature.

If the novel is read at all in history, it is typically because it may be employed as source telling us something factual about the past. Its value is in its referential functions – the way it serves as a window on life or crisis management in the past. The historian’s focus is, accordingly, on the content of the novel – its representation of social life, its characters, its themes and so forth. In a word, the novel is pertinent to historical research to the extent that it may be converted into useful knowledge or information. Such novels are self-consciously fictional and at the same time overtly concerned with the acts and consequences of the reading and writing of history as well as fiction. In other words, the aesthetic and the social, the present and the past, are not separable discourses in these
novels. This is the form, that we may call, historiographic metafiction—fiction that is intensely, self-reflexively art, but is also grounded in historical, social, and political realities. Moreover, fictions are in Derrida’s sense a necessary supplement to the gaps in our knowledge of history (Scanlan, *Traces of Another Time* 15).

And, of course, historians and biographers are themselves readers; they find and interpret the documents of the past. So too do postmodern novelists. It is this realization of the potential for change that postmodern fiction can exploit and expose. In trying to unsettle our unexamined convictions about the status of fact and truth, it sets up a new tension between the fictive and the historical. Historiographic metafiction questions the narrative and validity of the entire human process of writing—of both history and fiction. Its aim in doing so is to study how we know the past and how we make a sense of it. In a very real sense, historiographic metafiction, therefore, is ideological fiction, taking ideology as meaning those modes of feeling, valuing, perceiving and believing which have some kind of relation to the maintenance and reproduction of social power. But the novel, unlike, historiography may invent characters and events to give rise to configurations that are not available in the writing of history. When this elementary distinction between history and novel breaks down, one has the appearance of myth.
It is on other levels of interpretation, composition, and style that the relations between the novel and historiography become more engaging and controversial.

Modernism bequeaths on contemporary British historical fiction a host of techniques for representing the world as seen through a situated consciousness, for disrupting ordinary perceptions of time, and for keeping narratives open. Within the large body of British fiction that concerns itself with the past, we find a rebirth and development of the skeptical and critical historical novel that Thackeray wrote. Such fiction looks back to a public past, most often to the world wars or to conflicts in countries like India and Ireland once under British rule. The particular moments chosen are inglorious or violent, the novels are more likely to evoke defeats than victories, stupidity and arrogance than heroism. All concern themselves with the question of how private lives and consciousness intersect public events; how it is that we experience our history. Although even Thackeray wrote about the Battle of Waterloo, the contemporary novelist tends to put his or her characters in contact with less well-known marginal events: or to display the lives of people who live through a great historical event in the virtual ignorance of its signification to their lives.
British Colonial Rule over its colonised countries is such a historical event with lot of possibilities for literary presentation. When the African writers wrote about their rich cultural past and pictured political revolutions like the Mau Mau rebellion and the Nigerian Civil War and commented on the racial war between the White and the Black, the Indian writers had their own stories to tell about the theme of nationalism, woes of partition and problems of westernization. Against the nationalist sentiments of the Indo-Anglican writers, the fate of the coloniser was also delineated by the Anglo-Indian writers with a surprisingly inadequate and prejudiced picture of India and the different ways in which the English men on the one hand and India and the Indian on the other impinged upon each other’s consciousness. Apart from the manifold and serious limitation of the Anglo-Indian fictional vision of India there are undoubtedly quite a few saving graces among the imperial writers who probed mercilessly the British colonial conscience and the hypocrisies, the ironic demonstration of the empire-builders’ own imprisonment within an ideology of racial superiority and also the faithful ‘imperial embrace’ of many white men to civilize the natives.

From the very earliest times, India has made its contribution to the texture of Western thought and living. Tales of Indian origin can be discovered throughout the literatures of Europe. India also fascinated the
people who came from the West, traders and travellers alike. It is obvious that the white men profited abundantly by the resources of India. The Anglo-Indian literature also shows that it was not only the merchants that India rewarded amongst Englishmen, and in her vast spaces and strange thronging life there were remarkable treasuries of another order. After the opening of the Suez Canal (1869) the number of ‘cold-weather’ visitors increased. The English reading public in India was now quite substantial and its needs could not be entirely supplied from Britain. As Michael Edwards in British India remarks:

There grew up a market for verse and fiction about the lives of the British in India. There was also a growing market in Britain for tales about India and for descriptive works about life there. The expatriate community, though it occasionally believed itself menaced by growing Indian unrest, felt – at least till the end of the century – strong enough to laugh at itself. (171)

However, all these writers – the travellers and the historians – were critical in most cases of India and the Indians. All of what they wrote was primarily designed to influence opinion in Britain. It was from those works that legislators, and that narrow section of the British people which made up public opinion, acquired their image of India. They preferred
the evidence for India's depravity and backwardness. There can be little
doubt that the images that came to England through fiction had their
effect. One of the major reasons for the lack of understanding between
the British and the Indians which led to political conflicts is this
misrepresentation of the Indians in fiction. One sector of Anglo-Indian
literary activity thus helped to create a climate in Britain favourable to the
consolidation and advance of Western ideas of government and
economics in India.

British images of India can be found in a great number of written
and visual forms. Among written sources travellers' tales, antiquarian
studies, histories, political treaties, administrative records, missionaries's
reports, news papers, periodicals, diaries, letters, memoirs, poetry and
fiction, will all suggest what the British thought and felt about India. The
imaginative writings of the Britishers who lived in India and who were in
many ways connected with the administrative, educational, missionary
and military work in this country could provide us an insight into some of
the strong under currents of Indian history.

