INTER-RELATIONSHIP OF THE FOUR NOVELS OF THE RAJ QUARTET

In terms of time, The Raj Quartet is well-defined. The story is confined within the two borders of August 9, 1942 and August 9, 1947. During this tumultuous period, many epoch-making events take place both in fictional and historical terms in the novel. Historically, important decisions are taken on the questions of the birth of a free nation, or rather, two nations. Naturally, the labour pain that accompanies any such birth is bound to be intense. The long struggle for freedom that finally compelled the British Government to leave India, and the aftermath of the British withdrawal, are all historical facts. The four separate novels, together forming The Raj Quartet, cover, in terms of time, a period of five years immediately before Indian independence. But considered separately, each of the novels published during a period of nine years between 1966 and 1975 has an individual identity as a finished work of fiction. At the same time, the novels are by no means kept confined to particular periods in terms of chronology in the sense that many of the events and characters depicted in an earlier novel find fuller treatment in a later one. Likewise, certain aspects not fully treated in an earlier volume are given a more coherent shape, while certain other incidents find feasible explanations later. From a careful perusal of the four volumes under review, it becomes evident that they were not originally intended to form a sequence novel. The first
volume, in particular, is conceived and executed as a finished work in itself, although it is quite evident that as the author proceeded from volume to volume, the idea of all of them forming part of a sequence gets crystallized. When Scott comes to the end of the third volume, he must have seen that the fourth volume would become necessary to tie all the loose ends together. Normally, in a sequence novel, a certain chronological order is followed even if there are excursions into the past and the future. Yet the plot will move forward from point to point in terms of time. But in the *Quartet*, especially in the first three volumes, this is not the case. A detailed examination of the events of each of the four novels will show that though *The Raj Quartet* was not originally conceived as a sequence, nevertheless, Scott somehow manages, as volume succeeds volume, to project in it an underlying theme and a certain cohesion both in terms of background and plot-construction. Before proceeding to consider how different incidents and characters repeatedly come up in various volumes, a resumé of the four volumes will not be out of place.

The first volume in the sequence is *A Jewel in the Crown*. The title is suggestive. It is actually the name of a picture that was given to Miss Crane, Superintendent of the Bishop Bernard Mission Schools at Mayapore. This picture is further explained in various ways in different volumes. Miss Crane calls it an allegory (I, 23). Scott explains this picture in greater detail in Volume One in these words:
"Before she left there was tea, and then the presentation of the picture - a larger, more handsomely framed copy of the picture on the wall behind her desk in the Muzzafirabad schoolroom, a semi-historical, semi-allegorical picture entitled THE JEWEL IN HER CROWN, which showed the old Queen ... surrounded by representative figures of her Indian Empire: Princes, landowners, merchants, money-lenders, sepoys, farmers, servants, children, mothers and remarkably clean and tidy beggars. The Queen was sitting on a golden throne, under a crimson canopy, attended by her temporal and spiritual aides: soldiers, statesmen and clergy. The canopied throne was apparently in the open air because there were palm trees and a sky showing a radiant sun bursting out of bulgy clouds such as, in India, heralded the wet Monsoon. Above the clouds flew the prayerful figures of the angels who were the benevolent spectators of the scene below. Among the statesman who stood behind the throne one was painted in the likeness of Mr Disraeli holding up a parchment map of India to which he pointed with obvious pride but with tactful humility. An Indian prince, attended by native servants, was approaching the throne bearing a velvet cushion on which he offered a large and sparkling gem. The children in the school thought that this gem was the jewel referred to in the title. Mrs Crane had been bound to explain that the gem was merely representative of tribute, and that the jewel of the title was India herself, which had been transferred from the rule of the British East India Company to the rule of the British Crown in 1858 ..." (I, 17-18).

In Volume Three, The Towers of Silence, it is explained thus:

"There is the Queen ... The Queen protects the people. The people bring presents to the Queen. The prince carries a jewel on a velvet cushion. The jewel is India. She will place the jewel in her Crown." (III, 63)
In the last volume we are told:

"It was a kind of picture whose awfulness gave it a kind of distinction. The old Queen was enthroned, beneath a canopy, receiving tribute from a motley gathering of her Indian subjects, chief among whom was a prince, bearing a crown on a cushion. Ranged on either side of the throne were representatives of the Raj in statuesque pro-consular positions. Disraeli was there, indicating a parchment. In the background, plumb angels peered from behind fat clouds, and looked ready to blow their long golden trumpets." (IV, 504)

However, Miss Crane does not share these pious sentiments. A practical woman who knows the pulse of ordinary India, she does not find any romance in holding India any longer:

"The India of the picture had never existed outside its gilt frame, and the emotions the picture was meant to conjure up were not much more than smugly pious." (I, 21)

She realises that India is no more the jewel in the British Crown that it once was.

The first volume covering a period of almost five years from August 9, 1942 deals with the story of Miss Edwina Crane, a spinster, and the rape of Daphne Manners against the background of her falling in love with Hari Kumar. The opening line, however, tells about the story of a rape, which in a way, is the central theme of the novel:

"Imagine, then, a flat landscape, dark for the moment, but even so conveying to a girl running in the still deeper shadow cast by the wall of the Bibighar Gardens ...". (I, 1)
The point is therefore made clear that of the two stories, the story of the rape is by far the most important. The author says, on the same page:

"This is the story of a rape, of events that led up to it and followed it and the place in which it happened. There are the action, the people, and the place; all of which are inter-related but in their totality incommunicable in isolation from the moral continuum of human affairs."

The Jewel in the Crown, therefore, is primarily the story of the rape of Daphne Manners.

Miss Crane came to India as a governess to English children but later joined the Mission as a teacher to instruct small Indian children. Scott describes the pitiable and squalid school buildings meant for the education of Indian children and the kind of education imparted there. He does not mince matters when he says that the children went to those schools because "there were, to begin with, free chappattis" (I, 15). In 1942 she was the Superintendent of the Mission schools in Mayapore. Two pictures, one of Gandhi and the other, 'The Jewel in the Crown', already mentioned, adorned her drawing room walls. But she had taken down the picture of Gandhi because she felt let down by him when he started his non-cooperation movement to thwart the efforts of the Government in checking the designs of the Japanese on India. On August 8, 1942 she sets out for Shibrapur and stays there overnight in the small bungalow of the teacher, Mr Chaudhuri, B.A., B.Sc., with whom she has
not been able to establish any rapport. The same day, the All India Congress Committee, meeting in Bombay, adopts the historic 'Quit India' resolution. By the time she wakes up on August 9, 1942, most of the important leaders, starting from Gandhiji and Nehru down to the local sub-committee members such as lawyer Srinivasan, are put in jail. This naturally irritates the people who are now without proper leadership and a viable programme of action. Along with the people of good intention, the rough elements also appear on the scene.

