CHAPTER - IV

WHITE MAN’S BURDEN

Take up the White Man’s burden-
Have done with childish days-
The tightly proffered laurel,
The easy, ungrudged praise.
Comes now, to search your manhood
Through all the thankless years,
Cold-edged with dear-bought wisdom,
The judgement of your peers!

-Rudyard Kipling

THE LOTUS AND THE WIND
THE VENUS OF KONPARA
FAR, FAR THE MOUNTAIN PEAK
THE RAVI LANCERS
John Masters had set a schedule for himself to complete and publish a novel every year. After the publication of *The Deceivers*, he had thought of an ambitious plan to write two books in the next two years. One would be the continuation of the saga on the Savage family. The second would be a biography of Orde Wingate who was well known for his 'Chindit Campaign' and whom Masters knew very well. But, unfortunately Masters could not get the rights from Mrs. Wingate and thus the project had to be shelved. He had no other alternative but to concentrate on his Savage saga and absorb himself in the writing of *The Lotus and the Wind*. In his fictional biography, *The Pilgrim Son*, Masters writes:

My next novel, I decided, would be about the Great Game, the continental chess contest of spy and counterspy in Central Asia during the period of Russia’s expansion from the Urals to the Karakorams. This is the subject of *Kim*, and of some of Kipling’s short stories, but what I determined to do was translate the plot of the best spy story ever written, Erskine Childer’s *The Riddle of the Sands*, from the sea background of North Germany to the mountain background of the Himalayas. To make clear to myself what I was aiming at I at first called my book *The Riddle of the Pamirs*; but certain character developments in it, as I was writing, made me change that to *The Lotus and the Wind*.

His earlier two novels were historical in nature. But this time he wanted to shift his emphasis to the geographical aspect rather than the historical. He says that he wanted to make Central Asia so strong and real that the reader would recognize it as a part of the story's architecture, not a mere decoration.

*Lotus and the Wind* is set between 1879 and 1882. The protagonist is Robin Savage, son of Rodney Savage of *Night Runners of Bengal*. Robin is twenty-eight years old now. His is a strange kind of a personality. He had lost his mother in the Mutiny and was brought up by Caroline, his stepmother. The people in the club talk about him that he "suffered some ghastly experiences as a young child and his mother was killed before his eyes in the Mutiny" (23). It was probably his childhood experience that created a dent in his personality. He had developed into an introvert type of a personality. He always liked to live in an isolated atmosphere. His mother Caroline tells Catherine:

"Robin's mother was murdered in the Mutiny; he was only two and a half, and unconscious, but he says he saw it done. Really he remembers what Lachman has told him since, but it's real to him. Men he had trusted and loved all his short years picked him up by the heels and swung his head against a wall. His father carried him in a sack for hours, and later, with my help, dropped him down a sixty-foot shaft - to
save his life, but he didn’t know that. How could he? All he remembers is that we prised his fingers loose and pushed him down." (110)

He has joined as a Second Lieutenant in the 13th Gurkha regiment. His initial reports are not very favourable. He is teased as a coward as he did not have courage to kill the enemy. M.K.Naik analyses the character of Robin and writes:

Robin, whose story is told in The Lotus and the Wind, a man oppressed by the crushing weight of his father’s tremendous reputation on his shoulders. A virtual failure as an Army officer, he succeeds better when transferred to the Intelligence Branch.¹⁵¹

-But there is one person who likes him very much; she is Anne Hildreth; a young girl who loves him and vows to marry him despite her mother’s protest. She wants to put back his confidence in him. He has just returned from Afghanistan with his confidence shrunk. And Anne wants to soothe his hurt feelings. Her love for him grows stronger as the compassion develops:

She said in a choking voice, 'What was Afghanistan like?'

'It was wonderful,' She had to grip the reins in her astonishment. His voice was passionately eager. He couldn’t have seen her tears or understood anything. He had been at his window all the time. He said, 'The wind blew from Siberia. There were tangled mountains. When we got out of them, if the air was clear, the view stretched forever. Not a

soul to be see in it - though there were people, of course, hidden. I saw the Hindu Kush one day. Beyond that there's nothing for thousands of miles. I could feel it.'

She said, 'Isn't it lonely, unfriendly?'

'Lonely? I suppose so. I didn't find it unfriendly. "The everlasting universe of Things flows through the mind..." I've been sent back for cowardice.'(78)

She succeeds in getting him posted to the intelligence wing where he could operate in an independent atmosphere. He loves that. He wants to prove his mettle there. He has to travel long - from Afghanistan to Central Asia to study and collect information on the designs of the Russians to attack India. We have two imperialist powers trying to score over one another; one trying to retain its hegemony and the other trying to expand its territory.

The story runs on two levels simultaneously: the story of an English secret agent who is committed to his duty, and who braves all kinds of adversities for the sake of his government. Robin Savage is the hero who plays both the roles as a secret agent and as a lover trying to resolve the crisis of spiritual conflict. Masters tries to compare the plot in Erskine's *Riddle of the Sands* and the plot in his own novel, *Lotus and the Wind*, he gives us the details of his plot in the following lines:
Davies (in *Riddle of the Sands*) falls in love with a girl, and through that stumbles upon the spying plot. Tension grown in him as he realizes that if he uncovers the plot he will ruin the girl. I had tried to follow this pattern but it didn't fit, and my characters had got themselves into a much more complicated situation. My girl, Catherine said simply: 'I love this man, Robin Savage. I am a normal young woman, affectionate, passionate perhaps, in no way cut off from other women or humanity in general. Therefore I want to marry Robin, settle down, have children, and make a home. He has been hardly treated by the world. No one understands him, but I do (the universal cry of woman). I will so enfold him with love, that he will be cured of whatever ails him. He will be happy.'

But my young man, Savage said to himself: 'I have to keep searching. For what, I don't know. I have to be alone, stripped of all that encumbers thought. I must be free to move like the wind across the earth. I love this girl - but she terrifies me. The deeper she gets into my heart, with her need for love and a home, the more I fear her, because she will kill me. I am the wind. Hold the wind still, and what happens to it? It dies. She is the lotus, a flower. Tell the flower to follow the wind, throw it up in the wind, and what happens to it? It dies.'

I wished to God, Robin and Catherine would get back in the channels I had cut out for them, and behave themselves. These problems were too deep for me: on the one hand I believed it was my duty to find an answer to them, on the other, they were clearly unanswerable. It was extremely difficult, on technical grounds alone, to weld the three levels of my book into a single whole. I had set up a target and was now finding it beyond the range of my weapons. A miss on one side would fall into mawkishness,
or plain confusion, since mystics are as difficult to write about as to
understand; a miss on the other side would produce a spy story whose
clean lines were blurred by pointless philosophising.152

Masters' biographer John Clay, claims that the novel, *The Lotus and
the Wind*, also depicts the personal experiences of Masters besides an
unconscious influence of other novels of the same genre. He had served in
the North West Frontier and he had passionate feelings for Central Asia
through his 1940-41 campaigns there. "There was something of himself in
this. Indeed, each Indian novel was bringing out a different side of him...
The novel, whether Masters was conscious of it or not, belongs to the tradition
of quest narrative like Rider Haggard's *She*, Kipling's *The Man Who Would
be King* and Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*, all voyages into imperial darkness
that exhibit a flight from woman and show the male dread of woman's sexual
and generative powers. Robin in this book is fleeing from what he too sees
as 'false pretences'."153

'We find the imperialistic trend unfolding in the beginning of the novel
where Anne Hildreth is moving towards Peshawar, the North West part of
the empire where her father was posted. Back in Punjab, life was settled

and calm and where 'peace had already settled.' As she was moving along with her parents she could see 'to the left the Indus plunged into Attock gorge, after that flowing on down between rocks and deserts to the sea. Behind her lay such peace and security as India had been in Simla'. But here, she cannot see all that. The land and its people both are hostile. In front the land jagged and the people harsh and the sky unrelenting. Together they threw a challenge into her face. It was here that she had to live and make her home (9).

The burden had to be tolerated:

The slopes were bare of trees, the rocks ochreous and black and green. Here and there a small bush sprouted in a patch of yellowing grass. She saw no people, no crops, no animals. The land was hostile to men. No such men as the one with the eagle face and the green eyes would stride over it and enjoy its barrenness that matched their own. The land was hostile to women and all that women wanted. (10)

Major Hayling, who is a senior officer (Robin works under him later), introduces the area around Peshawar called Pabbi, as 'the worst reputed for robbery and violence'. The land is full of dangers. The people are uncultured and uneducated. There are many tribes. Pure anarchy rules the roost. Hayling says:
The tribes want to shoot each other. They do not want law and order. They want the blood feud. They want to guard their own idea of honour in their own way. ... Therefore, are we guilty of oppression when we enforce peace, law and order on them?’ (90)

The attempts made by the powers to bring order in the chaos have always been futile because the people are simply not prepared for it. The only alternative left for the British imperial regime is to use the area as a buffer zone to prevent the attacks from Russia and China. The officers in the club would have long discussions on this subject. One such discussion is given below where Major Hayling is briefing Robin about the area:

They say officially, Savage, that they don’t want it at all, that they are being dragged forward by circumstances. It is a fact of history that no strong power has ever been able to prevent itself from fighting, taking over, and at last absorbing any unruly or turbulent areas or peoples on its borders. We did it in India - we just had to, though half the time the government at home was trying to force the Governor-General, the man on the spot, to go backwards, not forwards. The Americans did it in the West and in Texas. The Chinese did it in Mongolia and Inner Asia.’ Someone else said, ‘Why haven’t we taken over Afghanistan, then? Heaven knows it’s unruly enough.’