Originally Anglo-Indian literature began to appear in the forms of
plays, poems and letters. The emergence of Anglo-Indian fiction in the
history of Britishers who remained here for about two hundred years, is a
later development. Nevertheless, the influence of Anglo-Indian fiction on
English literature has been no small one. As argued by Udayon Misra in his comprehensive study *The Raj in Fiction*, "the works of the Anglo-Indian novelists often served as a major source of information about Britain's largest and most profitable colony "(7). The Anglo-Indian element in British fiction is sizable, and till the beginning of the Second World War is marked by British and imperial in its orientation of theme and treatment. This is not surprising, since most of the writers who published novels set in India were, in one way or another, resident "empire-builders" whose literary activities were their avocation. The writers of such novels often appear unaware of the extraordinary variety of racial, social, and linguistic realities of India. Apart from their usual praise of the martial Pathans and Rajputs and their contempt for the slippery Bengali, they ignore the vast spectrum of what may be called the genetic treasury of India.

But the fiction writers of the Raj suffered from an artistic limitation while interpreting India to a coterie of selective readers. As members of the ruling race and belonging to a small repatriate community, they found in other English men the bondage of needed loyalties. Often isolated from their fellow country men and thus more attached to the ruling class and community, they fitted themselves into a defined genre and considered colonisation rather than the colonised as an important subject
for treatment. So it was the colonisation and not the colony and its people, which needed to be defended through the instrument of fiction. Consequently it was more or less an attempt at rationalization and self-justification by ways of distorting the image of the prevalent social reality. Thus the basic issues were not the issues of the occupied country and its people but the problems of such occupation. Similarly the central characters were not the Indians but the English settlers, soldiers or administrators. And whatever they wrote about India, most of the writers depended more on imagination than on documentation or historical evidence of actual conditions and facts.

In 1949, Susanne Howe in her work *Novels of Empire*, wrote: “Novels about India provide more vicarious discomfort than anyone is entitled to. They are among the unhappiest books in the language. They are long on atmosphere, but short on humour and hope” (33). Allen Greenberger in The *British Image of India* also remarked that one element “lacking from the image of India at all times is humour. The British could never paint their picture of India in anything other than the darkest colours” (204). The Anglo-Indian writers were also very careful in hiding the real motives of the white men in coming to India. Englishmen had always come to India to make money, and the objective of obtaining money had usually been a rise in social status. The first merchant
adventures, the “nabobs”, made vast fortunes in a brief span of years and returned to England with the ambition to move in aristocratic circles. Thus Benita Parry in *Delusions and Discoveries* finds out the hollowness of the literature of the early period:

Hypnotized by belief in their Messianic role or infatuated with vanity at wielding great power. Anglo-Indians expunged from their writings the material interests which Britain had in India and detached the idea of a mission from the complex and equivocal motives which had brought them to India and which were gratified in ruling over Indians. (27)

For the majority of Anglo-Indian novelists, India was simply a bizarre stage on which lonely British men and women acted out their passions of love and despair.

But then, there were also many writers who took India seriously and presented a very real picture of the British-Indian encounter. In the period commencing with the declaration of the Second World War and culminating in Lord Mountbatten’s tenure as Viceroy, there was a perceptible warming in Anglo-Indian relations, public and private. Naturally, this warmth conveyed itself to Anglo-Indian literature in
general during that period. Certainly, readers sense a new sympathy in most of the Anglo-Indian novels published after the Second World War, and an appreciation in quality ever since.

Yet, so far as fiction is concerned the great theme of cultural dialectics between the Orient and the Occident was initiated by Philip Meadows Taylor (1808 – 1876) the first major writer of Anglo-Indian fiction. He arrived in India at the age of fifteen, a year later he obtained a commission in the Nizam’s army, and published the fictionalized account of his experience in 1839, *The Confession of a Thug*, the most graphic and entertaining of all his works. In his other works, *Tara* which treats the rise of Shivaji in 1657, *Ralph Darnell*, the conquests of Clive, and *Seeta* a romance of the Mutiny, also, Taylor expresses a mutual respect and affection between himself and Indians and the subject is ‘dear to his heart’. William Delasfield Arnold, brother of Matthew Arnold, was another Englishman who came to India, but could not enjoy the Orient. Anglo-Indian society with its odd language, its rough standards, its lack of culture, its course pleasures was exceedingly distasteful to him. He relieved his feelings by writing a book with himself as hero and his less congenial brother officers as villains. His *Oakfield* or *Fellowship in the East* (1853) is a search for a moral basis to British rule in India with the crisis of faith which had hit Victorian English at that time. Oakfield,
Arnold’s persona, soon “begins to doubt the moral value of British power in India” (Bhupal Singh 57).

But the writer really obsessed with India and Indian mysticism was Sir Edwin Arnold (1832-1904). His most original work *The Light of Asia* (1879) is full of passages wherein India figures prominently. In his love for India, there seemed to be a sincere desire for a meeting point between the East and the West. Arnold’s novel also exemplifies the preference of the Westerners to the Vedantic and the Buddhism. East-West social meeting found fresh insights in another prominent writer on India, namely Maud Diver (1867-1945). Her major contributions are *Lilamani: A Study in the Possibilities* (1911), *The Great Amulet* (1914) and *Far to seek: A Romance of England and India* (1921). Sir Lakshman Singh of *Lilamani*, Diver’s idea of the perfect Indian, explains that he believes India’s welfare can only be improved with a continuation of British rule. “The problem as he and Diver see it, is that Britain is actually fomenting trouble by not continuing to act in a forceful way” (Greenberger 94). Diver was mistress of such writing, into which she poured reverence, sentimentality and self-pity, ingredients that did not always blend. In the novels of Flora Annie Steel (1847-1927), who has been acclaimed by many as lover of India, we find eloquent descriptions of Indian trees, shrubs, flowers and perfumes. She has written several novels with the
theme of the encounter between the East and the West, of which *On the Face of the Waters* (1896) is the most effective and popular novel of the Mutiny published before independence. Steel believed that much of the trouble was due to the English failure to realize their own power and to use it because the position of majesty “is a position which comes naturally to most English men” (*On the Face of Waters* 2).