It is on such a road that Miss Crane comes out intending to go to Mayapore. Mr Chaudhuri warns her against her decision but that only makes her all the more determined. On her way a crowd confronts her. In the trouble that follows, Mr Chaudhuri, who tries to save Miss Crane, is beaten to death. Miss Crane, too, is beaten to unconsciousness. At first all the English at Mayapore prove their sense of solidarity by condemning the Indians and by being indignant at her woeful experience, and becoming most considerate and solicitous towards her. But when she refuses to identify her attackers, they, as quickly, drop and disown her. Though cured of shock and exposure, she becomes totally withdrawn into herself. A few days later she wears a white sari, such as a widow does and sets fire to herself and dies, symbolizing 'sati'.
Daphne Manners is the niece of Lady Manners and Sir Henry Manners who was Governor of Ranpur in the thirties. The English hardly liked Sir Henry because he was said to be pro-Indian. To make matters worse for Daphne, she is discovered living at the MacGregor House with Lady Lili Chatterji who is the closest friend of her aunt, Sir Henry now dead and gone. The English at Mayapore were greatly excited at the report of Daphne's rape. The girl's life was inexorably entangled with that of an Indian, Hari Kumar, whom she had met at Lady Lili Chatterji's place where he was invited. They were instantly drawn to each other, and their mutual admiration soon ripened into love. Hari Kumar happens to have lost his Indianness while not being able to acquire the status of an Englishman - even a brown Englishman as Macaulay envisaged. When Hari was nineteen, his father committed suicide, leaving him a pauper in England where he was taken at the age of two. Hari was compelled to return to India and live with his aunt Shalini Gupta Sen who referred to him as her 'English nephew'. He cannot adjust himself to life in India. He also notices that in India he has become invisible to the English who are nevertheless piqued by his Chillingborough English and perfect upper middle class manners. Eventually he takes up a job as a reporter in a local English daily. During all these years, he has been exchanging letters with his closest
friend, Colin Lindsay, but when the latter comes to India as a captain in the British Army, the correspondence dries up. Then one day Hari sees him close enough at Mayapore but, like all other English people, Colin fails to recognise him. This makes Hari so upset that he gets drunk. Sister Ludmila, who collects the abandoned dying, picks up Hari from a ditch. Next morning he is confronted by the Police Superintendent of the district, Ronald Herrick. Hari's behaviour and his Chillingborough English arouse Merrick's animosity against him, and he is taken to the police station from where he is released at the intervention of Grinivasan and Lady Lili Chatterji. In Merrick's book this, too, counts against Hari. Merrick, who is from the grammar school background, has had to work his way up by winning scholarships; he has been 'setting his cap' at Daphne who, however, sees through him and turns down his offer of marriage. So when he notices that Japhne and Hari are fond of each other, he warns her against any such association:

"You know what I feel for you. It's because I feel it that I haven't said anything to you before. But it's my duty to warn you against this association with Mr Kumar." (I, 390)

This warning annoys her. Merrick, however, has already chosen Hari as his victim. Hari and Daphne visit a temple one night, and on their way back they quarrel. On the morning of August 9, 1942, Daphne sends him a note asking him to meet her at the Bibighar gardens, the only place where they could meet in private. The Bibighar is a haunted, broken down mansion which a
rajah had built for his beloved a hundred years ago. No one ever went near the Bibighar. Unaware of the troubled political situation, they meet there in the evening and make up their quarrel. In the process they consummate their love, the very first time as it happens. Some hooligans who were watching them beat up Hari badly and rape Daphne. When Daphne is able to overcome her physical pain, she realises that Merrick will surely take this opportunity to pin the crime on Hari. She wants to save him somehow. So she asks Hari to deny their having met that night or any night since the night they had been to the temple. Then she runs home all the way. Predictably, Merrick arrests Hari and the five boys who had been drinking country liquor and treats them with inhuman cruelty in the police station. Merrick is convinced that Hari lured the girl into the garden and raped her first and then let his friends do the same to satisfy his ego. Throughout his interrogation, Hari refuses to account for the time he and Daphne spent together, and both of them lie to their teeth that since their visit to the temple, they had not seen each other. Daphne even threatens to give evidence that all of them were British soldiers with blackened faces. Overnight, the British lose their interest in Daphne just as they lost interest in Miss Crane, or as the English population of Chandrapore lost interest in Adela Quested (in *A Passage to India*). Daphne becomes 'that Manners girl'. When the authorities find it impossible to sustain the charge of rape on Hari and others, they are locked away under the Defence of India Rules.
While Hari is languishing in jail and his aunt is knocking at every door for justice, Daphne goes back to her aunt, Lady Manners, and stays first at Rawalpindi and then in Srinagar where she delivers little Parvati and dies of peritonitis.

In addition to the main characters, i.e., Daphne, Hari, and Merrick, there are many minor characters who are mentioned throughout the Quartet. While the story of Miss Crane ends with her committing a symbolic 'sati', the story of Daphne, or rather the rape, reverberates throughout the novel. In Part Two of The Jewel in the Crown the period is 1964 and the narrator, possibly the author himself, is staying at the MacGregor House and gives a detailed background story of that house, evoking the memories of the Sepoy Mutiny. We get a vivid picture of Lady Chatterji. Scott uses this part to expose the vanity of the English middle class memsahibs. The novelist also says that Parvati is now a young woman whose passion is classical music. The stranger, that is the narrator (possibly the novelist), who is at Mayapore to collect facts about the Bibighar affair, is taken to the club, the citadel of English social life, where he meets English ladies of the old memsahib type. This part is an interesting comment on the professional English and their memsahibs in independent India, and the Indians and India of seventeen years after Independence. There is also a detailed history of Hari and
his father and the circumstances that led him to leave India to become an Englishman fit to rule the country. Brigadier Reid and the Deputy Commissioner, Robin White, and their views on the happenings of August 9, 1942 and the riots afterwards also are discussed in detail. The reader is told the background story of the Bibighar. It also produces the private journal of Daphne who "only wrote it as an insurance against permanent silence" (I, 349). She recounts in detail the story of her passionate love for Hari and its consummation in the Bibighar on the evening of August 9, 1942 and the rape. The journal tells the reader of her intuition that she is with child by Hari. She also requests her aunt that in the event of her passing away the child may be given to some institution and her money be used to give it a decent start in life. As it happens, Lady RAMS brings up the child, Parvati, and when she thinks that her days are numbered, she requests Lady Chatterji to provide her a home. Lady Chatterji looks after her very well, and with the money left behind by Daphne and her aunt, Sister Ludmila's 'Sanctuary' is turned into a modern Home for Children.