‘We nearly did - perhaps we should have - after the first war, in forty-two. Then the Khanates, Samarkand and so on, would have been the buffet between us and the Russians, and we’d have been that much farther forward. Now it’s too late because the Russians have reached
Afghanistan's northern frontier. Afghanistan is therefore the buffer. You know a buffer state is in a very enviable position. It can do just about anything. Neither great power dares interfere in its affairs, because the other will suspect an offensive move if it does. So Afghanistan, Persia and Turkey are now three buffer states between us and Russia....' (89-90)

Anne is not deterred. While on her way to Peshawar she is imagining that life could be possible in spite of such circumstances. The sense of adventurism, the grit to sustain and still adapt to the surrounding has come to her as a hereditary factor. She knows her father would support her in her efforts. Her love for Robin would give her the strength to face anything.

This breath of Central Asia smelled as discomforting in his (her father) nostrils as in hers. It was exotic and exciting, but ordinary people had to band together against it. If they did that, she and her father - she and Robin - they could make a place for themselves in the midst of its hostility. Outside that place there would be these barren rocks, bullets, the law of the hawk, the dust and the piercing, lonely wind. (28)

They do not know how long their mission would last. The shadow play would probably continue for a long time to come. Hildreth's enquiry with Major Hayling describes it better:
Her father said importantly, "This war, Hayling, what do you make of it? Think it will last long?"

"That largely depends on the Czar of All the Russians, Hildreth. He and his advisers persuaded the Amir of Afghanistan to refuse to accept our mission last year, which caused that campaign. We have no evidence the Russians were behind the massacre of Cavagnari's party this September, but of course it's possible." (21)

But before that they have to collect substantial evidence to find out the real plans of the Russians on the one hand and prevent the possible unexpected attacks on the other. A special posting is awaiting Robin. Hayling has found a special quality in Robin that is better suited for a secret agent. Robin didn't show much interest in the beginning. Somehow he didn't like the way the Russians and the English fighting for some barren rocks. Robin was silent. Outside the thin, straggling column, Afghanistan stretched away, as empty as the Antarctic. Yet Russians and Indians and Englishmen struggled and manoeuvred for these barren rocks. He resented all of them - including the Afghans, including himself - and wished he were somewhere else, away from all their strife. (33)

Robin accepts the responsibility a little later when he gets convinced that he likes working in isolation. It was an opportunity to prove his grit, and that is why he could not refuse the offer. Sacrificing the personal interests for the sake of the government and to hold on to the imperial reins
becomes imminent. It was probably because of this nature of sacrifice among the English officers in India that it was possible to rule the country for such a long time. We can observe this nature in almost all the Anglo-Indian community serving here. The administrators, missionaries, educationists and the defense personnel - all thought that it was their religious duty to 'give in order to receive'. Robin never stays with his wife, except for a short stint of one or two days, during the entire period of his deputation to the intelligence wing. He leaves behind his bride Anne immediately after their marriage. The poor girl understands the nature of her husband and the nature of his job. She fends for herself and her children till Robin returns back after three years. 'The white man's burden' is pervading all through the novel and the reader is compelled to empathize with the characters. Anne asks her father-in-law Rodney, when they meet for the first time, and wants to know if he knew anything about his son's whereabouts:

She said, 'Do you know what he's been doing? I don't want to know secret things, but I would like to find out what sort of life he's been leading. It will make it easier these first few days if I know.'

'I know a little, Anne. Hayling came down to the Southern front specially to tell me. Robin's work has taken him through some of the loneliest, wildest parts of Asia. He's done the work brilliantly. What the work
She said slowly, 'I wonder whether he felt the loneliness. Whether he thought of us sometimes.'

Her father-in-law hesitated, then he said, 'Not often, I'm afraid. We'd be deceiving ourselves if we imagined that he kept longing to be back with us, or even thinking much about us, any of us. A man in his position, on work like that, can think only of his circumstances from hour to hour, and of his task. We have to be content to a sort of floor beneath his feet. Then at the end he may realize that the floor has been there all the time, supporting him. Then - he may wonder whether we're a good floor or a poor one, wonder even whether he needs a floor at all.' (198)

On the other hand, we find that Robin did not have any regrets joining the secret service. In fact, Robin could not refuse the idea when Major Hayling tells him:

'You see, we - representing certain branches of the government of India - have been looking for someone with an unusual set of qualities, the most important being an ability, a preference, for working in isolation.'

Hayling said, 'Savage, I can offer you a post in Intelligence. More, I can give you a specific job. It will be dangerous, but you can make it as violent or as introspective as you wish.' (101)

Hayling has special reasons to choose Robin for the job. Hayling is convinced about the ability of Robin to take up the task. He thinks, '...But
he must put young Savage to work on the imperial problems confronting him. (139) On an occasion, later, Hayling tells Robin why he was chosen for the job:

In the train Hayling had asked him if he knew why he, particularly, had been chosen for this work. He had not known. ...

'You have a feel, an affinity, for emptiness. If I am not mistaken, - you are looking for something in emptiness - in other words, in nothing. You are unhappy because you think you might not find it, and unhappy - for other people's sake - because you think you might. The part of Asia where the solution of our problem lies consists of emptiness. Therefore, I feel that the intrusion of the world there, however secret, however carefully concealed, will be more apparent to you than to others. Any Russian plans will involve the intrusion of the world. The desert and the mountains will look different, feel different - to you - not to me.'(139-40)

Robin leaves for his training. Within six months, he is proficient in his job. He learns the desert languages; learns to live with the harsh terrain of land, food, climate etc. It is all possible because of his deep sense of commitment and sacrifice. The following dialogue between Hayling and Robin describe the situation:
'Good idea. It's hot as hell now. We're having a real brute of a hot weather.' He glanced out of the window at a thermometer hanging in the shade of the veranda. 'A hundred and eighteen. You must be fried to a cinder.' He drew his cigar. 'How did you get on in Gharghara?'

'All right, I think. I can speak Hazara and Zaboli Persian well enough. Jagbir learned Hazara quickly. He doesn't have a big vocabulary, but as a peasant he wouldn't. I learned something about business when I went on a trading trip to Herat in the late spring with Faiz Ali. I think I'm ready.' (119)

The Russians had plans to extend their regime to India. The need to counter their designs is the immediate goal of the British regime. Robin as a secret agent has to collect vital information on the subject. He receives instructions from time to time from his superiors, otherwise, he has to act on his own.

In Asia, England and Russia faced each other across land that was like a broad, long, rough-hewn table. The prize was India, the great diamond in England's grasp at the eastern end of the table. The land was the deserts of Afghanistan, Persia, and Turkestan. For the most part there were no metalled roads, no rivers, and few people. Mountain ranges rose from the deserts, and the ruins of ancient civilizations dotted the oases. Geological chance had built a protective mountain barrier - the Karakorams, the Pamirs, the Hindu Kush - around the northern and western faces of India. England had no desire to advance from India against Russia, because whatever she took would be beyond the range
of her sea power to hold. Already the landlocked Amir of Bukhara had asked Queen Victoria's permission to join the British Empire and had been regrettfully refused. (140)

Robin collects a lot of information during his mission covering parts of Afghanistan, West Asia and part of Mongolia etc. He meets two Russian agents Muralev and his wife Lenya, who make vane attempts to kill him and his Indian assistant Jagbir, a rifleman from the Gurkha regiment. A wild goose chase at last ends up in the conclusion that:

When he returned to India he could say that his evidence had led him to two conclusions; that the Russians intended to use two routes of invasion, the central and the southern; and that the principal weight of the attack would be in the south. Further, he could say that the center was the level of deception, where the clues were comparatively easy to find, and that the south was the level of truth. ... Therefore, the Russians will feint a single, central attack through Balkh and Kabul; once we move our troops to counter this, the real Russian attack will come in along the southern route, directed on the Bolan pass. (187)

At last Robin emerges as a hero. A man who was derided as a coward in the regular army, emerges as a brilliant secret agent and is recommended to get a D.S.O.

Hayling's eyes wandered speculatively over her face. I am glad to hear it, even if his pleasure is only on your behalf. Don't thank me. I told the chief about Robin's being considered a coward, and the chief swore
he'd get him the D.S.O. for this work if he had to invent a battle Afghanistan for him to win it in. (260)

Among the other imperialistic attitudes, we have the relationship between Robin and his Indian assistant rifleman Jagbir. Jabgir is a Gurkha, who follows his officer like a shade. He saves Robin's life on many occasions. Robin is so much attached to Jagbir that he wants him to be one of the godfathers for his children (Robin intends to have two godfathers and two godmothers for his twin children). His wife Anne is surprised at the strange suggestion made by Robin:

'Robin, it's - she fumbled cautiously for words. 'It's so unusual. I'm afraid people might laugh at him when he grows up and they hear his godfather is a rifleman, a Gurkha. My mother was hoping the commander-in-chief would accept. Your father knows him, and he could be so useful. And don't you think godfathers have to be Christians, at least?' (206)

The integrity of Jagbir is beyond question. The unstinted support Robin gets from Jagbir makes Robin respect and even worship him. Jagbir had a unique sense of understanding things in his own way:

Robin sighed. Jagbir could understand every shade of meaning in a dog's bark or a horse's neigh, but when a human being spoke to him his low forehead wrinkled and his smooth face became painfully creased. It was not stupidity, though it looked like it. Jagbir could understand
anything, and quickly, as long as it was set before him in some medium other than words - if he saw it, for instance, or felt it. Robin repeated, ‘Go back and tell Naik Dhanbahadur to come up to me, please.’ (32)

Love for the hill stations like Simla or Kashmir and scandals associated with the Anglo-Indian life is also a part of the imperial psyche. Robin wanted to spend some time with his wife Anne in Simla:

Simla was a pleasant enough place, and his company had liked being on Viceroy’s Guard. They had had plenty of time off, and so had he. From Jakko in the dawn you could see half the peaks of Kangra and Bashahr. Walk or ride fifteen miles out, and the wind blew away the febrile excitements of Simla, the hothouse of flowers, the perpetual struggles for place and notice. There were struggles for love too, but there the wind only sharpened his doubts. He had liked going out with Anne. (43)

The ladies, leaving behind their husbands to slog in the plains and desert below, spending almost six months in the hill station, was a common thing in the Anglo-Indian life. The obedient servant of the Raj complaining and regretting his ‘grass-widower’ status was a matter of sympathy. It was a kind of a ‘self-inflicted sacrifice’.