Although there were earlier works of fiction which dealt with India, it was only after the great success of Rudyard Kipling (1865-1936) that novels and stories set in the sub-continent, were published in large number. From Kipling’s time to the present, the British public has been deluged by a vast amount of writing on the subject of India. The recognition of Anglo-Indian fiction in the 1890s was due principally to the popular acclaim in England and the West which greeted Kipling’s glorification of two ideas – the staggering feat “of a handful of English-men ruling over the destinies of millions” and the selflessness of these “exiles who had made enormous sacrifices for the good of the natives” (Bhupal Singh 83). These two ideas – unified into a single theme in verse in “The White Man’s Burden” (1899), established Rudyard Kipling and his school as “defenders” of the Raj. The political condition of India during Kipling’s time was certainly one which could inspire thoughts of the permanence of the British Empire in the British mind. Kipling did not
believe that all human beings were equal. What he believed was that, it was the divine spark which created the brotherhood of rulers. The major attraction of Kipling's most popular work *Kim* (1901) is that in that novel Kipling wrote about India as if it were a stable society. The British Raj was established and taken for granted. Subversive movements and foreign intrigues on the frontier might be introduced in order to make the plot of a story more exciting. But there was no question of such movement succeeding or changing the nature of society. This is seen not only in his novel, but also in his stories of army life.

But one English writer who made the best use of her limited knowledge of Indian life was Mrs. Alice Perrin (1867-1934) whose literary career covers a quarter of a century. Like Kipling, Mrs. Perrin also displays her interest in the occult and mystery of the East and records its influence upon the British in India. Her novels, particularly *Idolatry* (1909), provide enough importance to English missionaries, usually a neglected sect in the works of other writers. Hindus in general, and Bengalis in particular, are portrayed in a very harsh light. Perrin's Brahman minister Krishna is "a repulsive-looking old native with a small, evil face" and is "a crab-like old person with greed and cunning stamped on every wrinkle of his malignant countenance, and in every gesture of his shrivelled little hands" (*Idolatry* 110).
Another writer who was known for his love for India and contempt for the Indians was Edmund Candler (1874-1926). As early as 1922 Candler wrote a novel, *Abdication*, which expresses the idea that Britain has already abdicated her power and should recognize this fact by getting out of India. Siri Ram, the young Indian in his *Siri Ram, Revolutionist* (1912), continues to provide the basic model for Indian revolutionaries and terrorists in Anglo-Indian fiction. The British hostility towards the Indian national leaders is clearly evident in the works of Mrs. Ethel Savi (1865-1954) who belongs to the Kipling school. An Englishman in her *Rulers of Men* (1922) roundly declares that swaraj is “not to be bestowed at the bidding of a few rabid orators who are, in no sense, the spokesmen of the millions of India” (175).

The British novel set in India, like fiction everywhere reflects the intimacy that exists between all kinds of literature and their historical background. In varying degrees it also exerts influences (moral, political, social and so on), as fiction does in every country, at particular moments and in particular contexts of history. While the facts and fiction of Anglo-Indian novels are valuable to all who wish to understand in human terms the real loves and hates which have been properly captured in E. M. Forster’s (1879 – 1970) *A Passage in India*, (1924) – and to discover how and in what ways such novels affected Anglo-India.
Till the outbreak of the Second World War, when India’s attitudes to the British Raj became of vital consequence, the bias in Anglo-Indian novels was patently imperial, and manifested itself in racial and cultural prejudice against Indians. Forster is a superb lyric writer, and the most impressive moments in *A Passage to India* are in the wonderfully accurate communication of how it feels, emotionally and physically to be in India. And as a comic commentator on the worst British behaviour in India, he has never been surpassed. But according to David Rubin, “Forster, for all his real sympathy for Indians and his censure of the ignorance and heartlessness of colonial Englishmen, is not free from certain common prejudices” (*After the Raj* 17).

While Forster’s *A Passage to India* stresses the difficulty of friendship between the races, his contemporary Edward Thompson (1886-1946) sees the difficulty of ruling. In three of his six Indian novels *An Indian Day* (1927), *A Farewell to India* (1930), and *An End of the Hours* (1938) - Thompson presented a pro-Indian view based on knowledge and experience rather than on liberal principle. His *An Indian Day* tries to diagnose the growing disenchantment between the British and the Indians. Forster in his epoch-making creation had already presented the problem more symbolically. In the case of Thompson, there are much raw materials and more a historian’s attempt in illuminating the problem.
Thompson’s *An Indian Day* deserves great attention as a typical work of the post-independent period and it set the tradition for the novels of Paul Scott. In the words of David Rubin:

No other novelists, not even Forster or Rumer Godden, can match Thompson in the near-ecstatic evocation of Indian nature; but he is even more interesting for the ways in which he anticipates Scott in the sympathetic but objective contemplation of the waning Raj, his respect for the work done by the British even while he sees its shortcomings, and still more his sense of the passionate, almost mystical feeling that marks certain men’s commitment to their vocation. (22)