The second volume entitled The Day of the Scorpion shows that there is a change in the planning of this novel. There is a certain sense of completeness in so far as The Jewel in the Crown is concerned. But the volume under reference does not seem to have been planned as a complete book in itself. It introduces
the Laytons and the Kasims, the two families who go on to the end of the *Quartet*. Except Guy Perron, all the other characters in the second, third and fourth volumes make their appearance here. Essentially, it is the story of Susan Layton and her sister Sarah Layton. The title of this novel, too, seems to be rather symbolic:

"And, after all it seemed that Susan had held somewhere in the background of her mind a memory of the day she once told Sarah she had forgotten: the day Dost Mohammed made a little circle of kerosine-soaked cottonwaste, set light to it and then opened a circular tin, shook it, and dropped the small black scorpion into the centre of the ring of fire. Poised, belligerent, the armoured insect moved stiffly, quickly - stabbing its arched tail, once, twice, three times. Sarah felt the heat on her face and drew back. When the flames died down the scorpion was still."

(II, 476)

This is a fossilised memory in the recesses of Susan's mind since her girlhood. She becomes a mother having earlier lost her husband after only three days of married life. She substitutes the child for the scorpion.

"... Susan placed the child on the grass, took the ready-to-hand tin of kerosine and sprinkled a wide circle around it." (II, 483)

Then she sets fire to it. Perhaps the most important character in *The Day of the Scorpion* is Susan who is not evidently well-balanced mentally. The volume takes its title from this imbalanced act of Susan.
In Book One of this novel, the novelist introduces Mohammed Ali Kasim, ex-chief minister of Ranpur, and his arrest on the morning of August 9, 1942. Sir George Malcolm, the Governor, tries unsuccessfully, to make a traitor of Kasim. Kasim is sent to the fort at Premanagar as a political prisoner in seclusion. The novelist then narrates the totally disconnected story of another 'prisoner of circumstances', Lady Manners, who, as already stated, has decided to bring up Parvati, the daughter of her late niece, Daphne Manners. Sarah Layton, one of the most important characters in the last three volumes of the Quartet, a kind of understudy of Daphne Manners, visits Lady Manners who has become a social outcast in so far as the English are concerned. Sarah, and her sister, Susan, along with their mother, Mildred Layton, and their aunt and uncle, Mrs Fenny Grace and Major Grace, happen to be on holiday in Kashmir. Fenny Grace is scandalised to know that their neighbour on the lake is Lady Manners. She declares: "Everyone agrees that that woman's behaviour has been extra-ordinary" (II, 204). Their English social sense makes them prisoners of other beliefs. But Sarah is a girl of altogether different nature. She visits Lady Manners when her people are out, and even has a look at the baby and spends a lot of time talking with the old lady whom she describes
as extra-ordinary. The reader is then told the story of the Laytons: "If English people in India could be said to live in (in the sense of belonging to) any particular town, the Laytons lived in Ranpur and Pankot" (II, 49). Col Layton, Commanding Officer of the 1st Pankot Rifles, is at present a prisoner of war in Germany. Susan is about to be married to Capt Edward Bingham. It is during this wedding at Mirat that Merrick is introduced as a captain. During the groom's ride to the church with Merrick, a stone is thrown at the car which belongs to the Nawab. Teddie is injured slightly. The stone is thrown at Merrick actually by his persecutors to remind him that they have not forgotten the Bibighar case. Though till now Merrick has been successful in keeping his true identity hidden, Bronowsky, the emigre chief minister of Mirat, ferrets out Merrick's past. His antecedents become well known. Merrick tries to make friends with Sarah. He confesses to her that "that stone someone chucked this morning was really thrown at me... It's all to do with that Meyapore business" (II, 210). He tells her that Sarah reminds him of Daphne whom he had admired. He also advises Sarah to keep off Ahmed, son of Kasim, now social secretary to the Nawab, because no Indian should be trusted. He tells her that "friendly and cooperative though Kasim is on the surface, it's as well to treat him cautiously as well
as considerately because it would be unnatural if he didn't resent us a bit" (II, 146). But in spite of this warning and her aunt's disapproval of her riding in the company of Ahmed, Sarah and Ahmed become rather friendly though this friendship matures much later. Pandit Baba, the man behind the stone-throwing incident, who instigates young men to do acts of sedition in the tradition of Narasimha Swami of Sirj Ram the Revolutionary, is also introduced.

On the request of Lady Planners, Sir George Malcolm, the Governor, orders an enquiry in camera into the case of Hari who is languishing in jail. Capt Nigel Rowan, ADC to the Governor, and V.R. Gopal of the Department of Justice, examine Hari. Once Hari Kumar starts speaking in English, he sounds like an upper middle class Englishman. He narrates the cruel and almost inhuman treatment meted out to him by Merrick to get Hari own that it was he who had originally lured Daphne to the Bibighar Gardens with the sole purpose of humiliating her. Hari says that he refuted this charge, but when he is asked to account for the time between his departure from the newspaper office where he worked, and his arrival at home, he keeps a stiff upper lip now as he did then before Merrick.
The examination reaches a stage of impasse when he narrates the indecent and perverted treatment of the victim (Hari Kumar) by Merrick. This scandalises Rowan's sense of English solidarity and suggests that Hari is lying. Rowan knew Hari as his junior at Chillingborough. Slowly, Hari realises that something has happened to Daphne and that they are going through this drill to satisfy someone's troubled conscience. Rowan confirms that she died of peritonitis and that she did not marry any one. Hari realises the full import of this news. He weeps bitterly but silently for Daphne. He then explains what Merrick called the 'situation' of being white and black; the relationship of the ruler and the ruled. He also tells what Merrick told him during the interrogation: "What price Chillingborough now?" meaning Hari's expensive school education did not take him anywhere; though himself a grammar school boy, Merrick was now the master. It is the 'situation', and Hari happens to be the chosen victim of Merrick. Capt. Rowan and Lady Manners leave the jail convinced that Hari is the father of Daphne's child. "The child", she said. "But even now I can't be sure. Only surer. She was so sure" (II, 307). She was not so sure earlier because in her letter dated May 31, 1943 from Srinagar she had asked Lady Chatterji to visit her: "I really
want you to see Parvati yourself and judge if there is any resemblance at all to Hari Kumar" (I, 444). Of course, a little later she is definite because she recalls what her friend confirmed: "Each time you see her you say she looks more like Hari than the time before" (I, 446).