Here is a quotation from Mr. Hildreth, Anne’s father:

‘Give my affectionate regards to Mrs. Hildreth, won’t you, sir?’
'Of course, of course. She is in Kashmir - Srinagar. Went up in May. I am a grass widower. Hardly a woman left in the station; except Anne and Mrs. Collet.' (118)

The hunting pleasure among the officers is another imperial habit. We find the information of Rodney's - father of Robin - love for hunting and yet studying the behaviour of the birds and animals. Jim Corbett is another famous example who loved hunting in the beginning, but dedicated his whole life for the conservation of wild animals later. Anne finds this quality in Rodney and admires it.

He was Robin's father, and Robin did not like him. But she had found him, from the first minute, everything she expected a man to be. He shot wild birds, yet he loved them. He risked his life to kill ibex and markhor on the mountains, yet he spent more time talking of their wonderful ways than how he had shot. (197)

A similar narration is found in Kipling's *Kim*.

... They (the Ladakhis) judged India and its Government solely from their experiences of wandering Sahibs, who had employed them or their friends as *shikaris*. Kim heard tales of shots missed upon ibex, serow, or markhor, by Sahibs twenty years in their graves, every detail lighted from behind like twigs on tree-tops seen against lightning.154

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The novel has a spiritual angle, though not similar to the one we come across in *Kim*, but attempting to resolve an issue why God created love:

'Yes, I am afraid of your love. When I try to explain to myself why that is so I say that every good human quality is balanced - usually overbalanced - by an opposing evil. I say that there is no humility without pride, no love without hate, no courage without cowardice. Don't you see that each word, each idea, has no meaning without its opposite? But in the end I think there is no explanation.' (203)

Anne is compared to the Lotus symbolizing love, tenderness and the ability to enwrap. Robin is compared to the wind which would never stop anywhere; and keeps moving. It is its nature. Robin would perhaps not hesitate to move on if his government assigns him further responsibility. That is why he says:

If the lotus moved, it died. If the wind stayed, it died. (266)
Venus of Konpara (1960), is a work of fiction by Masters based on the historical and archaeological subject. The setting of the novel is 1890. The novel tries to probe into the historical background of India when the Aryans had probably invaded India in 1300 B.C. and had driven away the Dravidians. The novel is set in the Central part of India where the Gond tribe inhabited. They were mostly Dravidians. The Aryans suppressed them and drove them into slavery. The Aryan King the Suvala was one among them and he established his kingdom around a place called Deori. In the post-script of the book Masters gives us the following information based on the report prepared in 1930:

Mohan Singh Suvala, Rajah of Deori, in the fortieth year of his reign, has ordered this report prepared on the Caves of Konpara, and the circumstances of their rediscovery. No eyes but those of the Ruler and the State Archivist may be permitted to see it until A.D.1960, when, seventy years having elapsed since the events described, all those who had a part in them may be expected to have passed beyond the reach of earthly reward and punishment.

The report falls into two parts. First, that relating to the building of the caves and earliest history of Deori; secondly, that relating to the events of A.D. 1890.

The excavation was made in 1892-93 under the orders of Rajah Mohan Singh of Deori. 'Traces of the wall of this fortress were found on the Dobehari and Konpara ridges. ... The dividing walls were first uncovered by Mr. Smith'. The Gond tribals had maintained the existence of the caves as a great secret. The temples that existed in the caves were the products of Dravdian slave labour who worked under the Aryan kings. Masters writes that "the opening of the caves to the public, in A.D. 1891, caused sensation and controversy which were to last for thirty years. The problem was essentially no different from that posed by the Vedas - if the Dravidians had indeed built such great cities as those shown being burned and destroyed, where were the relics of them? Argument and accusation flew back and forth among learned men with regrettable venom, and doubts were even cast upon the genuineness of the caves, until 1922 of the Christian era." (224) Charles Kendrick died in an accident.

Thus, the plot of the novel upholds the imperialistic theory that what the native Indians were incapable of finding out the mysteries of their own
history, the British could do. Moreover, there are other imperialistic points to ponder over like the sense of adventure, the curiosity to probe into the history, analysing and documenting of the findings and so on. The sense of commitment and dedication with which the officers and their friends work is worth appreciating. Unless they loved the work that they were involved in, the commitment would not have been there.

This is a novel on Indian theme, but where the Savage family does not show up. Among the important characters are:

1. Mohan Singh  Heir to the Suvala Kingdom in Deori
2. Rukmini  A Gond tribal dancer- helps in unraveling the mystery.
3. Kendrick  An ICS officer in charge of Deori as Resident
4. Barbara  Kendrick’s wife and a good artist
5. Smith  An archeologist
6. Jim Foster  Civil contractor
7. Huttoo Lal  Village Headman and Gond tribal

As a part of the reformation programme undertaken by the British government after the Mutiny, the young heir to the king of Suvala, Mohan Singh, took up the construction of an irrigational dam and a cricket pitch.
Mohan Singh is educated in England. He has developed Western tastes. While the civil work was going on, accidentally they come across an area where probably a cave existed. There was curiosity to know more about it. The aboriginal Gonds who encourage the construction of the dam in the earlier phases, discourage the attempts to go near the cave area later. They bring a lot of hurdles in the way and try to deliberately divert the attention of the construction work. Two artists, Rukmini as a dancer and Barbara as an artist, help the investigation to find out the door to the cave that throws light on the ancient civilisation.

Mohan Singh sees Kendrick, the resident commissioner, as a fatherly figure. The imperial attitude of a father and son plays its role unconsciously. Mohan Singh, who had studied for seven years in England before returning to India, feels the difference in attitudes between the two cultures. So did the commissioner.

One of the lathes was broken and had not yet been repaired. That was India, everywhere the same, ramshackle, nothing ever finished, nothing maintained or looked after when it was! The great dam down there, across the narrow mouth of the pit, now near completion, would suffer the same fate. So Kendrick believed, in his heart of hearts. (6)
There is an indirect hint at the inability on the part of the Indian king that it would not be possible for him to reform his land without the support and guidance from the British officer Kendrick. Mohan Singh is imagining that:

Mr. Kendrick, with permission, would resign from the Indian Civil Service and become his Prime Minister. Deori would prosper. There would be better roads, new schools, the dam down there finished, another one started the other side of the state. The cricket festivals would begin. Deori would look like Cheltonham (8)

Rukmini is a tribal dancer and claims that she knows the history of the Suvalas, in other words, the pedagogy of the present heir Mohan Singh. Mohan Singh himself does not know about his past. And today, because of his Western education, his own history has become strange to him. Rukmini tries to teach him the history of India. Here, we find Western theory of Aryans raiding India and driving away the Dravidians who were the aboriginals of India. Masters makes us believe that the theory existed in India even before the English arrived.

She faced him, sitting up like a teacher in the school. First were the small dark people - the Gonds. Then, thousands of years ago - six or seven thousand years - new invaders drove the small dark people into the deepest jungles. Her sweeping hand embraced the ridge, the pit, the valley, and the upper plateau. Those first invaders were the
Dravidians. They flourished all over India until 1500 B.C. Those were my mother's people. In 1500 B.C. the second invaders came, out of the Central Asian steppe. They were the Aryans - your people. They fought the Dravidians, took their land from them, and drove them south, or into the jungles to join the Gonds. Gradually the Aryans spread over the whole of India. In the far south they lived with the Dravidians, as rulers, rather than destroying them. And they established the caste system for their own selfish convenience. (18)

The Englishmen tried their best to eradicate the caste system, but failed. They had to restrain from doing it for their own survival. Mohan tells her, "You don't know how orthodox the people are here. And the British more so. If they don't go out of their way to uphold caste, everyone will say they're planning to destroy Hinduism. Mr. Kendrick has often explained to me." (19)

"An Anglo-Indian novel is perhaps considered incomplete unless it covers a hair-raising incident on the hunting of a tiger or killing of an elephant that has gone amuck. This is a stereo-typed image that probably the authors could not avoid. Masters had only one experience of hunting a tiger in his entire life. He had shot a tiger that had accidentally sneaked into the defence colony in Bakloh, Garhwal in February 1938. He describes this experience in almost seven pages in his fictional biography, Bugles and a Tiger. There was a celebration in the colony on that day:
Bakloh had gone crazy while we waited in the ether stillness of the hospital. Men ran about, laughed, danced in the road, and slapped me on the back. Women kissed my knees; children brought flowers. Two hundred soldiers slung the tiger on poles and brought it up to the mess, singing as they came. Machhindra, with a touch of grim humour, put it in the guest room and surrounded it with a circle of kerosene to keep off the ants. By midnight Poppa and I were again mad drunk with excitement. We sat in my room, and drank, and played my seven variations of 'Tiger Rag' five times each on the portable gramophone. Gurkhas brought rum and growled hilariously in time with the rhythmic roars coming out of the gramophone.156

Tigers, snakes and elephants are an inseparable - and even unforgettable - part of the Anglo-Indian experience. Authors like Jim Corbett in Man Eaters of Kumaon or Kenneth Anderson in Nine Man-Eaters and a Rogue, have written about their hunting experiences of tigers. The expert opinion is that the tigers are not man-eaters by habit. They do not attack human beings unless under duress. They attack human beings normally during their time of heat, or when they are with their young cubs. It is purely a defence-mechanism. Rarely do the tigers become man-eaters except, probably, when they become old and weak and unable to hunt their

food. It is a misconceived notion that tigers are man-eaters. In this novel Masters describes about a man-eater tiger that prowls and kills a labourer. Mohan Singh, Barbara and Foster spot a tiger on their way and before they could raise alarm it catches a coolie.