L.H. Myers (1881-1944) is another writer of the same period who is very different from most of the writers who concerned themselves with India. His India was solely the creation of his imagination and his choice of the setting of sixteenth-century India was dictated only by his desire to carry the reader away from the machinery of a life that is familiar to him. In his major works — *The Near and the Far* (1929), *The Root and the Flower* (1935) and *The Pool of Vishnu* (1940), he examines the rival entities of good and evil and the issue of human relationship and variations of human relations.
From the time of the Second World War, Anglo-Indian writers began increasingly to recognize the claims of nationalists, whom they no longer saw as utterly self-interested and villainous. Writers began to concede that even loyal Indians might belong to families in which other members would hold nationalist views. Thus in Parr Cooper’s *Ayah* (1942), Siromani, who emblemizes the fidelity of the Indian nurse, is torn between loyalty to the British, on the one hand, and to her husband Luke, a Congress supporter, on the other. Her other two novels, *Uninvited Guests* (1946) and *The Gesture Comes First* (1949) also present India at her most crucial and historical period. “These novels of Parr Cooper”, says Bhagban Prakash, “are sensitive representations by one who is at once close to the scene to provide authentic insights and distant enough to ensure objectivity” (*Indian Themes* 22)

The baleful influence of India on the British is also encountered in novels by Rumer, the younger of the Godden sisters. This Indian born writer tried to concentrate on India’s various aspects of the unknown and the mysterious. She intelligently underplayed the racial animosity, so manifest in Kipling, and exhibited a remarkable control over her subject matter. The Eurasian problem is very dear to her and she believes that all of Eurasians’ weaknesses are explained by their inability to find a place of their own. The difficulty of existing in a never-never-land between
two cultures is her major theme in *King Fishers Catch Fire* (1953). *Black Narcissus* (1939), which tells the story of five nuns of the Anglican Order of the Servants of Mary who tried to set up a convent in an abandoned place in the hills above Darjeeling, is a very neatly cyclically structured novel, its plot solidly unified, and its characters well motivated. Rumer Godden in her treatment of Indian themes anticipates the new approach that influenced the post – independence writers.

The horrors of the Sepoy Revolt and the heroism which it inspired were, naturally, the immediate province of news papers, journals, histories and private diaries. The Mutiny novels followed on their heels – the first, Lt. Col. Edward Money's *The Wife and the Ward*, being published in 1859. This uprising of 1857, which is also called in India, the First War of Independence, was one of the most popular subjects for Anglo - Indian fiction in the late nineteenth century and the first quarter of the twentieth. Since the end of British rule, the Mutiny has continued to be a very popular subject for fiction. Among the post – independence fiction writers with the Mutiny theme, M.M. Kaye, John Masters, Valerie Fitzgerald and J.G. Farrell have established a reputation of their own.

Earlier Mutiny novels, such as those by Steel and Wentworth were intended to glorify the Raj, but the post-independence novels reflect the new generally liberal attitude in the Western world and some
sympathy for Indians. Strategically published in the centenary year of the Mutiny, M.M. Kaye’s *Shadow of the Moon* (1957) presents an objective and sympathetic view of the Indian side. She dedicated her novel of the Indian Mutiny to all men and women of her family and so many other British families who served, lived in and loved India. More conciliatory and hopeful than any other Mutiny novel, *Shadow of the Moon* looks forward to the rejection by Indians and British alike of the old belief that only blood and savagery can repay and wipe out the stain of blood and savagery, so that they will either come together, or part as friends. However she is also similar to the female predecessors in admiring without reservation, the white heroes of the Mutiny who were later viewed as abnormal personalities.

Valerie Fitzgerald’s *Zenindar* (1981) offers a close parallel to the *Shadow of the Moon*. Fitzgerald’s Indian characters play only minor roles and are quite without even the limited depth and resonance of her Europeans. The assertion of affection for India seems ultimately merely sentimental and may be considered a mid twentieth-century liberal anachronism. John Masters with his nine novels and each of them devoted to an important moment in the history of the British in India, discussed the theme of Mutiny in *Nightrunners of Bengal* (1951) and the problem of Eurasians in *Bhowani Junction* (1954). Writing of Mutiny
Masters says that it forged a chain of hatred which bound the British and Indians together. It could be broken only by love and ‘there was no love’. *Nightrunners of Bengal* is a tenser more believable tale than either Kaye’s or Fitzgerald’s later Mutiny novels. Masters with his own knowledge of cantonment life at a later period is able to create a far more convincing picture of both military and civil society in the last century. The presentation in the narrative of the circumstances pertaining not only to the Mutiny itself, but to the entire problem of Indian and imperial government combined with the political dialogues, raises it to the level of an historical novel.

The best Mutiny novel to date is J.G. Farrell’s *The Siege of Krishnapur* (1973), the centrepiece of a trilogy – with *Troubles* (1970) coming before and *The Singapore Grip* (1979) coming after it – about the decline of the British Empire. The major thesis of the novel, implicit rather than explicit, is that the Mutiny occurred because such men and women – different types of English men and women of different mental capacities who represent the Raj – did not, or could not, feel the pulse of Anglo – Indian history. Unlike other Mutiny novels, *The Siege of Krishnapur* possesses certain qualities which are not at all stereotyped. Farrell here points out that the fiction of happy natives being led forward along the road to civilization could no longer be sustained. This
melancholy realization is beyond the imaginative powers of the other Mutiny novels and is one of Farrell’s distinctions.