The Layton family is described in greater detail. Mrs Mildred Layton, her daughters Sarah and Susan, and her husband Col Layton are mentioned. Susan, whose husband is in Burma, is now waiting for the baby. Sarah is still working as the war-time clerk in General Rankin's office; Mildred has taken to drink and occasional adultery. Rose Cottage, where they hoped to live, is occupied by its owner, Mrs Mabel Layton, Col Layton's step-mother, and her paying guest, Miss Barbie Batchelor. Teddie is killed. Merrick, who tried to save Teddie at the risk of his own life, is now undergoing treatment in a military hospital at Calcutta. Susan insists on Sarah going to visit Merrick. In the hospital Merrick tells her about the Indian soldiers of the British Army who have joined the Indian National Army, nicknamed by the British as 'the Jiffs' and the circumstances leading to Teddie's death. Sarah is seduced by a man called Major Clark but she seems to be happy to cease to be a virgin, often referring to the experience as 'entering her body's grace'. At night she is told by her aunt, Mrs Fenny Grace, that her great aunt Mabel is dead and so she comes back to
Pankot next day. While trying to change trains at Panpur she runs into Count Bronowsky, the Chief Minister of Mirat, and Rowan.

We are told that Mahammed Ali Kasim is being released on compassionate grounds. Though Kasim refuses to believe it, his eldest son, Lieut Sayed Kasim, has joined the INA and has been taken a prisoner of war by the British.

Susan who was alone with Mabel at the time of her death acts admirably though later she suffers from delayed shock and runs into labour pain and delivers a boy. But she herself becomes imbalanced mentally. A row between Mildred and Barbie takes place on the question of where Mabel is to be buried. But ultimately Mabel is buried at Pankot. Barbie loses her roof over her head.

The Towers of Silence, the third volume of the Quartet, explains, in greater detail, the story of Barbie Batchelor and that of the Layton family, both mentioned in The Day of the Scorpion. Barbie Batchelor is a retired Bishop Bernard Mission school teacher like Miss Crane. The novel takes its name from the fact that she spent her last days in contemplation of the birds. "She said the birds belong to the towers
of silence. For the Ranpur Parsees" (III, 390). Like the birds that pick the bones of the dead Parsees clean, Barbie finds that something has 'picked her words clean'.

Susan's marriage, mentioned in the two earlier volumes, is once again described in greater detail. She becomes engaged to Capt Edward (Teddie) Bingham, and, though quite reluctantly, Mildred agrees to the alliance. In the meantime, Teddie is transferred to Mirat Cantonment. His room-mate Merrick does not disclose the part he played in the Bibighar affair of Mayapore in 1942 till he is compelled to own up during his encounter with Count Dronousky, at the wedding reception of Susan. Later he confesses to Sarah.

The scene then shifts to the war front at Imphal. One day an INA prisoner, Baksh, is caught and produced before Teddie. Baksh happens to be from Teddie's Muzzafirabad Guides. He breaks down when confronted by his officer who works the charm of 'man-bap' relationship with the Indian soldiers. He convinces Teddie that he was made an INA soldier by coercion but he took the first opportunity to come back to his parent army and that there are several such men waiting in the hills beyond. Teddie wants
to get them and so rushes off with Baksh in a jeep; Herrick who does not believe in 'man-bap' relationship, follows. By the time they reach the spot, they are subjected to intense shelling by the enemy. Teddy's jeep catches fire and he is seriously wounded. Herrick tries to help Teddie who succumbs to his burns. Herrick is also badly wounded causing his arm to be amputated later on. He however, gets a coveted military decoration, B.D.O. As has already been mentioned in the earlier volume, The Day of the Scorpion, Teddie’s death affects Susan badly.

Once again, Mabel's death and its effect on Barbie, mentioned briefly in the earlier volume, are explained in this volume in greater detail. At the time of Mabel's death, Barbie is away from Rose Cottage which has been her home for several years. When she returns home hearing the news of her friend's death, she finds that Mildred has already taken over the house and removed the dead body of Mabel to the hospital. All the rooms and cupboards and the silver are locked away. She feels both wretched and humiliated. Yet out of her love for her dead friend who, she thought, desired to be buried at Ranpur, Barbie faces endless troubles to convince Mildred who, however,
behaves rather badly with the old missionary. She is asked by Mildred to leave the house immediately though her continued stay would have benefitted the Layton family. When it was so suggested in the club, Mildred is reported to have said that the old lady is not quite a good influence: "... it would be most, most unsuitable. Unsuitable especially, it was said, with two pretty young girls in the house" (III, 261). Barbie is more pained than scandalised. She takes temporary refuge at the residence of the vicar. Mildred takes every opportunity to humiliate her. She even returns Barbie's wedding present to Susan, a set of apostle spoons. The insult is too much; she decides to present the spoons to the Mess. While trying to find the Adjutant, Capt Coley, for the purpose, she comes across him and Mildred making love. Scandalised and bewildered, she runs out in pouring rain resulting in her prolonged illness, and losing both her health and her voice. At Sarah's suggestion she had earlier left behind her trunk in the shed of the mali at Rose Cottage. While there to collect it, she meets Capt Merrick who tells her about her colleague Eulina Crane and Daphne. Against Merrick's advice she takes it away in an old tonga which meets with a serious accident on the road.
Barbie loses both her trunk and her balance of mind. She is kept in a hospital at Ranpur where she spends her time watching the vultures on the towers of silence where the Parsees leave their dead to be picked clean by the birds. On August 6, 1945, she breathes her last. Throughout her stay in the hospital, her only visitor was Sarah.