Fifteen feet ahead a black and gold shape sprang over a thicket, a man in its mouth. A tigress, not a tiger. She had the man by the middle of the back, so that his body hung down on either side, just like the buffalo cow. He was a coolie, his bare head toward them, the neck twisted and a trickle of blood running from the corner of the mouth, the wide eyes staring straight at Mohan. (86)

Kendrick was already on the scene. ‘He was not afraid of the animals.’ On learning that the tigress had gone into the forest, he tries to chase it with rifle in his hand.

The feelings of a white man towards a brown man manifest themselves naturally when; Mohan offers to escort Barbara to pick up her drawing cylinder. Smith who was present on the scene stops Mohan and behaves very roughly. No matter how close you are or whatever high rank you hold in the society, an Indian always remains an Indian ‘and the twin’ can never become equals.
Foster turned on him. I just told you to keep out of this. Step this way a minute. He grabbed Mohan's arm, and pulled him away. Mohan allowed himself to be dragged off, for he had begun to think Foster had gone mad. Foster pushed his face close, dropped his voice, and grated, You keep your hands off Mrs. Kendrick, see? You don't mean her any good and she's too much of a lady to know it. Leave her alone. Got it? Foster let go with a final shake, turned, and stalked back toward Mrs. Kendrick. Mohan took a step after him, anger rising at the way he had been spoken to. Then he thought, by God, Foster thinks he's protecting a white woman against a dirty nigger. Blind with rage, he broke into a run. (88)

Avarice for gold or wealth and the design to procure it by any means, legal or otherwise, was yet another imperial quality. Jim Foster, the contractor working under Kendrick to build a dam, comes across a few bars of gold while excavating. He keeps it a secret without informing the Resident Kendrick. A few days later, his foreman, a Pathan, finds a huge quantity of twenty gold bars. He wants to outwit his master and runaway with the booty. But unfortunately, he could not do so because of two reasons: one, the suspicious headman informs both Jim and Kendrick separately who follow one another. Secondly, the two Pathans wanted to outsmart one another and one of them kills another but at the same time he is also
killed by snakebite, a cobra that was hiding in the bullock cart. The wretched thoughts of Jim are explained here:

For a minute he lay retching, holding the earth with his hands. The lantern still burned inside the cart. Jim climbed to his feet. Now he knew what had killed the two Pathans. The gold remained. The nausea left him. He had twenty bars of gold. Six lakhs of rupees. The golden light came back into the world. Six bloody lakhs! A country house in England, more suits of clothes than he would know what to do with, servants to boss about the way he'd been bossed about, pictures in golden frames. Barbara Kendrick’s pictures, they’d be. (106)

But the presence of honest and sincere servant of the Raj like Kendrick, would not allow it. He would safeguard the interest of government at any cost. He admonishes Jim and calls it a ‘bad business’ for keeping him in the dark about all the developments. Kendrick confiscates the entire loot and institutes an enquiry into the whole episode. The cobra guarding the ancient wealth is one of the beliefs that exists in India. Smith, the archaeologist, tries to conclude the whole episode by informing all that ‘greed, hatred’ would have stopped them from the search.

We have other impressions of India like ‘in India the servants know everything’ and nothing can be hidden from them. Barbara wants to marry Jim Foster the contractor, as she is convinced of the fact that her husband
Kendrick is impotent. Foster and Barbara are thinking if their action would embarrass all. Foster replies: "It does worry me, but not enough... We'll find it a bit awkward at first, I expect. India's like a small village, and not many people of your sort are going to have much to do with us. Even without the divorce." (166) His tone is suggesting that Indians damn bother about the social morals etc. or probably they are of no significance to anyone. Foster also warns Barbara not to walk barefoot, as there are scorpions and snakes.
Far Far the Mountain Peak\textsuperscript{157} is the sixth novel on the Indian theme in the order of publication. The novel has a plot that covers the period between 1902 and 1922. After the bitter experience of the Mutiny, the British attitude towards India undergoes radical changes in terms of administration and reformation. The Queen's rule laid stress on reforming education, health and other civic amenities. The Indian Civil Service came into existence. Gradually the natives were also given the opportunities to enter the civil service.

Masters, this time, tries to shift his theme to mountaineering. In the preceding two novels we have seen that he had tried to take up the plot of adventure in geographical and archaeological discovery, respectively. It was a conscious move Masters made in order to break the monotony of theme in his novels. He wanted to continue to narrate 'the Indian saga of the British rule'. This time around, Masters goes back to the mountain \textit{Meru} in the Himalayas in the North-Western part of India between India and Tibet. The mention of this mountain was made in \textit{Coromandel} earlier. The mountain is supposed to have a religious as well as metaphysical significance in the Indian tradition. The people, who tried to climb Meru, always returned

\textsuperscript{157} John Masters, Bantam Books, NY., 1958 (Originally Published in 1957 by Viking in US and MJ in London)
unsuccessful but, instead, they came back with some kind of a mystical experience which they find very difficult to explain or express. The team led by the protagonist Peter Savage, an ICS officer serving as the District Collector of Rudwal in Punjab, makes concerted efforts to climb the mountain but in vain. He returns with a similar experience - 'metaphysics at twenty five thousand feet'.

Masters was personally very fond of trekking in the Himalayan range. In fact, trekking in the Himalayas was a favourite sojourn for him. He went on long visits quite often before and after his marriage. He acknowledges that he derived a strange kind of strength every time he trekked in the Himalayan range. The beauty of the hill range holds sway over the mind. The fresh ice-cold water, serene beauty of the plants, trickling water falls, singing birds, howling wind - every thing has a uniqueness of its own. The experience is difficult to transcribe in words. Just before the Second World War was concluded, he was on the trekking expedition, accompanied by his wife Barbara, in Ranikhet. He comes to know about the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Joshimath. He abruptly returns back from his trip. He recollects the nostalgic moments of that evening in his book, Pilgrim Son and writes:
On my final evening in Ranikhet I took Barbara up to the ridge above the cantonment for a last look at the Himalayas. From west to east for 200 miles the horizon was a glittering wall of ice and snow, gold tinted in the low sun. The sun left the grass where we stood, and a cold wind shivered in the pines behind, but for half an hour yet those distant battlements shone in the afterglow, hanging in light above the darkness of earth.158

Such an intense personal experience provided the necessary material for him to write on mountaineering. Besides, Masters continued to travel widely even after his retirement and settling down in the United States. Spain also became his haunting obsession for a few years. He felt that Spain had many similarities with India. Though mountaineering covers a large part of the novel, it is not the central theme. There are matters related to the reformation measures taken up by the British regime to improve its image after the horrendous experience of the Mutiny. Discussion and debate on the merits and demerits of the measures taken up find their way into the plot of the novel through the characters both Indian and British.

The following characters play an active role in the novel:

1. Peter Savage: An ICS officer in charge of Rudwal district in Punjab, son of Robin Savage hero of *The Lotus and the Wind*.

2. Emily: Wife of Peter, a Lady by lineage.

3. Gerry: Close friend of Peter in Cambridge, Earl of Wilcot

4. Peggy: Sister of Gerry and childhood friend of Emily (Lady Margaret)

5. Adam Khan: An Indian, who studied along with Gerry and Peter. He is a native of Rudwal.

6. Harry Walsh: Husband of Peggy, he is an adventurer

7. Baber: Son of Adam Khan representing the new generation

8. Rodney: Son of Peter- named after Peter's grand father, hero of *The Night Runners of Bengal*.

Adventurism is one of the imperialistic attitudes. As young friends, Peter, Gerry and Adam Khan share a common dream to achieve something to steal the limelight. Peter Savage is very active and naturally the most dominating of the three. Gerry, though an aristocrat by birth, lacks the dynamism of Peter and easily yields to him. Adam Khan was sent to England by his father to study and take up ICS. But, Adam considers that he could help his motherland better by remaining outside the official power. He
thinks that his proximity to Peter would give him better opportunities to reform his native district of Rudwal. Peter wishes to have his close friend Gerry to enter into politics in England and enter India either as a Governor General of one of the Presidencies or become the Viceroy. It was easier for Gerry to attain one of those posts because of his aristocratic birth and influence. In turn, his position would help Peter and Adam to implement their ideas more effectively. The plot has many sudden twists and turns. Masters succeeds in maintaining the sustained interest of the reader by throwing such shocks and surprises at the reader. The marriage between Peter and Emily, for example, is totally sudden and unexpected.

The ignorance of the British citizens about India and Indians is depicted in the conversation between Emily, Peggy, Gerry, Harry and Peter. When Adam Khan was introduced for the first time in England, the response from Peggy was a bit disappointing because the way Adam looked, dressed and spoke was hardly different from any other Englishman. His upbringing in England had totally transformed him. He spoke English with a perfect accent except for one or two sounds. It was an unbelievable thing for her since Adam could not fit into her set notion of an Indian:

She was disappointed because she had expected some Oriental splendor,
perhaps a huge ring on his hand, or on his head a turban with an egret plume and a glittering diamond; and that his conversation would be of elephants, slave girls, and tame peacocks.(6)

The English group has a preconceived picture of India. The members have heard of big cities like Delhi, Calcutta and Bombay and yet they are ignorant about their geographical locations. They have heard of big rivers like the Ganges but ignorant about the size of the river when compared to the Thames. When Adam speaks of river Maghra in his native district of Rudwal in Punjab, Emily asks him if it was bigger than Thames. He had to stun her by telling her that it was at least seven times bigger than the Thames. She did not know where Punjab was located. She asks him innocently whether he visited Calcutta quite often, assuming that both should be close to each other.

"Do you go to Calcutta very often?" she asked.