All those writers provided a fascinating picture of India in their works but on the whole, English authors could not help approaching India as Englishmen and though most of them were realists, their sticking to the English side, to the imperialist side cannot altogether be ruled out. The literature of Anglo – India describes, although it rarely diagnoses, a community that perceives itself to be beleaguered, and which consequently closes ranks and consolidates a particular mythology about itself in the interest of self-preservation. These are all the unfortunate ingredients for the diseased, static societies of many colonies, and Anglo – Indian literature too, despite the sheer number of books written on the subject of India by British writers, exhibits this stasis: an obsession with stereotypes, a certain paranoia, and an unimaginative repetition of certain themes and concerns. Far from representing the true India to the West, such literature, helped in spreading the mythology of Empire and popularising a series of myths and stereotyped images of India that rationalized the mystique of the Raj.

The two – century old history of Anglo – Indian literature thus shows the various approaches of literary men to the problem of British – Indian encounter. In the new environs provided by the spirit of
colonialism, the initial adventure – romances were resulted from the fascination with the exotica and the sense of adventure of the white men. Thereafter, “the expansion of England worked its way naturally into the Victorian novels” (Howe 3), the imperial tide bringing with it the current of Anglo – India. Britannia ruled the waves and the ways of Anglo – Indian fiction had no other course. D.M. Burjorjee’s observation of the new trend is apt:

Anglo – Indian fiction paradoxically became insular in the sense that, well into the twentieth century, it confined itself to the theme of empire, portraying unidimensional empire-builders, engaged in little else than empire-building, in novels whose reiterations could not possibly add to their art.

(Anglo – Indian Politics 332 – 33)

Unfortunately most of the authors who wrote on or about India were themselves vocal members of their own community rather than full-fledged intellectuals. In their writings they were only trying to conceal their tracks through wearing some sort of mask. Hence novels of quality written before the Second World War are only a few in number. The vast number of bad novelists imitated Kipling. “These novelists dragged ‘The White Man’s Burden’ into the twentieth century, but the literary value of their fiction is negligible”, says Burjorjee (333). The writers after the
Second World War may not all have been humanists of the same colour, but they were certainly realists who accepted the fact that Empire no longer made any sense. The most obvious trait in making good the deficiency has been the new characterization of the Indians. In the Mutiny novels, which rise above the epic race that crowds everything else out of the earlier fictions, the mutinous Indians are characterized more fully than ever before as people who have legitimate grievances against the East India Company, in general, and the policies of Delhousie, in particular.

In the novels that next came along and focus on twentieth-century experience, the characterization of Indians is even more complex than it was in the Mutiny novels of the post-war Anglo-Indians. Whereas up still now ordinary Indians were never major characters in the action, now they would be appearing from the ranks of all sorts and conditions of men. Characterization alone does not account for the increase in quality of Anglo – Indian novels written after the Second World War. Before that time, the writing that went into them lacked power in diction, and rare in dialogue of dramatic pitch or dialectical thrust. Written mostly from the omniscient point of view, Anglo – Indian fiction wanted the diversity of multiple vision and the interiority of the personally committed narrator.
An Anglo – Indian writer who felt the change and understood the need of time is Paul Scott (1920 – 1978). Though he was an imperialist in the true sense of the term, yet his frequent visits to India had acquainted him with the diverse nature of Indian subcontinent. He became a realist with an imperial bend of mind, and his thirteen novels bear testimony to his attitude. Scott was led on to a rereading of the great novelist who entered the Indian scene shortly after Lord Minto left it and, on the basis of his 1912 – 13 experience, published *A Passage to India* in 1924. Scott to his chagrin and disadvantage was always compared with Forster and felt a compulsion to distinguish his Anglo – India from Forster’s.

It is inevitable, almost axiomatic, that any British writer who writes about India be compared with Kipling and Forster. Although Paul Scott is a successor to other Anglo – Indian novelists, his literary reputation is unjustly overshadowed, particularly by E.M. Forster. Scott’s epic novel *The Raj Quartet* and its sequel *Staying On* provide a pointed indictment of the human costs of British imperialism from a British point of view both employing and undermining the standard themes and conventions of the Anglo – Indian novels.

Rudyard Kipling is often assumed to be the founding member of the tradition of Anglo – Indian novel. “This assumption bears
examination”; says Aruna Srivastava, “the Anglo – Indian novel was flourishing by the 1830s, providing Kipling with a store of conventions established by his literary predecessors . . .” (The Pageant of Empire 54). Nevertheless Kipling’s success has probably done more than anything else to consign his forerunners to oblivion. Unlike Kipling, Scott sees the Indian as equal to the white man spiritually and politically. He appreciates the ancient cultures of the Hindu and the Muslim traditions and sees their contribution as integral to the Indian character. Scott refuses to judge the native culture as “pagan” or “childish”, or derived from the darkness. On the other hand, Kipling and his imperialist views are vilified at the expense of a close examination of his fiction and poetry. At the same time the equally discreditable imperialism of E.M. Forster’s single novel about India is largely ignored, with effect that Forster is lionized as the unrivalled and not – to – be rivalled novelist of India and the ills of British imperialism. This critical view has become so entrenched that it has almost totally obscured the achievements of a younger generation of writers, particularly Paul Scott.

The assumption shared by most critics including many Indian critics, however, is that A Passage to India demonstrates Forster’s dislike of imperial posturing and, more importantly his comprehensive understanding of Indian religions and cultures. Yet for all his professed
sympathy for Indians, and love for the country, Forster cannot escape his own cultural biases. Many of them are evident in the account of his stay in India, *The Hill of Devi*, which is the source for much of *A Passage to India*. In a similar vein David Rubin notes:

After teaching *A Passage to India* . . . in an Indian university, I can testify to the general antipathy Indians feel toward the novel; no amount of argument could convince students that Forster’s view of India and Indians was anything but condescending and at heart hypocritical.