A Division of the Spoils is the last volume of the sequence. The period covered is from June 1945 to August 1947. As in the case of the earlier volumes, this title also has its own meaning:

"Some English people in Pankot have raised the question of the silver in the mess and suggest that the new Indian Government should buy all the knives, forks, spoons and trophies, everything of value, and that the proceeds should be shared out among the families of the men who had contributed to their cost." (IV, 553)

This idea is, of course, not shared by the saner section of the Anglo-Indian community. The same is the case at the national level. The British Government suddenly decides to transfer power to Indians but only after dividing it into India and Pakistan. This necessitates dividing a lot of 'spoils'. The novel, unlike its predecessors, does not give the idea that it is planned as an entity in itself; rather the volume clearly indicates that it is some kind of a tying up of the loose ends.
Host of the important characters like the Laytons, Merrick, Nigel Rowan, and are already familiar to the reader. One important exception is Guy Perron, a sergeant. He is more a witness to so many historical events than an active participant in the story. In a party at the residence of a maharani he meets a girl whom he instantly adores. The girl turns out to be Sarah Layton in the company of Merrick, now Major, Count Bronowsky, and Ahmed. Perron is taken to meet Sarah's father Col Layton who is back in India. Both of them have been at Chillingborough and, again, Perron and Rowan also are friends from their days at Chillingborough. Merrick has already chosen Perron in the way he has been choosing several others before damning them. Eventually, Perron finds himself attached to Merrick, and his special responsibility, the ICA prisoners of war. In Bombay Perron happens to witness the nauseating way in which Merrick conducted the preliminary interrogation of a particular prisoner of war named Karim Muzzafir Khan who is a favourite of Col Layton. Col Layton comes home with Sarah. His home-coming has a certain touching quality about it. Susan has become a mother and a widow during his absence. And there are many changes at Rose Cottage also. He spends his days quietly for a while.
Rowan who goes to Pankot on a special assignment meets Merrick, now a half colonel, and his sergeant, Perron. He also becomes quite friendly with Sarah. At the Rose Cottage, the engagement between Susan and Merrick is announced. Sarah and Mildred do not like the alliance, but Susan's argument is that the child adores Merrick. Perron gets his demobilisation and goes back to England but he becomes more attached to Sarah than ever.

In a meeting between the old Congressman Kasim and his son Sayed who is a prisoner of war, the old man refuses to defend the INA prisoners who, according to him, have waged an illegal war against a proper authority, that is, the Government. He also scoffs at the idea of joining Jinnah. Merrick tries to ingratiate himself in Kasim's good books because he knows that his name is included in the list of officers who had tortured the Indians during the riots in 1942 and that Kasim is likely to become the chief minister.

By the time Perron visits Mirat again as a visiting academician, in the middle of 1947, the country is on the threshold of freedom. Rowan has married his old beloved Laura. He is at Mirat.
Count Bronowsky is advising his Nawab to join the Indian Union. Merrick had joined the Indian Police and was at Mirat helping the local police organise itself more effectively but was hacked to death a few days before the arrival of Perron. Possibly, his time had run out; perhaps his treatment of the six boys in the Bibighar case was finally avenged. Perron notices that Sarah and Ahmed are very friendly. There are sporadic communal riots in many areas where people have been living for centuries in perfect amity and goodwill.

On August 7, 1947 Perron leaves Mirat with Ahmed, Ayah, little Edward, Susan, Sarah and Mrs Grace by train. They are accompanied by Mr and Mrs Peabody who object to the presence of Ahmed and the ayah though it is only eight days to the sure but sad demise of the Raj; and they are going to take up employment under Jinnah. On their way, their train is attacked by religious fanatics and all the Muslims on the train, including Ahmed, are killed. Sarah feels guilty for not being able to protect Ahmed. As if to atone for that wrong, she helps the people collect water to put into the
yearning, dying mouths. Perron tries to help her. Then he goes back to Mirat to report to Bronowsky. He takes a plane from a place called Ranigunj, the aerodrome that serves Ranpur. Before going to the airport he tries, unsuccessfully, to find Hari Kumar. He writes an incomplete letter to Sarah and when his plane takes off after an interminably long wait, he is on his way to Delhi and thence to England. The date is August 9.

The above resume makes it clear that the plot is spread over all the four volumes. In fact, there are more than one story as such. As we have seen, the first volume tells the story of the young lovers viz., Hari and Daphne, the rape of the girl, and its effects on them; the second volume narrates the story of Susan's wedding and her subsequent unhappy experiences such as her losing her husband and mental balance; the third volume contains mainly the story of Barbie Batchelor, while, incidentally, expanding the story of the Laytons; the last volume depicts the end of the most controversial but chequered character, Ronald Herrick and the birth pangs of the two nations. The one character who appears almost till the very end is Ronald Herrick.

*The Quartet* starts on August 9, 1942 and ends on August 9, 1947, but it by no means tells
any of the stories in a chronological order. There is a lot of intermingling of incidents and events. In the first part of the first volume we come across a letter from Lady Manners dated August 5, 1947. But the next volume starts with the morning of August 9, 1942 and the arrest of Mohammed Ali Kasim. The third volume, on the other hand, tells the story of Barbie Batchelor from 1939 when she becomes a companion and paying guest of Mrs Mabel Layton but the actual happenings are confined to the period 1942-47. The last volume starts on a date in 1945. At the end, the reader is told about the departure of the members of the Raj. Even at the end of the fourth volume, everything is not 'tied neatly', as it is normally expected. In fact, one's curiosity has to wait till the publication of Staying On to know what became of the Laytons. At the same time, there is no sense of dissatisfaction either because what is left unsaid does not mar the final impression of the novel. While it can be said that no volume is a spill-over from an earlier one, each one is a succession of the earlier one in the sense that events and characters find better and often fuller portrayal. A detailed examination of various incidents and characters will prove these observations.

The pervading factor in the Quartet is the author himself in various forms. Scott has said:
"There is a bit of the author in all my characters. But there is also an almost invisible figure running through it, a traveller looking for evidence, collecting statements, re-constructing an event."  

Part Four, 'An Evening at the Club' in The Jewel in the Crown bears witness to this assertion. The entire part is devoted to the author visiting Mayapore (indeed a fictitious town) in 1964 in order to collect information with a view to reconstructing the events that led to the rape and the resultant arrests and then the riots that rocked the country and knocked the life out of the Anglo-Indian life. The writer who visited India several times to find material for his book is, presumably, the guest who lives at MacGregor House. It is through this guest that we know as early as at the end of the first volume of the Quartet that Daphne Manners' daughter, Parvati, has grown up to a lovely girl in a pale pink saree whose 'skin is the palest brown and in certain lights her long dark hair reveals a redness more familiar in the north' (I, 451). In the 'Prologue' in the second volume, there is the same narrator on the streets of the money lenders of Banpur. Throughout the novel, this narrator is present though his presence is rather restricted in the third volume, but in the last volume he appears as a character, Guy Terron. He is a student of Indian history, more specifically of the period 1830-1857. This somewhat whimsical sergeant links, once again, Kumar of the first volume and
Rowan of the last volume. At Chillingborough he was
two years senior to Hari Kumar and two years junior
to Rowan who, again, knew both of them there. Thus,
Perron is presumably the manifestation of the nameless
narrator of the first volume.