Now it was the young Indian's turn to stare at her, his lips suddenly tight. He said quite curtly, "Calcutta is about one thousand one hundred miles from Rudwal by rail, Miss Fenton. I have only been there once, when my father presented me to the Viceroy, Lord Elgin. I was eighteen.(7)

Commenting on the geographical ignorance of the Anglo-Indians about India, M.K.Naik writes that a consideration of the nexus between Anglo-
Indian and the geography of the Indian sub-continent reveals a curious fact that for a vast majority of these novelists, India means north India alone. The complaint of Emily in John Masters' *Far, Far The Mountain Peak* is, 'O dear, there was such an awful lot of Empire.'

The beauty of the Himalayan Mountains is known to all. All of them nourish a dream to visit it once. Emily thinks that Adam was fortunate to get a glimpse of the Himalaya everyday.

After a long silence she said, smiling, "Can you see the Himalaya from Rudwal?"

I found it in the map."

Adam Khan said, "Wonderful! Yes, we can see the snows all the year round."

She said, "How beautiful! And when you come down from King's next year you'll go and live there all your life? Just like Gerry going to Wilcot?"(34)

The old Rodney, who was the hero of the Mutiny, had now settled down in England at 243, Nashe Street in Kensington, Major General Rodney Savage, C.B. Indian Army retired. He looked after Peter since his father Robin disappeared and his mother died later. Rodney still recollects his

experience of the Himalayas. He gives the details of the mountain to a
group of Peter and his friends over a dinner in his house:

"I would hardly call them 'near' the general said with a slow smile. "The
crest line of the range is about a hundred and twenty miles in - but of
course it climbs all the way from the plains in ridges and valleys, each
one grander than the last. Magnificent country. There are five peaks
over twenty-one thousand feet in that area, and the lowest pass over
into Parasia and western Tibet is thirteen thousand, eight hundred. I
know. Went over it in 'sixty-seven after ovis ammon. Isn't the Rudwal
District one of the largest in India, Adam? (49)

By around 1900, induction of ICS officers to administer the districts
in India had already begun. There were a few Indians also among the officers.
They were mostly educated in England. They were very intelligent too. The
selection was very tough. Adam is hopeful about Peter getting into the Civil
service, while he himself would like to keep away.

"There's a lot of competition, though, isn't there? Daddy said so. He
wondered how Mr. Savage - Peter - could be quite so sure he was going
to get in."

Adam said, "Oh, there is no doubt about that - but I have decided not
to sit for the exam at all. You see, I had hoped to get the Rudwal
district, though, it was very unlikely they would post me there, since it
is my home. But Peter wants to go there and I realized that I could do
more by helping him in Rudwal than by becoming a D.C. myself in
some other place. Peter and I have talked it over since May Week. But, as I said, I fear my father will not be pleased. He will not give me much responsibility for the estate, so I shall be hanging about." (34-35)

Those selected were given thorough training to administer the land and to uphold the dignity and integrity of the Government that they were serving. These officers were highly respected in India and their integrity and commitment always remained beyond doubt. Peter is interested in entering into the ICS. In fact, Adam was sent to England by his father to get into the ICS. But Adam does not want to enter, because, being an official he cannot go against the interests of the British Government. It would be a limitation for him to act freely to help his motherland. But still his impression of an ICS officer is always held in high esteem.

Adam Khan said, "It is no different from what always has been. Only the ICS are honest, and the Mogul and Sikh officials were corrupt. The ICS are also foreign - most of them. That doesn't mean Indians dislike them, Mrs. Fenton. It was the Sikhs whom we hated, but even while we hated them we could understand them. I doubt if there are more than handful of Indians, in India, who don't believe, now, in the ICS and ICS system, especially if they know or have heard what India was like for the last hundred years or so before Warren Hastings. But the ICS have never tried very hard to get across this barrier, that we think differently. That is what I am going to try and help with. That is why I am not going into the ICS (51)
The British had begun to realize that the natives should be given some responsibility and an opportunity to take part in the process of reformation. The old order was gradually changing. On the other hand, the educated Indians were also changing in their mental attitude. There was a inclination to co-operate with the administration in a responsible way. Adam feels that it is the duty of the native literate youth to educate their countrymen to understand their responsibility well. Dictating the terms to rule cannot be as effective as voluntary participation. If Peter’s move is from the Government’s side, Adam would like to meet him from the citizen’s side. The reciprocal gestures could usher in a happy time. Adam is dreaming of a strong democratic India in the making.

For a time they ate in silence. Then Adam said in a low voice, "My father thinks I am a weakling because I talk with the cultivators on our land, and argue, instead of telling them what to do. But I think that I too have a destiny - no, that is a bad word - a fate, Miss Fenton, just as Peter Knows he has. He knows what must be done, and he says, 'Do it,' And the people do it. But if Indians are to grow, to fit ourselves into this modern world, the people must know why they do it, and they must agree that it is good, and understand. I am an Indian - I keep telling you, do I not? But it is very important. When Peter says, 'Do this', I can make the people understand, so Peter's work will be done properly. Later, many years later, it can be the other way round, so
that the people will say, 'Do this' and men like Peter will do it - but that will not be in my time, I think, or perhaps in my son’s. (35)

Adam believes in the slow transformation of the society - especially the Indian society. He doesn’t have faith in radical changes. His idea is that the Indians should have to first prepare themselves to learn the art of administration. He considers himself that he is not a revolutionary:

"Nothing has changed for my father." Adam Khan said quietly, not smiling. "But I am not a revolutionary. There are no serious Indians today that I know of, who want independence now. A few want to go faster than others, but that’s all. Indians who think about it - not many have the time or the education - want India to become like England, and they know that they will need England’s help - guidance - for some time. That’s what Peter and I are going to do. (51)

Peter, on the other hand, is also not interested in staying back in England. He does not like the class-conscious and the snobbish society of England. His birth in India and the early childhood that he spent in India (as in the case of Masters himself) has made him develop a special regard for that country. Soon after his completion of study in the College, he tells his friends in England, "I'm not going to hang around begging these people for favors. I'll come back able to demand what I want. I'll take the Indian Civil."
Adam Khan is very happy with Peter's idea. He thinks that he could realise his dreams with a close friend who has done his ICS and who would be heading the district:

"Rudwal," he said with a quick smile. "Yes, and plenty more besides, I hope. If Peter has really made up his mind to go the ICS - it would be wonderful! My family is very old and respected, Miss Fenton. If I can persuade Peter to come to Rudwal as D.C. - why, between us there is almost nothing we could not achieve, because he has the power and I know the people." (21)

Later, when Peter completes his ICS and joins the service in Rudwal he writes to his friend Gerry, who was in England, convincing him that if he could also join him in India, the three of them i.e. Adam, Gerry and Peter himself, can change the face of India:

We can all get there together. Then we can set to work to change the face of India. We will abolish disease and poverty, and make a new India where every Indian is the partner of every Englishman. We three, or whoever will join us, will decide what must be done. You will explain it to England, Adam to India, and I will build and run the machine that does it. (72)

Peter proves to be a very efficient, confident, active and adventurous officer in Rudwal. He has a clear vision of the future. He has set a goal clearly cut for himself. There is no deviation from it. His indomitable
nature puts him in the saddle as a real leader. His aristocratic friend Gerry is not as active or as firm and confident as Peter is. Therefore, Peter persistently tries to dominate him and force his will on him. Gerry is too mild to assert himself. Peter is of the view that Gerry, with his social status, can do anything. But he requires the prompting. Peter is of the firm belief that things can be got done with the will power, influence and co-operation from the subjects. In his letters to Gerry he highlights this aspect in an attempt to convince him and make him accept his suggestion to come to India in some capacity with power - either as a Governor or a Viceroy. He takes the analogy of their adventurous common interest in climbing the mountains and tries to apply the principle to life situations:

So - we are hoping to do something great for India and the world. We see ourselves organizing, administering, directing the flow of energy. But we've got to remember that our particular summits, when we get there, may turn out to be something quite different - moments perhaps in which one of us is killed saving the other; or when we are thrown to the wolves by the blindness of those we are trying to help; or when we father sons who will do what we have been prevented from doing. This untrustworthiness of the Deity must not prevent us from going on toward the top as we see it, because the journey itself must also be our desire - as it is in climbing.

Why do we climb? Because we want to, and to get to the top. And in my case, because it is easier not to. (78)
The intelligent, enlightened and educated should not have to withdraw from their responsibility to lead on the pretext of cultured gentlemanly behaviour not to impose our will on others. It should be assumed and then accepted as the moral responsibility to guide the ignorant. The analysis of the situation by Peter is very convincing in terms of Prospero and Caliban relationship. Nirad C. Chaudhuri writes, “the challenge before the British was to create an open society in the order of the mind. Their opportunity was to make India an extension of the Western world.”

The Caliban requires the guiding light to attain that stage.

Having this idea in the mind, Peter writes to Gerry:

To get to the end of this road - the top, if you like - whatever the conditions, we have to develop our wills - and, especially, you. You usually seem to think you are no better than anyone else is, and therefore have no right to force your will on them. But you have to, and there will be occasions when we cannot work as a team; when you as the chief, will have to overcome opposition on your own. So on this trip you've to make decisions, the deliberately unpleasant ones, just as much as I have. (77)

160. Nirad C. Chaudhuri in Passage to and from India, published in Encounter, June 1954, p - 24
To do what you want to do, you need power. Peter enjoyed that power.

When he joins his service on probation, he explains to Gerry how he enjoyed his life because of the unlimited power he is vested with:

You asked me in your letter to tell you about my work. It will not be easy, because there are no real limits to it. At the moment I am "under instruction," which means that I do anything that seems to need doing, or that Philipson tells me to do. ... Most days I go round with the Pathwaris, who are a kind of junior official, while they check the field records. The records show what crop is grown in every field in this district. I also inspect liquor shops, count the money in the sub-treasuries, listen to complaints, decide what to do about them - and do it.  