(*After the Raj* 176 – 77)

Forster is not examining the perils and pitfalls of humanism, but resorting instead to a simplistic and comforting view of human relations that many critics have misguidedly latched on to and proffered as an answer to the ills of imperialism. However, in Forster’s long literary shadow Paul Scott has had to live and work. Scott himself was aware of it. In a letter to Dorothy Ganapathy, his Indian friend, he wrote: “The one thing I’ve had to fight here is the awful English literary – academic fixation on Kipling and Forster. For heaven’s sake! Did nothing happen between 1924 and 1945?” (Robin Moore 121). Yet, despite a certain similarity in concern with the Anglo – Indian relation, the philosophies and styles of the two writers are quite different, even some times
antithetical. Both novelists are alike in their use of public events as a means to probe private consciousness. Both maintain a dispassionate posture toward their material. Of the two, Scott is actually the more objective, for he takes no sides between Indians and English, Hindus and Muslims, conservatives and liberals, whereas Forster at the very outset of his Indian novel’s action established a pattern for British emotions and forced the white men to hold to it. Nevertheless “Paul Scott, like any other important writer”, remarks Jacqueline Banerjee, “deserves to be recognized first and foremost for his own distinctive voice and his own distinctive achievement” (*Paul Scott* 81).

Paul Scott was born in Palmer’s Green, North London, second son of a family of commercial artists. Paul and Peter, his elder brother, were sent to the Winchmore Hill Collegiate, a private school with a good local reputation. While he was a boy, Paul inherited literary aspirations from his mother Frances, a woman from a working class background who had burned her unpublished novels the night before her wedding. At his father’s insistence, Paul began training as an accountant when he was only sixteen and it continued until he was called up in 1940 to begin his national service. His marriage with Penelope Elizabeth Avery took place in 1941.
Paul Scott was a non-commissioned officer in Intelligence, in the U.K., for three years. His commission in the Indian Army came with his arrival in India in 1943. Later Paul was posted to a Supply unit which took him to Burma and Malaya, as well as India. But a year after his war service was completed; he was demobilized and returned to England. During his service in India, Paul Scott travelled extensively to various parts of British India, including the princely states of Tripura, Manipur and Kashmir. On his return to England he was appointed secretary to a publishing company. In 1950 he left this company to become a literary agent with David Higham Associates, and remained in that post for ten years. During this period Scott produced four novels. Then he resigned his position to become a freelance writer and regular reviewer for *Country Life* and *The Times*. Later he decided to become a full-time writer and thus by 1964 brought out four more novels. Scott was highly obsessed with India and the subject matter of most of his novels was India. So he wanted to pay a visit to India and it happened in 1964. The visit gave him enough confidence and he finished the first two books of the Quartet before his second visit in 1969.

Recharged with new knowledge and experience of India Scott returned to England to finish the third book. However to finish the Quartet he wanted another visit to India and it took place in 1972. This
time Paul Scott found chances to visit the southern side of India also. Thus in the last week of February, as part of a lecture tour Paul Scott visited Calicut. Back in England, Scott continued his work with the Quartet and finished it in 1975. After the publication of this major work, Scott visited the U.S.A. and lectured at many universities. The American scholars were very enthusiastic to receive him and to listen to his lecture. This new found cordial atmosphere helped him to remain as Writer in Residence at the University of Tulsa in 1976 for a few months. The publication of his last fictional creation, *Staying On* and the Booker Award for this tragi-comedy happened in 1977, one year before his death in March 1978.

Paul Scott’s literary contribution is many sided. Apart from the thirteen published novels he has authored poems, essays, review articles and certain unpublished plays. *I Gerontius* is the first poetic work appeared in 1940, when Scott was only twenty. *Charing Cross Station* (1941) is another collection of poems. There are three unpublished plays to his credit – *Pillars of Salt* (1948), *Lines of Communication* (1953) and *Sahibs and Memsahibs* (1955), the last two being radio plays. “India: A Post - Forsterian View” (1970) and “The Raj” (1974) are two essays by Scott. He is also the author of several remarkable review articles appeared in the *Country Life* and *The Times*. 
Paul Scott's first work of fiction, *Johnnie Sahib* (1952), is a character study of a charismatic officer, Captain Johnnie Brown, based on Scott's own experience in the air supply unit in Burma. *The Alien Sky* (1953), his second novel, presents a group of British civil servants and longstanding residents of India whose futures are suddenly jeopardized by the country's independence in 1947. The next two novels, *A Male Child* (1956) and *The Mark of the Warrior* (1958) complete Scott's apprenticeship, developing his interest in obsessional family relationships and the mystique of leadership. *A Male Child*, set in London examines some of the same themes as *The Alien Sky* and demonstrates significant emotional growth. *The Mark of the Warrior* is a superseding novel of architectonic perfection, in which Scott infuses the images of the forest and the river. In the novels that follow, *The Chinese Love Pavilion* (1960), *The Birds of Paradise* (1962), *The Bender* (1963), and *The Corrida at San Feliu* (1964) he was to evolve a much more complex narrative technique than the one he used in the earlier works. *The Chinese Love Pavilion* represents the beginning of Scott's mature philosophy and it explores in yet another way the symbolic nature of reality and illusion. In *The Birds of Paradise* the setting is princely India and it tells the story of the betrayal of the princes by the Empire. The conventional techniques used by Scott in *The Bender* point directly at the central symbol of a
bender which itself represents an aspect of modern life. *The Corrida at San Feliu* is about a novelist writing a novel presented as a posthumous publication of the fictional novelist Edward Thornhill. Scott’s masterpiece creation, published in a single volume as *The Raj Quartet* (1976) contains *The Jewel in the Crown* (1966), *The Day of the Scorpion* (1968), *The Towers of Silence* (1971) and *A Division of the Spoils* (1975). In *The Raj Quartet*, the demise of British India is traced through the fortunes of an enormous cast of characters who respond to these problems of personal identity in a variety of ways. The events of the novels extend over a period of five years, from the ‘Quit India’ motion of the All India Congress Committee in August 1942 to the preparations for partition that followed the British retreat in August 1947. Scott’s award winning and final fictional contribution, *Staying On* (1977), a different work written in the background of free India, is a wonderfully comic and deeply moving novel. In *Staying On* Scott describes the new history of India, twenty-five years after independence, with all its comic strength and its sophisticated documentation of the new Indian class structure. This novel’s principal claim on our attention arises from the extent to which it makes us care about the fortunes of the people in it.