Characters and incidents are not treated
in complete detail in any one volume. A character
who appears in the first volume appears again in a
later volume. It need not necessarily be that the
second appearance is at a later date. A very minor
character is Miss Edwina Crane. The novel starts with
Miss Crane, who, however, does not fade out along
with her death or rather her 'sati', in October 1942,
but comes up again and again in the narrative and
every time we know a bit more about her than before;

"She locked herself in and soaked the walls with
paraffin and set them alight and died. ... The
story goes that for this act of becoming 'suttee',
... she dressed for the first time in her life in
a white sari, the sari for her adopted country,
the whiteness for widowhood and mourning."
(I, 109-10)

This episode is not forgotten throughout the Quartet.
The explanation for her committing 'suttee' is given
in the second volume by Herrick when Sarah visits him:

"A symbolic act, I suppose. She must have felt
the Indir she knew had died, so like a good
widow she made a funeral pyre." (II, 396)
The episode does not end here. While discussing Mayapore, Sarah mentions Miss Crane. Merrick asks if she knew her. "No, but the woman my aunt lives with was in the missions. She often talks about her. Edwina Crane" (II, 396). A factual mistake that Merrick makes while talking to her is corrected later. Merrick tells Sarah: "There wasn't much to find, she hadn't left a note" (ibid). In the third volume, Barbie Batchelor happens to meet Merrick who becomes a link between her and Miss Crane. She asks him:

"What did she say in the letter, the one that was never read out at the inquest?"

"I am afraid I don't remember except that it satisfied the coroner. ... Well, it was a sane letter. Personally I should have recorded a simple verdict of suicide." (III, 380)

As mentioned earlier, the most important aspect of the Quartet is the rape of Daphne Manners and its consequences. This incident is discussed in all the volumes. Even her uncle is not spared. In the second volume, Kasim, a friend of Sir Henry Manners, speaks well of him:

"Manners was a Governor of great skill - tolerant, sympathetic, admirable in every way. His term of office in Government House was one of hope for us, a bright spot on a rather gloomy horizon. What enemies he made were reactionary English and extremist Indians." (II, 36)

But the ladies of Pankot have something else to say about Sir Henry: "He was rather pro-Indian, wasn't
he? I mean politically" (III, 355). The rape is ever fresh in all the volumes of the Quartet. In the second volume the subject comes up when Kasim has a discussion with the superintendent of the jail at Premanagar where the former is imprisoned:

"You said something about a girl."

"She was raped. Another woman was attacked. ... The girl who was raped was of good family." (II, 28)

Kasim reads this news in detail in the newspapers a few days later. Yet the reader is given the reproduction of this report in the third volume (III, 44). Incidentally, it is through him in fact that the birth of Parvati and the death of Daphne are first made known to the reader (II, 40), though Parvati herself is introduced to the reader much earlier through her morning raga in The Jewel in the Crown (I, 63).

The subject of the rape continues to attract the attention of the reader throughout the Quartet. In her journal in the first volume, Daphne explains the scene and circumstances of Merrick proposing to her. Though Merrick keeps this dark, others ferret it out. In the second volume, we are told by Sarah's aunt, Mrs. Grace, that "the DSP definitely set his cap at Miss Manners" (II, 202). But even before, the reader knows from the discussion that
takes place between Count Bronowsky and Herrick that the latter's part in the Bibighar affair was known to the former (II, 178). When Herrick is asked if he really believed that Hari and the other boys were the ones who raped Daphne, he has no hesitation: "I think that I shall believe they were till my dying day" (II, 190). Various aspects of this rape are mentioned by several characters in all the four volumes. In the first volume the author says:

"The boys they arrested did not have to be found guilty of anything, but simply locked up and sent away, God knew where, with countless others. And with them, Kumar." (I, 150)

Obviously, there was an interrogation but the details are made known much later; in fact, exactly one year and nine months later in the Premanagar Fort jail in the undisclosed presence of Lady Manners (II, 233-305). It is during this examination that the cause of Daphne's death is made clear to the reader although he knows from the first volume that she was delivered of a baby in far from satisfactory conditions. Much later, in the fourth volume, (Book One: 1945, 'Journey to Uneasy Distances') Capt Rowan and Count Bronowsky discuss the rape of Daphne and the part played by Herrick in the case. The novelist recounts once again all the little details of this affair including the stories of Hari, Daphne, and Herrick, and the Bibighar arrests (IV, 163-70). But the scene actually takes
place in 1943 and what is mentioned in the fourth volume is in the form of Capt Rowan's pleasant recollections in connection with his first meeting with Sarah Layton at Ranpur Railway station on the Nawab's coach.

Another aspect that threads through the novel is the constant reminder of Merrick's treatment of Kumar, narrated in the first volume; throughout the remaining three volumes the reader is told about the subtle persecutions of Merrick engineered by Pandit Baba. In the second volume, a stone is thrown at Merrick when he accompanies Teddie on the occasion of the latter's marriage. Of course Merrick pretends not to realise the source or cause of this outrage (II, 154). In the same volume there is another scene designed to embarrass Merrick. It takes place when the wedding party is bidding good-bye to the young couple (II, 206). In the third volume, again, there is another attempt at persecuting Merrick. A broken bicycle is placed on and then removed from the veranda of the cottage shared by Teddie and Merrick at Mirat. Again, Merrick denies having any connection between this curious business and himself though Teddie notices that it affected Merrick tremendously:
"He had never seen such a change in a fellow, at least he couldn't remember seeing one. It was brief but - there was no other word for it - electrifying." (III, 151-52)

Merrick and the reader are constantly reminded of the Bibighar affair till the very end. Count Bronowsky asks Merrick when they meet in Bombay in 1945:

"I hope you are not plagued still by incidents such as arose when you were in Mirat, Major Merrick? Has all that sort of thing died down?" (IV, 60)

Obviously, it has not. It continues right up to the very end. Bronowsky tells the visiting academician, Guy Herron: "Ahmed had told me there was a revival of persecutions when he was in Delhi dealing with his brother's and others' cases" (IV, 562). And, finally, Bronowsky reports, Merrick is done away with by these same forces playing upon his known physical weakness.