The power exercised by a District Collector was immense. That power also helped him to protect the interests of imperialism if he minds. It is one of the reasons why he forced Gerry to come out to India so that they could do something worthwhile to the society. Peter's wife Emily, who has a soft corner for the mild nature of Gerry as a gentleman who would never run after power, admonishes her husband:

"It was not my idea, it was his," she said. "Peter, you haven't done anything wrong. You showed Gerry that a man must live for something, but what you wanted him to live for was not right for him. That's all. You brought him to India to show him one thing, power - but what he saw was people ill, and poor. He wants to work in the new hospital all his life."  

(161)
But the hopeful dreams of Adam to build a country of responsible citizens run into rough weather later. Adam Khan starts a committee called Committee for Good Government (CGG). The objective of the committee is to initiate constructive work to improve the infrastructure facilities like building schools, hospitals, bridges and canals. Peter, as the District Head, would facilitate the process. But, the members from the political parties smack of a hidden agenda behind the motive. They feel that helping the rulers would make the rulers stronger because the citizens would sympathise with them. Therefore, they hesitate to extend their full co-operation to Adam.

Adam gets desperate at the developments. Peter informs Gerry:

He (Adam) looks increasingly harassed, and confesses that he is finding it more and more difficult to keep the control - rather the moral dominance - over the C.G.G. (Committee for Good Government) that is essential for our purpose. (74)

The selfish people capitalise on every small incident by politicising the issues and blowing them out of proportion. Adam’s soft policy is criticised. He does not get the co-operation he expects. Adam complains out of desperation: “We snap and snarl like rats, and I sometimes think that when we become free we shall be so warped that we are not Indian. Let Baber stay with my father - especially as he runs back to him if I took him
away. Then there'll be real Indians to use the freedom, with generosity, that we will have given up our good tempers to earn for them. ..." (159)

It is suggestive of the fact that Indians have not yet reached the level of maturity to govern themselves. The fact testifies the apprehension of many political philosophers in England. The conservative corner of Peter's mind would comment that his generosity of believing in the Biblical saying, "It is in giving that thou receive" would be a futile exercise to empower the natives. He tells his wife Emily:

"It's democracy without a head," he said coldly. "Democracy has to have the last say, as to whether it agrees or disagrees, but it won't - it can't lead. Did Abraham Lincoln lead, or was he pushed? You know he led, Pitt led, England followed. A leader's no better than his followers, of course, but by God, followers without a leader are no good at all."

He sat down abruptly in the chair and said, "Let's forget the C.G.G. now, and even Adam." (116-7)

On some points even Adam would disagree with Peter. For example, the question of Indians joining the British in the First World War: Adam would ask for a guarantee from the British that after the war they would free India as a colony. Others would oppose, they do not want to have any truck with the British. But Adam says that he would like Indians to join it because of his education in England. Adam's son would not agree. The
controversy goes on. Peter bursts out at Adam that India would not have enjoyed the facilities that it has presently but for the benevolent British power:

Peter said, "Would you prefer that? It's not our fault that it's the truth. It's yours, for being such a mess of corruption and civil war a hundred and fifty years ago. If it wasn't us dragging you around at the wheels of our chariot it would be the French or the Russians. What the devil do you want? To be left on the sidelines as a kind of trophy to be picked up by the winner? If you'd prefer the Germans, make trouble for us here. If you don't put your pride in your pocket and come and fight. I can assure you that we won't be starting this war, and certainly not with the express purpose of insulting Indians, as I expect Harnarayan has already decided." (180)

But despite all this, Adam, his son Baber, Peter, Harry Walsh, Peggy, and Emily - all rise to the occasion when there is a national calamity that strikes in the form of a powerful earthquake in Rudwal in 1921. The presence of mind on the part of Peter to blast the bund of river Maghra in order to save Rudwal from inundation wins acclaim from all the people. The construction of the hospital and schools in the remote areas convinces the natives of the reformations undertaken with sincerity. The people love Peter. When Peter returns with a broken personality (for personal reasons of course) after the First World War, he could rejuvenate himself only because of the
blessings and good wishes of his subjects. Emily writes to Rodney the elder:

People were very good to us all the way up. Many who had known Peter in the old days went out of their way to be nice. I nearly cried once or twice, because I wasn't expecting it. (271-2)

Emily has identified herself with the Indian life. She loves it. She does not want to go away now, because the people shower love and honour on them:

It was all coming out, and now of all times was the time to speak the truth and go on speaking it until all was said. She said, "Yes. Yes! You know Rudwal, and the people know you. No one who's ever been here has used it as a stepping stone. They've made it their home, as I have. I don't want to leave Rudwal." (161)

There are other things that relate to the imperialistic glory of the yester years. For example, the house of old Rodney: one can find room decorated with things that were classic examples of the Anglo-Indian life. The retired officer has still kept up the sense of wit and vigour. Peter draws a lot of inspiration from his grand father especially the old man's will power to rise above the mundane world and the power to reconcile with life without any grouse. He had lived a full life daring all the rigours. He has become stoic now. The following lines describe some of these elements.
"I am a very old man, Mrs. Fenton," the general said. "I was born in the reign of King George the Fourth, and I can say anything, particularly to young ladies."

They climbed a flight of stairs and entered a large drawing room full of bronze and brass and heavy curtains. It was a typical room, one of several Emily had seen like it, but made different, lifted completely out of its class, by four oil paintings on the wall opposite the windows. They were portraits, and as she sat down she eyed them surreptitiously. One was of an Indian woman with a veil across her forehead and huge dark eyes, one of a child of about two and a half with fair curly hair, one of a woman in her late twenties, the fourth of a man in dark green uniform. The man held a big shako loosely in his right arm; his careless, strong left hand rested on a silver sword; his hair was thick; and black, black whiskers curled flamboyantly across his cheeks, and his eyes were snapping, glacier blue. (47)

There is not much about hunting in this novel except for a brief reference to leopard and fishing masheer in the Maghra river. Peter writes about it in his letter to Gerry:

Give my regards to Emily, and let me know whether you are still hoping to get out here after a big game next cold weather. We have nothing larger than a leopard in Rudwal, but they're exciting enough for anyone. I shot two last month, which had been taking goats and sheep in the foothills. The masheer in the Maghra run up to 65 lbs., and fight like salmon (only I've never fished for salmon). (68)
Major part of the novel is dedicated to the adventurous hobby of mountaineering. Their experience gained in the Alps is described as a mere training ground for the ultimate climbing of Meru in the Himalaya. In his letter to Gerry Peter writes:

I have a feeling that the Alps are going to be merely a training-ground in future, and that real fame will come only to men who find and conquer new peaks here. When you see the view from the foothills of the Southern Tehsils, you will understand. (67)

But despite their three efforts, Peter and his team will not succeed in climbing to summit of Meru. Peter deducts that perhaps God does not allow some secrets to be unravelled. It was a vision, perhaps too female for him to see without difficulty, of achieving happiness and knowing fulfilment by staying, not by moving; by being, not by working. It was the ideal of the flower; and his, of the towering clouds - the lotus and the wind. (161) They climb twenty six thousand eight hundred feet, just short of three hundred forty feet to reach the top.

The plot has many other twists and turns, shocks and surprises. They all add to make the reader sustain his interest. The emotional ups and downs in Peter, Gerry or Harry Walsh suggest the stress and strain in the Anglo-Indians. They are torn between the obligations to keep up the
imperial status on the one hand and, on the other, the personal sacrifices they had to make in order to keep up their obligations. Peter represents the true Anglo-Indian officer. Gerry exhibits the qualities of aristocratic intellectuals in England unable to decide and act. His problem is that he is too sensitive, cultured and mild to act. He could not survive since he could not act. Adam Khan is depicted as a victim of the generation gap. He believes vehemently that 'the old order changeth yielding place to the new' - as Tennyson would put it. But, in India, it does not change so fast. Some one has to bear the brunt of it.
*The Ravi Lancers*161 (1972) is set against the background of the First World War. The Indian soldiers helped their British masters to face the challenge in Europe. There was a mixed response from the Indian nationalists as to whether the Indians should assist their colonial masters at all. Some resisted it tooth and nail. Their opinion was that it was the best opportunity to teach their masters a fitting lesson by humiliating them in the international arena. But there were moderates, including Gandhi, who towed a softer line and said that it was not the time. The moderates felt that by helping the British in a critical moment they (Indians) would create an environment in such a way that the British would be, at least on the moral grounds, obliged to free India from the shackles. Ultimately, the Indian cavalry did participate in the war.

Masters devotes this novel to put forth the arguments from both the sides. The British were slowly beginning to realise the inevitable fact that the ground beneath their feet was collapsing. The hard-line approach mixed with adamant attitude would work no longer in containing the developments. The Ravi Lancers were actually a part of cavalry maintained by an independent kingdom in the northern part of India at the foot hills of the

Himalayas. The king was not at all under the mercy of the British to oblige them by sending his own army especially in the dire threat of facing death and destruction at the hands of enemies in a totally hostile and strange environment. But the young Yuvaraj, the heir to the throne, takes the side of the British and takes his men to the battle ground in Europe.

The plot of the novel briefly runs like this: Warren Bateman is an English soldier who is promoted as the Commanding Officer to lead the Ravi Lancers in Europe. He represents the old guard of the British colonial establishment and yet suffers from a dilemma of love-hate relationship with the country and its people whom he rules. He somehow wants to cling on to the power so that he could see reformation in India. He wants to instil discipline, moral values, honesty and other good qualities among the Indian soldiers. A strict disciplinarian, holding steadfast to his convictions, he feels it irritating to learn that the things are going out of control right under his nose and yet he is unable to contain the process. His own wife Joan, sister Diana, step-brother Ralph - all oppose his way of approach and action. They even go the extent of revolting against him. The young Yuvaraja - Krishna Ram - who is second-in-command, who he thought was very humble and subservient, dares to contradict him and criticise, makes Warren self-
examine to convince himself whether he was going in the right direction or not. He finds all around him a decadent and rotten world stinking around him. His is a typical prescriptive type of a personality, unable to compromise with anything. He feels let down, let down by the very same people whom he loved, whom he respected and whom he thought he protected. The end is predictable. The disillusioned, frustrated Warren commits suicide.