Despite being the author of thirteen fictional creations, including the Booker Prize winning one, Scott took a long time for academic
recognition. Reviewers invariably applied the very highest critical standards to Scott’s novels, whilst often conveying the impression that they did not quite achieve them. However, of late several articles and about a dozen full-length studies have established the greatness and indispensability of Scott as a writer of Anglo – Indian relations. The first important review of *The Jewel in the Crown* by Orville Prescott “Empire, Race and The Cycle of Inevitability” (1966) appreciates Scott’s treatment of the theme of British Raj and also his technique of examining and re-examining the central incident of Daphne’s rape from different points of view. In 1973, after the publication of the third book of the Quartet, an Indian critic S.P. Appasamy praised Scott’s treatment of history and the use of multiple perspective in his article “The Withdrawal: A Survey of Paul Scott’s trilogy of novels on India”. The next major commentary was made by Benita Parry. In her long discussion “Paul Scott’s Raj” (1974), Parry finds ambiguities in Scott’s attitude and treats his novels as sentimental. As she puts it, the *Quartet* is “a muted celebration of a concept rather than a critique of a reality” (359). On the contrary, H.R.F. Keating’s review “Last Days of the Raj” (1975) takes a positive approach and classifies Scott as a superb chronicler.

Caroline Moorehead in “Getting Engrossed in the Death Throes of the Raj” (1975) blames Scott’s subject for his unpopularity as a writer.
Though Scott has strong admirers, was well reviewed and sold respectably, he remained surprisingly little known, and has on occasion been dismissed – the real reason for his relative obscurity was his chosen subject. Max Beloff is the first critic who discovered the real worth of Scott as a writer. Beloff’s article “The End of the Raj: Paul Scott’s Novels as History” (1976) is eloquent on the capacity of the novel as compared with historical writing to elucidate the relationship of the British with India. His assessment is that Scott’s novels offer a distillation of the last years of British rule in India in fictional form. Francine Weinbaum is another notable writer who contributed extensively to Scott criticism. Apart from a detailed critical study, she has written a dissertation and several articles. Her 1978 article “Paul Scott’s India: The Raj Quartet” introduces Scott’s subject as an idea of the thwarted love or union on three levels: historical, social, and psychological. Similarly Richard James’s “In the Steps of Paul Scott” (1979) also acknowledges Scott’s marvellous precision in presenting the people of the Raj in the big things and in the small, in the traumas as well as in the teacups.

M.M. Mahood, another critic, complains of the ‘small heed’ that serious literary critics had paid to the Quartet. According to him Scott’s masterpiece creation aspires to be an imaginative recreation of Tolstoyan
breadth and depth. Mahood’s article “Paul Scott’s Guardians” (1983) emphasizes Scott’s ‘positive values’. His commentary is especially good on the female characters of the Quartet. Another earnest Scott supporter is Antony Copley who in “The Politics of Illusion: Paul Scott’s The Raj Quartet” (1984) believes that The Raj Quartet is indispensably on the grand scale on the final decades of the British in India. Tariq Ali’s “Fiction as History, History as Fiction” (1984) is an approach from the historical perspective of Scott’s works as does Beloff. Being more interested in the accuracy of the sociological aspect, Ali considers the volumes of the Quartet to be “social – realist essays” (78). Allen Boyer’s “Love, Sex and History in The Raj Quartet” (1985) is a different work on Scott. Boyer argues that Scott uses Merrick’s homosexuality to show the causes of the failure of the imperial relationship.

While many critics praised Scott in general and his Quartet in particular, Salman Rushdie’s is a scathing attack on him. His “Outside the Whale” (1985) contains vituperative general comments on the screen version of Scott’s epic story. Not only does Rushdie bitterly criticise Scott’s treatment of Indian characters as ‘bit players’ but also comments that Scott is not as fine an artist as Forster. Margaret Scanlan’s “The Disappearance of History: Paul Scott’s Raj Quartet” (1986) is a positive commentary giving emphasis to Scott’s pessimism. Similarly Richard
Johnson’s “Sayed’s Trial in Paul Scott’s “A Division of the Spoils”: The Interplay of History, Theme and Purpose” (1986) praises Scott’s handling of the historical issues. Donald Hannah’s “Dirty Typescripts and Very Dirty Typescripts: Paul Scott’s Working Methods in The Raj Quartet” (1992) is a different approach based on the unpublished manuscript to bring out the experience of ‘re – enactment’ shared by author, characters and reader. A modern critic, Danny Colwell in “I am your Mother and your Father: Paul Scott’s Raj Quartet and the dissolution of imperial identity” (1996) situates Scott on ambiguous middle ground between the colonial and the postcolonial, and supports a postmodern reading of The Raj Quartet.

Apart from these articles, there are twelve detailed studies on Scott including one excellent biography. Though Scott was awarded Booker Prize for his last novel in 1977, it was only in 1980 two studies on Scott appeared. K. Bhaskara Rao’s Paul Scott is good for basic information about the Indian background. There are perceptive insights in his study and Rao ranks Scott as far superior to Kipling and Forster and close to Tolstoy. Rao’s book provides the more comprehensive account of Scott’s work, taking in the few poems and plays, albeit briefly, as well as the novels, and drawing on reviews, essays, articles, and Scott’s own comments. Patrick Swinden’s Paul Scott: Images of India is an enquiry
into the position of India as a country and an idea in Scott’s mind. “More ambitious as a critic than Raô, he traces throughout Scott’s work a dominant theme: the loss of ‘Paradise’, in the shape of the ‘sense of personal reality’ which disintegrates when the ‘external props’ . . . which provide an illusion of permanence are withdrawn” (Williamson 268). Swinden has also authored another book Paul Scott (1982) which can be used as an introductory essay on Scott and his works. In Introduction to The Raj Quartet (1985) Janis Tedesco and Janet Popham have done a moralistic study which makes no mention of the literature or any critical debate but provides good insight into Scott’s characters and identifies Scott’s use of light – dark imagery broadly as good and evil. The admirable authorized biography Paul Scott: a life (1990) by Hilary Spurling is an indispensable contribution to Scott studies. Some of the reasons for his being a literary missing person are beautifully and convincingly explained in this book. “Her keen eye for detail, her narrative fluency, and her psychological perspicacity and tact, combined with her meticulous and extensive research, make Spurling an exceptional biographer” (Mann 795).

Robin J. More has taken a sympathetic approach from a well-informed historical perspective in his Paul Scott’s Raj (1990). Moore makes full use of unpublished materials and in the words of Francine
Weinbaum: it is a “very useful account of Scott’s creative process in the India novels” (*Critical Study* x). The most detailed critical analysis with an emphasis on Scott’s fragmented personality and desire for unity, has come from Francine Weinbaum in the form of *Paul Scott: A Critical Study* (1992). It discusses Scott’s central idea as about love that had been thwarted, on the political as well as interpersonal levels. In a postcolonial reading, *Paul Scott’s Raj Quartet: History and Division* (1998), Peter Childs gives a new dimension to Scott studies. Childs here tries to place *The Raj Quartet* in relation with other anticolonial writings. He also extensively applies Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory on heteroglossia to interpret Scott’s *Quartet*. Jacqueline Banerjee’s very recent work *Paul Scott* (1999) is a revaluation of Scott’s earlier novels and the significance of *The Raj Quartet* as one of the major works of twentieth century.

Two other Western studies also attempt to measure the merit of Scott as an Anglo – Indian writer. David Rubin, in his excellent survey *After the Raj: British Novels of India Since 1947* (1986), compares Scott’s fiction favourably with that of his contemporaries and with Forster’s. Rubin extols Scott’s novels as a striking justification of the novel genre as opposed to what is generally called history. Michael Gorra’s *After Empire: Scott, Naipaul, Rushdie* (1997) treats Scott as a
postcolonial novelist in his concern with what Empire has left behind, in the way Scott pursues its consequences into the realm of culture.

Though the subject of Paul Scott’s fiction is India which is also a cause of his unpopularity in England, Indian criticism on Scott fiction has been scanty. There are only three books on Scott so far. Indira Kohli’s *Paul Scott: His art and Ideas* (1987) is the first Indian study which discusses British imperialism as reflected in Scott’s works. In this book the author links the fact of Scott’s life with his development as a novelist. V.R. Badiger’s *Paul Scott: His Art and Vision* (1994) is another encouraging Indian discussion of Scott’s use of novel as image, symbol and metaphor. Badiger interprets the intrinsic relationship between Scott’s art and vision as they are inseparably amalgamated in his finely executed novels. Anil Kumar Verma’s *Paul Scott (A Critical Study of His Novels)* (1999) is a recent book which analyses the entire socio-political structure of India and England on the basis of Scott’s novels.

These critical studies undoubtedly establish that Paul Scott has earned the universal acclamation as a writer of the grand scale. Considering his worth The University of Tulsa McFarlin Library’s Special Collection Department maintains a collection of 6000 of Scott’s letters as well as his correspondents’ responses and typescripts of his lectures on the novel, sometimes containing more than one version. The
other large collection of his writing, consisting largely of his working manuscripts, is at the Harry Ransom Humanities Research Center at the University of Texas at Austin.

Although Paul Scott is one of the major writers among the Anglo-Indian novelists, his literary reputation is unjustly overshadowed. He is a neglected writer mainly because he is not a critics’ writer. Scott is unexperimetal, untheoretical, unamenable to anything but attentive reading. However, to the modern reader as well as to the Britons with Indian experience, Scott’s fiction has become an unfailing source to learn the history of the Raj. So the present study attempts to probe Paul Scott’s fictional works with a historical perspective. The approach chosen is to consider how Paul Scott recorded his perception of India and the story of our freedom struggle in his fictional works. The emphasis is on how the borderline between history and fiction gets blurred and to what extent Scott’s novels can be read in the place of formal history. The following discussions centre on the hypothesis that it is interesting and profitable to find out how Scott’s narratives interact intellectually, affectively, imaginatively and politically with history. For this purpose Paul Scott’s novels with Indian background, namely, Johnnie Sahib, The Alien Sky, The Mark of the Warrior, The Birds of Paradise, The Jewel in the Crown, The Day of the Scorpion, The Towers of Silence, A Division of the Spoils
and *Staying On*, are selected for an in-depth study. It is hoped that this study can provide a deeper understanding of the Indian experience and the politics of postcolonialism as revealed through Scott's novels.
Chapter II

The Crumbling of the Edifice