Miss Barbie Batchelor, Hari Kumar, Daphne Manners and Ronald Merrick appear throughout the Quartet along with others such as the Laytons and Lady Manners. But it is the Laytons who have continued existence even after the Quartet closes. They are the dominant characters in the last three volumes of the novel. In the second volume, the reader gets a faint notion of the family on a
houseboat on the lake near the one occupied by Lady Manners and little Parvati who was then only a crying bundle. The Laytons are introduced to the reader rather obliquely through the comments of Lady Manners in her letter to her friend Lady Lili Chatterji:

"Since you were here, I acquired neighbours. They are now gone back to Pankot where they are stationed." (II, 45)

Of all the Laytons, the one who dominates the story is Sarah, and Sarah it is who is first introduced, and through her, her parents and sister. Actually, at this stage, in terms of the development of the plot, as is evident from a reading of the second and third volumes of the novel, the story of the Laytons is far advance. They are on the lake in Kashmir directly before going to Pankot to get the preparations of Susan's wedding under way. The Laytons, Count Pronowsky, and the Nawab of Mirat are discussed, but all this is done purely as a matter of contextual talk. The second volume discusses in detail the wedding of Susan. This is rather abrupt, as abrupt as the opening sentence of the section:

"Having handed young Kasim a glass of forbidden whisky Count Pronowsky said, 'Toirs Layton drinks, you say. Do you mean in secret?'" (II, 64)

Even at this stage one does not get a full picture of the Layton family. Then comes the news that Teddy (Captain Iningham) is dead and that Derrick tried to
save him. This news upsets Susan. She sustains another shock when her great aunt Label passes away suddenly when she is alone with her in the house. This results in her premature delivery. She becomes mentally deranged and is hospitalised. After her brief recovery, she makes a ring of fire and puts the baby at its centre. But one does not get a real picture of Mabel Layton's death or of the quarrel that takes place between Mildred and Barbie on the question of late Mabel's desire to be buried at Tampur and Mildred's refusal to do so. For the details of the companionship of Mabel and Barbie, the reader has to wait for the next volume, _The Towers of Silence_. Although Barbie dominates this novel, the Laytons are again described in great detail. It is here that Susan's nature and the circumstances leading to her decision to marry Capt. Dingham are discussed. In fact, the marriage announcement of Susan and Dingham is made in the third volume, though the reader has already been told about their marriage, Dingham's death, and the subsequent story of Susan's childbirth and her mental imbalance. The second volume briefly mentions that Barbie is to leave Rose Cottage, but the circumstances leading to that exigency are discussed in the third volume. Actually, the third volume is a further exposition of the second volume. Even the Dingham affair and the riots are explained in _The Tower of the Corinian_.
directly involved. The year covered by both the second and the third volumes is also 1942. The women of Pankot discuss the affairs of Kajaphore:

"I am told the whole trouble is she was infatuated with the Indian. She'd have done anything to save him." (III, 67)

The third volume discusses the Kajaphore riots and the excesses committed by the troops in shooting down the rioters: "The little thing today was wildly under-rehearsed!", says one of the officers of Grenadier Field who feels terrible at the very thought of the whole gruesome affair at Kajaphore (III, 76). It also discusses in detail the circumstances leading to the selection of Herrick as Bingham's best man; the second and the third volume narrate how Teddie Bingham met with his end and the part played by Herrick in the incident, but it is only much later in the third volume that the reader is told how Capt Bingham and Capt Herrick happened to come together. In the second volume, Herrick criticizes Teddie Bingham's 'man-hater' attitude towards his Indian soldiers (II, 256-97), but Teddie's mother-in-law, Mrs Dillroth Luton, thinks that what Teddie did was a sacrifice for a principle (III, 256).

At the end of the third volume, one would think that what is left is only silence like in the case of Barbie Patcheloe who passes out of our horizon. It takes another four years for the next volume to come out. In this, too, we find most of the
important characters of the earlier volumes dominating the scene. There are the Laytons right through to the end. But the character who really fills the volume is Merrick. To prove how right he is always, Scott mentions, almost out of context, Hari Kumar to a new entrant to the Indian scene, Sergeant Perron. In June 1945 he asks Perron if he knew an Indian boy "who called himself Harry Coomer. Actually Hari Kumar." (IV, 49). He also volunteers the information that "he and five of his disreputable friends were arrested in 1942 on a very serious criminal charge. They wriggled out of that, but we got them under the Defence of India Rules and locked them up as political detenus." (IV, 51)

Presumably, Scott wants to show how the mind of Merrick works but there is also the novelist's intention to link the past with the present and to introduce the story of the rape as an integral part of the plot. It is also noted that for the benefit of Perron, his friend, Nigel Rowan, produces an almost verbatim report of the examination of Kum-r in camera back in 1944 (in the second volume) and leaves a copy of the proceedings with him (IV, 281-325). The real idea is that the rape is not to be forgotten throughout the Quartet. Till the very end the story of Hari Kumar is kept alive. The story ends on August 9, 1947 when Perron leaves India, but just before his departure he goes to find Kumar at Ranpur.
Although the last volume tells the story of the characters who dominate it, it does not forget that it is a successor to the earlier volumes. Even Lady Manners who has left the pages long back appears on many occasions through her reported presence at Pankot. Rowan tells Perrot:

"An old friend of Conway's is coming down too. She's lived in Rawalpindi for years but doesn't want to stay on now that it is becoming part of Pakistan." (IV, 539)

And this is a continuation of what Lady Manners says in the first volume:

"I'm going down to the Residence in Gopalakand to stay with an old friend of Henry's, Sir Robert Conway, who is adviser to the Maharajah."

(I, 445)

Thus Scott keeps the close link between the four volumes ever alive. Interestingly, this Conway is the father of William Conway of The Birds of Paradise whom we have discussed in the earlier chapter. The novelist does not allow the reader to forget the past of any character easily. Otherwise, there is no reason to bring in Colin Lindsey and Hari Kumar when the last volume is about to come to an end. The novelist wants the reader to remember that it was Colin who, though quite unwittingly, was responsible for all that happened to Kumar in India. About the conspicuous absence of Hari's signature in the Visitors' Book of the Gymkhana Club of Mayapore, Srinivasan tells the visitor of Lady Chatterji in 1964:
"And on a date in February 1942 a Captain Colin Lindsay signed in, presumably on his first appearance as a temporary privileged member of the Gymkhana Club of Mayapora. Capt Lindsey's signature is steady and sober, unlike the signature that does not actually accompany it, but which one can see, by its side, in the imagination." (I, 175)