_The Ravi Lancers_ is probably the most powerful work by John Masters trying to argue out the things in favour of and against colonialism. The characters display the real experience of the time when hundreds and thousands of colonial masters felt the pangs of losing their colony. India was almost slipping out of their hands. "The brightest jewel in the crown" was fading at last. The sun was setting on an empire where they had thought he would never set. Warren depicts these sentiments of a forlorn world. Who should be blamed for the tragedy? Nobody, but the time. Mr. Fleming, the old tutor of Yuvaraj Krishna, sums up everything in a nutshell in the following lines at the burial ground:

The tutor said, "My boy, I understand all that has happened. I think I know how you have felt, certainly how Warren felt, because I have faced a little of the same. Before I went out to become your tutor I had read about India. Then I met it face to face, in its reality. I went out with
certain thoughts, ideas, visions of India and Indian culture fixed in me. After a year or two I began to learn the truth, which was sometimes better, sometimes worse, than my previous imaginings. The learning was often painful, for ideas become part of you and when they are wrenched out there is pain... anger too, for what you lost. There were times when I hated Indians and despised India. You were too young to see or understand, but your grandfather saw, for in a way he was my enemy as you have been Warren Bateman's. We were struggling against each other for you - your soul, if you like - as you and Warren have struggled for the soul of Ravi Lancers. But it is only through the struggles, such suffering, that one reaches truth. Warren Bateman went through all this in his attitude to India, but what killed him was having to face the same agonies as between his old values and his profession- war ... his religion - Christianity ...and his civilization - that of Western Europe." (446-7)

The attitude of love and hate is very clearly seen in the description of landscape as well as in the characterisation in the novel. For example the beauty of the landscape of India and the significance of an *ayah* and the cook called *Khitmatgar* are described in the following lines:

They drove back from the picnic lunch in the great Mogul gardens after three o'clock, the children dozing fitfully between *ayah* and Diana on one seat, himself and Joan opposite, the *khitmatgar* in full livery smart on the box beside the *syce*, the fox terrier, Shikari, sitting proudly between them. Shalimar was very beautiful, Warren thought,. All the works of the Moguls had a great strength and calm, at least the early
ones. The Taj Mahal felt flashy and somehow foreign after one had really absorbed Fatehpur Sikri and the Red Fort. He had tried to point out to Diana some of the special graces of Shalimar. She listened, because he was her brother - he could tell that she was not really interested; but the crowds of Indians in the gardens had held her attention. After six months she could barely tell a Sikh from a Muslim, but that didn't matter for it was always the children that absorbed her - they, and the marks of poverty and disease, which were prominent enough even in this rich capital of rich province. (8)

The Englishmen, who had come down to India in the earliest days, watched the luxurious life style of the Kings. Later, they themselves wanted to enjoy a similar kind of luxurious life. Every household would have hundreds of servants, sprawling bungalows, a dozen dogs that enjoyed a better privilege than most of the Indian servants. In fact, there was a sort of unproclaimed war of rivalry - between the kings ‘who had lost their crowns’ but still somehow ruled their kingdoms with the help of the British - and the British rulers who assumed their crowns. The only difference was that the Indian kings enjoyed their life without any labour. For them, it was a divine gift.
"Seems a nice chap," Warren said. "Though I don't envy these princes at all ... raised as petty gods to find when they grow up that they really have no responsibility, I believe Ravi come under the Agent to the Governor - General for the Hill state ... a lot of them take to drink, or worse, I can't say I blame them." (12)

But, for the British rulers it was hard-won and they thought they deserved it and that is why justified. Of late, among the young Indian princes, at least a few of them tried to imitate the English in working hard to attain positions. The imperialistic mind had the satisfaction that the Indians were learning a bit of responsibility. To that extent, the stay of the British was justified.

The men offering him more whisky were not soldiers dedicated to their regiment, but personal servants dedicated to protect the Yuvraj's life with their own. Krishna Ram did not command by experience or rank, but by divine right, and all this gave the gathering in the dusk at the river's bank a mysteriously feudal atmosphere. But he was glad to note that he (Warren) misjudged the young man, in at least one respect. It wasn't idleness but his responsibilities as heir apparent that had prevented him riding down to Ratanwala Camp with his regiment. (22)

But the hard truth is that they cannot change all the attitudes of the natives in a day or two. It might require a long time, because some of the characters have come down by heredity. To wipe off these characters it is
not only difficult but also a time consuming process. Krishna Ram knows the maladies coming in the way of his country’s progress. He tells Warren:

“Of course, sir. There is much that I would be sad to see the end of... even panchayats ...but nothing will really change or improve until our ways of thinking are changed. Better education, for instance. Better health and more real medical care, not the old superstitions. Better care of women and babies. Sanitation, hygiene ...”

A few of the dysfunctional qualities of the natives that are hated by the English rulers are that the natives do not have patience at all. “That's the trouble with these people,” Warren’s neighbour muttered, “no perseverance.” (9) Another thing is that they lie unashamedly. Warren Bateman accuses even the Yuvaraja of Ravi, Krishna Ram, of lying to protect the honour of his Indian soldiers caught in smoking bhang, visiting the harlots, making money by violating the set norms of the regiment etc..

Warren Bateman said, "You have betrayed the trust I put in you, which is not important. You have forced half a dozen men to lie for you ... the doctor, your orderly, all the officers of the regiment, except one. But I see that lying is nothing to an Indian, especially an Indian Prince." (385-6)

Incompetence, inefficiency and lack of discipline are another side of the Indian society which are disliked by the English. In one of the exercises of mock practice, a lancer called Mangla Ram dies drowning in water. Warren
tries to reason it out that the soldier had died because of the lack of the discipline. He remarks that the Indians would ignore such serious lapses as if they did not matter much. On the other hand, the English system is so particular that they would have spent months and years in conducting an inquiry on what caused the death of the soldier. The fear of inquiry itself would have chastised the responsible people. Indians do not bother about these things at all. Value of life is so insignificant here.

And Sowar Mangla Ram could probably have been saved with better discipline and supervision in the ranks. (24)

"You're lucky," Warren said. "If Mangla Ram had been one of ours we'd be holding courts of inquiry from now till the rains to establish whether he died as a result of military service or not, and who should pay for the lost and damaged equipment..." (32)

The Yuvaraja is made to believe that the English were right. They have a system of set rules and regulations whereas in India it never existed. The Yuvaraj argues with himself and convinces himself that he sometimes behaved cruelly and sometimes very kindly. Wasn't it arbitrary unlike in England?

Sometimes he was cruel and sometimes he was kind. It was impossible to tell what he was going to do because he didn't act according to a definite set of rules, like the English did. (37)
Krishna Ram, the Yuvaraja seems to express the thoughts of an Indian with the Western influence. He is young, but was educated by an English tutor in his childhood.

Though he is grown up now and despite the fact that he is the heir, the typically Indian characters like shyness, inferiority complex are still found in him. His description goes like this:

The prince was the same height as Warren, about 5' 10", but slimmer, his skin the color of wheat, his hair shining black and wavy, his eyes dark brown and deep set under strong straight eyebrows. He was bowing awkwardly to Diana, obviously a little ill at ease with her. He wouldn't have much knowledge or experience of European society, living up in that remote pleasant little kingdom nestled in the foothills of the Himalayas. (10)

His upbringing makes him look at India from the Western angle too. He has the dual advantage of placing the viewpoints, juxtaposing them and taking a balanced decision. Masters tries to depict his views of a reforming Indian through Kriashn Ram. The Indian superstition of playing down the importance of a girl child in the family is described in the following lines. The practice resembles the ancient Spartan ways of treating the male child to assure that only the healthiest survived:
Krishna nodded. Among the paharis girl children were put out naked on the ground for the first twenty-four hours of their life. Most died, leaving the few who survived to be the brides of the men. A girl born at this season, August, was more likely to live than one born in December, when a foot of snow covered the high pastures. More barbarism ... indeed the British treated it as murder, when it was practiced in British Indian territory, such as Bashahr. (42)

There are hundreds of other superstitions that have marred the development of the country. A civilised society cannot be dreamt of unless these social evils are eradicated. As a young Indian Krishna visualises of an India that would emerge as a strong nation. The Englishmen could never understand some of the superstitions connected with the Hindu religion. For example, considering the cow as a sacred animal.

A line of cattle plodded out from among the houses, and Hanuman said sharply, "Careful, lord!" Krishna sighed, and slowed still more. The cattle were sacred, of course. His poor country would never rise until the people outgrew such superstitions. Even in the rich foothills of the Himalayas there were more cattle than the land could support. Yet it was forbidden to kill them. Only last week his grandfather had had the right hand cut off of a Muslim villager who had been found to have killed a calf and secretly eaten it on some ceremonial occasion, with his family. Superstition ... dirt ... poverty ... disease ... and yet the people so good, so kind. It frightened to think that one day soon he would rule them. Better to die in battle, for in truth he did not understand people as his grandfather did. (36)
Another example is that of the worshipping of Lord Shiva, in the form of Lingam - a shape that resembled the human phallus - that stood for the power of regeneration. Anglo-Indian authors repeatedly pondered over the rational significance of the worship. It was an intriguing riddle for the European mind, and it could not be resolved convincingly. Warren Bateman could not guess it whereas his wife Joan could:

She found nothing shocking in the sexuality displayed in the temples. “Shocking” wasn’t the right word for his own thoughts about it, but he didn’t know what was. “Degrading”, perhaps - for surely it was degrading to equate God with the animal functions of procreation. There must be more to it than that, of course. With luck, he might learn a lot from the Ravi Lancers - at least as much as they were going to learn from him.(59)

Krishna Ram respects his uncle and admires too. He tells Warren:

“My uncle’s a wonderful man. He’s my great-uncle actually ... He doesn’t hold his rank because he’s the rajah’s brother, you know. He’s the best officer we’ve got.” Warren nods approvingly and says, “One of the old school. And a terrific polo player - rides as hard as anyone I’ve ever seen.” (20)

While his uncle was apprehensive of extending his support to the British during the First World War, Krishna Ram as a heir reassures his uncle - the present King - that it was the moral obligation and duty of the Indians to extend their support to the British at the critical hour. He allays
the fear of his uncle that the bold step of offering help would win the hearts of the rulers of the country. His uncle is not convinced in the beginning. He is afraid of the English people. The nightmarish experience of the Mutiny of 1857 where the English massacred his brother and many of his subjects has not yet disappeared from his memory. He says that he is afraid of the English, as one would fear a rabies dog:

The rajah shook his head. "I am not. I am a man of fear. That is different. I am terrified of the British, as a man is terrified of rabies, more than of the rabid dog. They are to be feared for what they carry in their hearts and minds. What all Europe carries, I think, Blood, Hate. Something infectious, and fatal. It is not the war that I fear, but the exposure of my people to that fatal disease." (47)

Krishna Ram wins over his argument by his convincing ideas. He explains how the English have helped the country to be a civilized nation. The influence of Western education has certainly made him think differently from his uncle who represents the ancient India. The argument of Krishna goes like this:
"I do not think we should ever fight the British," Krishna said. "I think we should learn from them. Why is it that they can rule India with eight hundred officials? And the British soldiers out-numbered two to one by Indian soldiers? It is because they have superior civilization. We are backward and ignorant. We will always remain in subjection, and will deserve to, unless we learn from them, and improve ourselves. But if we don't fight beside them, they will continue to look down on us. If we do, they cannot refuse to give us what we then will have earned - greater freedom to rule ourselves." (45)

The English were also not very keen to have the Indians participate in the war fought on the European plains. They have their own fears; the foremost being the possible exposure of their weaknesses. The exposure could be Achilles' heel later through which the Indians could outsmart them. Secondly, the experience of participating in a hi-tech war could give the Indian soldiers a confidence that might prove detrimental to the Imperial interests. Inspite of these possible apprehensions, the Indian participation in the First World War becomes inevitable. But, they have to move very cautiously. The instructions to the officers from their higher-ups were very clear and subtle at the same time: to handle the Indian regiments carefully.

The colonel said, "I agree. But frankly. I think we're laying up trouble for ourselves in sending any Indian troops to France at all. It's a white man's war, and they'll learn to kill white men. The sepoys and sowars are going to meet white women very different from memsahibs. They're
going to see things it would be just as well for all concerned that they should never see. Even the most loyal of them are going to return here questioning, wondering ... Well, all that's in the future. For now I'll just give some advice. If you don't want these Ravi fellows to run away the moment a German says boo to them ... or land you with the regimental funds embezzled ... or lie around smoking bhang when ought to be inspecting stables ... or bribe the dafedars for small favors ... you are going to have to drive them, take no excuses, show no mercy, right from the beginning. These people are not our Indians, but the Indians as they were before we came, the Indians, we walked all over at Plassey and Laswarrie ... individually brave, often enough, but idle, corrupt, self-seeking, vicious when your back's turned. (55)

Warren receives his officer's advice that he should be careful. The Indians need to be handled in a special way. His Colonel tells him:

"If I may venture a word of advice, Bateman, I would go slowly, go cautiously. React rather than act. We civilians have to deal with the Indian more as he is, less than with what we can make him, than you do in the army. We have learned that methods, which will work with Englishmen, won't necessarily work with Indians. It's what outsiders could call deviousness, but often it isn't devious, it is just ... Indian. They have their own ways of thought, you know. (60)

Warren personally, is not totally averse to the plan of taking the assistance of Indians participating in the war. He thinks that the Indians also had many positive qualities. It would be an opportunity for him to
learn the strengths of the old civilisation. They may not have discipline, but that could be instilled through proper training. But the sense of loyalty and courage among the Indians remains beyond doubt. He himself had experienced it.

India was not as simple as that. In some ways it was worse, in some better. He himself was certainly not going to treat all the Ravi officers as scum, but rather would try to find out the qualities and defects of each. It would be a wonderful opportunity to get to know a class of people the British really had nothing to do with - the educated Indians of the upper and middle class. He would get an insight into the soul of another India - perhaps the true India - an India unmolded by British hands or British attitudes. (55)

When Krishna accompanied Warren to London on his way to join the war, Krishna wonders how London looked. The proud Warren reveals the secret of his people holding the reins of many colonies including India:

He (Krishna) scrambled out. "I'm sorry, sir, I was ... seeing London. It makes Lahore look like a village. And as for Basohli ...!"

"It's a big place," Major Bateman said, as they followed the hall porter into the hotel: but Krishna was not thinking now of the size. It was not by size that England held India; it was by discipline, hard work, courage, and justice. It was not the size of London or the busy-ness of the streets that had overwhelmed him, but the sense of majesty, of ease with which this massive power was supported, of grace shown in the parks and the lower boxes. (92-3)
It is exactly the same point that Edward Said raises in his book, *Culture and Imperialism*. Said writes:

In India, for instance, by the 1930s a mere four thousand British civil servants assisted by sixty thousand soldiers and ninety thousand civilians (businessmen and clergy for the most part) had billeted themselves upon a country of three hundred million persons. The will, self confidence, even arrogance necessary to maintain such a state of affairs can only be guessed at, but, as we shall see in the texts of *A Passage to India* and *Kim*, these attitudes are at least as significant as the number of people in the army or civil services, or the millions of pounds England derived from India.\(^{162}\)

Warren thinks from the angle of his elderly generation that had fought the Indian army. How different it could be today to fight not against them but along with them against the European enemies. There should be many things to reform in them. The way of approach itself was different in the Indian context.

War ... with Indians who would be much more like the Indians the British had fought a century and more ago than the sepoys and sowars of the modern Indian Army. Raised under a despotism, religion, superstition, custom would be more important to them than discipline or law. Their relationships, their whole life would be guided by persons, personalities, personal emotions - not impersonal principles. (57)

Warren tries to instil discipline, honesty and confidence in the soldiers. There were men who used to smoke bhang and behave madly. Warren had the guts to walk straight to such soldiers and face them. On one of such occasions, a soldier was behaving like an elephant running amuck. He was about to shoot his own men under the influence of bhang. When other soldiers warn Warren not to go near him, Warren walks straight without any fear of being shot. He asks him:

"Why were you shooting?" Warren demanded.

"Sahib ... I don't know ... I thought ... I saw the enemy ..."

"Bhang", Krishna said disgustedly, naming the popular North Indian type of hashish, "I can smell it on his breath." (68-9)

On another occasion, the humble Indian Lancers were bullied by an English officer in the ship on their way to England. The Indian officer takes the humiliation lying down. It enrages Warren. He calls the officer, berates him and teaches him how to behave confidently in order to preserve the dignity and decorum of his squadron. Warren hates the attitude of subservience and cowardice:

They were talking stooped across the body of a sowar who may or may not have been asleep, the steel deck tight over their head. Warren was furious. The bloody weakling, to let himself be bullied like that! ...

Warren sighed. "Listen ... you are not Himat Singh, an ordinary man
like any other man in the street. You are the commander of B Squadron of the Ravi Lancers. Every time you speak you speak for a hundred men, who have no other voice. In whatever concerns them, speak louder for they speak through you." (80-1)

Warren feels that it is miserable on the part of the officer who has no self-confidence, unable to act on his own and take a decision. Such an officer does not deem fit to lead his squadron - indirectly suggesting that Indians are incapable of governing themselves. This is the attitude which suggests that a 'weakling' - or the 'colonised' as Albert Memmi would put it - needs to be protected.

The nationalist feelings wake up in Krishna once he comes to know that the attitude displayed by the Englishmen in the war was based on the duality of values. Krishna resists Warren's hypocritical attitude towards him once he comes to know that Krishna had fallen in love with his sister Diana. The true colours of an imperialist come out. Warren calls Krishna and tells him:

"You will not marry my sister," Warren Bateman said forcefully. "These things that you have done proved finally what Rudyard Kipling said, *East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet*. Your ideas of decency and honor are not the same as hers, and I am not going to see her life ruined by a ... you. Nor have her bear children like
Flaherty here." He looked at Flaherty, "Are you happy with what you are?"

The burly Anglo-Indian looked startled, then his mouth quivered and he said, "No, sir ... I hate it, sir! I often pray God to make me English or Indian, or the other." (384)

Krishna feels sorry for the predicament Warren was suffering from. He thinks that Warren 'loved India and Indians without understanding either of them'. He questions the double-dealing attitude of Warren and threatens to withdraw his men from the war and return back to India. Many of his own soldiers had already suggested it to him to return back as it was of no use fighting a useless war. The Christians, they said, preached something and practiced something else. Warren loses heart to learn that no one supported his stand - a stand to preserve the purity of his race, the stand to preserve the imperialistic stature of his country. He goes and meets his maternal uncle, Rodney Savage, the retired hero of the Mutiny, and complains of the loss of 'values' everywhere. The decadence was making its way in a world that was full of honour and values once.

Thus we see that a good deal of debate taking place in this novel speaking for and against the imperialistic forces. Masters has successfully analysed the subject from both the coloniser's point as well as from the
colonised's point of view. A lot of introspection and self-study has gone into the plot of the novel. The first hand experience of Masters who saw the imperialistic trends inside India, and his advantage of looking at the English view from an American point of view, has given him much insight into the subject. But there are some usual pitfalls too. The treatment of sex by Masters, especially in this novel, goes a little too close to the level of pornography. It seems unnecessary and unwarranted. If one has to consider the sensuous exploitation as one of the elements of imperialistic exploitation, may be Masters has a justification. But, at the outset the matter appears as an inevitable personal obsession for Masters.