The signature of Hari Kumar could not be there because Colin did not recognise him when they met within a few feet from each other. Kumar says: "To Colin I was invisible" (II, 255). This upsets him so much that he gets drunk and is then caught by Merrick. In the fourth volume Perron remarks:

"Where I agree with Rowan is in pinpointing the meeting with Lindsay as the one meeting in Kumar's life which ... must bear a special significance. No Lindsay on the Maidan that day, no drinking bout with young Vidyasagar and friends ... no Sanctuary, no morning waking there, hungover, resentful and un-cooperative. No Merrick." (IV, 301)

Scott utilises Perron to emphasise the special friendship that existed between Hari and Colin:

"Coomer and 'Lindsey here', standing together, the brown boy and the white boy, resisting an inquisitive prefect's invasion of their solidarity and privacy." (IV, 279)

Paul Scott did not envisage The Raj Quartet as a river novel in four continuous volumes divided by convenient passage of time when he started work on the first volume. But with the second volume, the novelist seems to have got on to the idea of linking
the different novels together as a part of a sequence. The third volume, as has already been mentioned, is practically an elaboration of the second volume, and the fourth is a continuation of the plot leading to its denouement. The structural pattern of the four volumes points to the fact that the author did not however mean to write a river novel like, say, the *Alexandria Quartet* of Lawrence Durrell. Actually, the first volume sets off a chain of actions and reactions, and the volumes that follow are necessarily expositions of those actions and reactions. The rape of Daphne Manners and the resultant arrest of Hari Kumar bring the policeman Merrick on the scene. The next three volumes are, in a way, the exposition of this character. In the process, Scott has portrayed a large number of characters who are directly or indirectly linked to this interesting character. The structure of the novel is, necessarily, planned in such a manner that in the end all the significant events should find a way to converge on the main theme of Indo-British relations. When *The Raj Quartet* is considered a sequence of four novels, it is understood that structurally it varies from normal sequence novels. Both C.P. Snow and Lawrence Durrell come to mind in this context. In Snow's *Strangers and Brothers*, Lewis Eliott is the only character who holds the sequence together. Others come and go; the plot
grows further and still further, introducing more events and characters but the cementing factor is the long memory of Eliott. From his days as a clerk to his retirement from the Civil Service, Eliott experiences a great many things in life and shares these experiences with a large number of characters. The different volumes have clear-cut demarcations in the context of time. In the Alexandria Quartet, the method changes. No doubt the sequence shows forward movement in terms of time. Incidents and experience, rather than the passage of time, control the manner of the plot's progress. Durrell has employed the multiple viewpoint to look at the same incident or assess the same character from different angles. Consequently, various incidents are interspersed in Durrell's narrative, such as Justine's diary, extracts from an autobiographical novel written by her first husband, Jacob Arranti, Dalthasar's account of Nurse-warden's writings etc. The viewpoint, rather than the passage of time, becomes the dividing factor in separating the different volumes. This technique has given the Alexandria Quartet a certain verve and freshness. In The Corrida at San Feliu, Paul Scott employs this technique quite successfully. In his next novel which forms part of the the Quartet he employs this trick almost to its logical end. And when he finds that his experiment is successful, he extends the technique to
the other volumes and thus makes the four novels part of a sequence.

Structurally, *The Raj Quartet* defies a general definition. The narratives, even in the first volume, which is more or less self-contained, are not organised in any orderly sequence. There is no logical flow of action. There is constant superimposition of narrative over narrative. There is a multi-focal viewpoint which no doubt adds a dimension of psycho-analytical quality which, more than the story, makes the novel artistically interesting. The technique of the novelist has been to allow the plot to progress with the help of the multilayer system of narratives and the multi-perspective views of different characters.

In conclusion, it may be said that when Scott started working on *The Jewel in the Crown*, possibly he had no intention of writing a river novel or even a sequence novel. He evidently wanted to write the story of the two lovers, Hari and Jeanne, and the rape. His opening sentence may be said to justify this reading. In fact, he rounds off this novel thus:

"Of an admirable quartet ... only Lili Chatterji survives to recall directly the placid as well as the desperate occasions. Of the actors, Said
has gone, and the girl, and young Kumar into oblivion, probably changing his name once more. The Whites and the Coulsons and young Ronald Merrick seem to be lost, temporarily at least, in the anonymity of time or other occupations."

But then, the idea of the Indian background interests him further. So he invents a character who is some sort of an understudy to his earlier heroine, and links her to the aunt of the heroine. Naturally, he weaves a web of other characters and incidents, and the plot, like a Veronese canvas, becomes ever expanded to include a huge cast though limited events. The result is the second novel of the series, namely, The Day of the Scorpion which left plenty of room for further explanation resulting in yet another novel, The Towers of Silence. Even at the end of this novel, the writer does not seem to think that he has said all that he wished to say. So he worked on the last of the series, A Division of the Spoils, ending with the departure of the Raj. Even then he could not tie up all the loose ends, though most of the characters and incidents are 'tied-up' as well as he could. That was left out had to remain till his last novel, Staying On. Naturally, the method adopted is not that of a river novel; it is not possible for the novelist to keep to the passage of time to one thing and then start another. As we have seen in our consideration of certain aspects of the story, there is n-
clear-cut division between the four volumes. They are only divisions of convenience. That is to say, the plot has no progression in terms of the flow of time. Incidents overlap incidents; narrations become often repetitive, events are viewed and commented upon from varying angles. Naturally, the sequence form could not be strictly adhered to. Patrick Swinden has observed:

"Events do not succeed one another in a straightforward linear way, rushing from the past into the future. Instead they curve around from the future into the past and back into the present - which is always Bibighar, the assault, the arrival of Daphne Manners at the MacGregor House and the search for Hari Kumar by Merrick."^ It is indeed a question of forward and backward excursion into time.

What then holds the four volumes as a homogenous whole is a pertinent question. It is, centrally, the rape. It sets forth a chain of actions and reactions which culminate in the death of Merrick, the diabolic character who superimposes himself on every action till his death. Then, as a corollary to this fact, there are so many themes of minor importance, such as the life and disillusionment of a generation of Englishmen, the relationship between the Indians and the English. The story contains all these streams, sometimes flowing parallel, sometimes crossing each other, and yet sometimes taking courses that are far removed from each other. But they are all,
in the ultimate analysis, the product ends of the same action and the same attitude, and so the inter-relation-
ship of the four volumes is indeed of a very close kind. It may therefore be safely suggested that what Scott had in mind was not a river novel in four volumes, but one 'in quincunex'. And *The Raj Quartet* has proved that the novelist has succeeded in his aim.

Notes and references: