CHAPTER II

IMPERIALISM AND COLONIALISM

Two truths are told
As happy prologues to the swelling act
Of the imperial theme

- Macbeth in Macbeth Act I (iii)
Anglo-Indian fiction is written against the backdrop of the Colonial rule of the British Empire. It is a by-product of the colonial experience. The ideas and the attitudes of these Anglo-Indian writers were framed by the Imperial policy of Britain towards its colonies. Since it is our purpose to study these attitudes, it would be appropriate to understand these two terms, namely, *Imperialism* and *Colonialism*, from different perspectives and from different viewpoints.

Generally, both these terms are used almost in the same context. In the post-colonial context, these terms are mostly used in a derogatory sense. They refer to the domination of a stronger nation over a weaker one. Imperialism is associated with the political ideology of a nation to keep its territories always expanding so that it can assert its superiority over others. On the other hand, the term colonialism is associated with economic and psychological implications as well. A closer look at the interpretation and the usage of these terms help us understand them better. An attempt is made here to look into these two terms as defined in dictionary, encyclopaedia and as interpreted by historians, administrators, literary critics, thinkers and economists. We can also take into account the interpretation of the terms in the 'post-colonial' context. The colonial psyche was perhaps the strongest influence that prompted the attitudes of the Anglo-Indian authors.
Oxford dictionary defines 'imperialism' as a policy of imperial rule or system. Usually it is used in a derogatory sense to mean dominating other nations by acquiring dependencies etc.

Encyclopaedia Britannica mentions that the word 'imperialism' originates from the Latin word *Imperium* that means power and so empire. The word dates back to 500 BC in the Roman Empire. It was a policy of the state by which control is established beyond its borders over people, generally unwilling to accept such a control. The imperialist nature of a policy is sometimes difficult to discern.

"Power" appears to be at the root of the word 'empire'. The superior powers wanted to extend their territories beyond their own, for either materialistic gain or to assert their superiority. Once the territory was won, attempts were made by the victor to impose his cultural and ideological attitudes on the vanquished. This attitude is 'imperial attitude'. The Encyclopaedia of Asian History interprets 'imperialism' in the following words:

From the earliest recorded history there have been empires and, therefore, 'Imperialism'. Each empire has imposed its own rules and administration upon other peoples, who thereby find themselves in a dependent relationship to the dominant - or 'imperial' power. Empires are typically characterized by a centrally organized authority in which decisions are made, often arbitrarily, according to priorities of the ruling power and with little, if any, consultation of those affected by these decisions.

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imperial order traditionally describes an asymmetrical power relationship that is usually maintained by political control and military strength, but may also be enforced by economic and diplomatic pressure.

The early practitioners of imperialism whether, politicians, journalists, missionaries, explorers, merchants or military officers provided various justifications for their activities. Arguments for empire included prospects of economic gain, an enhancement of national power, the scientific value of exploration, and the uplifting task of bringing the benefits of a more advanced civilisation and culture to ‘backward’ peoples. Often these arguments adopted the language of a competition for glory and power as each nation sought its ‘place in the sun’, fulfilled a ‘manifest destiny’, assumed a ‘civilising mission’, or acted as a ‘chosen people’ revealing an underlying drive for supremacy. Thus imperialism may be described and identified but its origins and causes and influences continue to be debated.57

Swapan Majumdar is of the opinion that imperialism is a natural by-product of the meeting between two cultures. He is of the view that when two cultures meet they naturally arouse admiration and apprehension for each other. He says, “At times such meetings are caused by strokes of historical accidents, at others by a motivation of expansion.”58

Highlighting the characters like assertion and superiority in Imperialism, Nadel H. George and Curtis Perry write:

By Imperialism we mean the extension of sovereignty or control, whether direct or indirect, political or economic, by one government; nation or society over another, together with the ideas justifying or opposing this process. Imperialism is essentially about power both as end and means. Behind the stirring slogans, the martial symbols and the institutional façade of empire can be found superior military, economic, political, or moral power. Underlying all forms of imperialism is the belief - at times unshakeable - of the imperial agent or nation in an inherent right, based on moral superiority as well as material might, to impose its pre- eminent values and techniques on the ‘inferior’ indigenous nation or society. Imperialism generally involves the collision of two or more cultures and subsequent relationship of unequal exchange between or among them. What confuses the issue has been the inability of men to analyze their real motives for territorial or cultural expansion and to separate them from rationalizations devised after the fact.  

Though the purpose of domination is obvious, it is the domination with a concern - a concern for reformation. John Strachey says that the British rule in India was iniquitous and beneficent. He says: “By Imperialism I mean the process by which peoples or nations conquer, subdue and then permanently dominate (either de jure or de facto) other peoples or nations. By empire, I mean the state of the things in this way established. — The words, imperialism and empire should therefore, always carry with them the

connotation not only of conquest but also of an attempt at continuing
domination of one people by another."^{60}

Continuing his argument, Strachey says that it would be easy to moralise
over the history of imperialism since that history includes some of the most
ferocious events in the whole of human development. According to him the
British were both iniquitous and beneficent. He asserts that the British
Empire in India "was founded by violence, treachery and insatiable avarice,
but also by incomparable daring and sustained resolution; it united India; it
partitioned India; it created modern India; it degraded India; it industrialised
India; it stunted India; it served India; it ravaged India; it created modern
India; it was selfish, selfless, ruinous and constructive, glorious and
monstrous. Such events cannot usually be either celebrated or arranged,
but perhaps they can be understood."^{61}

There are many theories that try to define the motives behind
imperialism. Some of them focus on economic profit as the chief motive,
while others think of the availability of abundant natural resources, and
cheap labour. Military strategy is also one of the motives for imperialistic
activity. Some of the nations in the past expanded their territories to create
a 'buffer zone' around themselves so that their own territory remained intact
from the foreign attack. Imperialism may also be attributed to patriotism,

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60. John Strachey, *The End of Empire*, National Book Trust of India, Delhi, 1959, pp - 3, 4
61. Ibid., p -11
religion, and cultural and racial superiority. The Europeans for example, considered the people of Africa and Asia inferior racially. The lack of education and knowledge - specially industrial and technical - reinforced their cultural prejudice. Most of these imperialists believed strongly that they had a God-given mission to lift the downtrodden. This feeling can be testified in the words of Kipling's oft-quoted phrase: "The White man's burden".

D.K. Fieldhouse is of the view that imperialism is the most widely used of the four concepts viz. Colonialism, Imperialism, Colonisation and Neocolonialism. It is like an umbrella that comprehends the whole gamut of relations between a dominant and a subservient society. He finds it difficult to define it as it meant all things to all men. But he says, in a general sense, it can be used to indicate the tendency of one society or state to control another by whatever means and for whatever purpose. On the other hand, the term 'colonialism' cannot be either defined or understood in isolation. It is an extension of the process of imperialism. It is neither precise nor self-explanatory. Therefore, colonialism could be understood as the condition of a subject or people.62

Ania Loomba makes an attempt to distinguish these two terms - 'imperialism' and 'colonialism' - in her book *Colonialism / Post Colonialism* in the following words:

In the modern world then, we can distinguish between colonisation as the take over of territory, appropriation of material resources, exploitation of labour and interference with political and cultural structures of another territory or nation, and imperialism as a global system. Thus, imperialism and colonialism and the differences between them are defined differently depending on their historical mutations.63

Edward Said is of the view that neither imperialism nor colonialism “is a simple act of accumulation and acquisition”. They are supported and impelled by ideological formations and are even intentional. He uses the term, ‘imperialism’ to mean practising the “theory and attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory”. And colonialism is almost a consequence of imperialism.64 He says that domination and inequities of power and wealth are perennial facts of human society. But in today’s global setting they are also interpretable as having something to do with imperialism, its history, and its new forms. Said explains that:

Everything about human history is rooted in the earth, which has meant that we must think about habitation, but it has also meant that people have planned to have more territory and therefore, must do something about its indigenous residents. At some very basic level, imperialism means thinking about setting on, controlling land that you do not possess, that is distant, that is lived on and owned by others. For all kinds of reasons it attracts some people and often involves untold miseries for others.65

63. Ania Loomba, Colonialism/Post Colonialism, Routledge Lon., 1998, p - 6
64. Edward W. Said, Culture and Imperialism, Vintage Lon., 1994, p - 8
65. Ibid.,
In his book, 'Orientalism', Said says that the relationship between Occident and Orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degrees of a complex hegemony. He adds that 'Orientalism' is not an "airy European fantasy about the Orient, but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations there has been a considerable material investment."66 Thus, Orientalism has become a style of thought that has been accepted by a large number of writers, philosophers, political theorists, economists and imperial administrators. Though it is of no use to blame each other for the misfortunes, what we need to do is to look at these matters as a network of interdependent histories, that it would be inaccurate and senseless to repress, but useful and interesting to understand.

Suhash Chakravarty attempts to explain the imperial perception that "It is the particular action of mind that refers to its sensation to external objects as its cause. Distinct from conception, imagination, judgement and inference, perception denotes the faculty that takes note of the sensible and quasi-sensible objects. It involves taking cognizance of the objects in general and recognition of their moral and aesthetic qualities."67

The terms, 'imperialism' and 'colonialism' are often used in the same context to project the same idea. It is very difficult to distinguish them from

one another. There appears to be a very thin edge between the two words. Imperialism denotes the political and geographical ideology of expansionism whereas; colonialism chiefly denotes the economic and cultural ideology of settling down in the conquered land. But, the process has some common effects.

The Encyclopaedia of Humanities and Social Sciences defines, "Colonialism is a system of control by a country over a dependent or people outside its borders. ... European from 15th to 19th century was usually associated with economic aims; it was linked with the Imperialism of the new nation- states and governed by the economic policies of Mercantilism."68

According to the Oxford Dictionary, the word COLONY is derived from the Latin word for farmer, cultivator, planter or settler in a new country (colon-us). Colonia had thus meanings of "farm," "landed estate," "settlement," and was especially a proper term for a public settlement of Roman citizens in a hostile or newly conquered country, where they, retaining their Roman citizenship, received lands, and acted as a garrison, being mostly formed of veteran soldiers who had served their time; hence it was applied to the place so occupied or to towns which were raised to the same rank and privileges. Colonialism means (1) "The practice or manner of things colonial" and often serves as a synonym for "provincial"; (2) "The colonial system or principle-

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now frequently used in the derogatory sense of an alleged policy of exploitation of backward or weak peoples by a large power.  

The thought of subjugation occurs because the coloniser thinks that he is superior in every respect. He convinces himself of his right to rule over the weak. Albert Memmi says, "Whenever the colonizer states, in his language, that the colonized is a weakling, he suggests thereby that this deficiency requires protection. From this comes the concept of a protectorate."  

Marxists were of the opinion that colonies were established by the British, primarily to find a market for their finished goods and to find work force to work in their factories. The labour worked out very cheap for them. The colonised were forced to buy the goods from them since an impression was created on them that a superior class produced them. In other words, colonies were formed to find a market for the goods produced by the colonisers.  

But, Albert Memmi contradicts this view. He is of the opinion that economy or material gain may not be the only objective behind colonisation. By acquiring a colony, the coloniser invites for himself many other responsibilities too. Memmi writes:

However, colonial privilege is not solely economic. The Marxist discovery of the importance of the economy in all oppressive relationships is not the point. Psycho-analysis or Marxism must not, under the pretext of

69. OED
having discovered the source or one of the main sources of human
conduct, pre-empt an experience, all feeling, all suffering, all the by-
ways of human behaviour, call them profit motive or Oedipus complex.

The colonialist's existence is so closely aligned with that of the colonized
that he will never be able to overcome the argument which states that
misfortune is good for something. With all his power he must disown the
colonised while their existence is indispensable to his own.

Having chosen to maintain the colonial system, he must contribute more
vigor to his defence than would have been needed to dissolve it completely.
Having become aware of the unjust relationship, which ties him to the
colonized, he must continually attempt to absolve himself. He never
forgets to make a public show of his own virtues and will argue with
vhehence to appear heroic and great. At the same time his privileges
arise just as much from his glory as from degrading the colonized. He
will persist in degrading them. If need be, he will act to devalue them,
annihilate them.71

Thinkers like O.P.Juneja, attribute the cause for colonisation,
exclusively to economic necessity. The expansion of the territories takes
place in order to find raw materials and to dump the surplus industrial
products. Treachery, bribery, enslavement are natural accompaniments. He
adds: “The colonialism generated certain changes and reactions all over the
world and various fields - political, cultural, educational, philosophical and
racial.”72 He continues to argue that the process of colonisation creates a

72. O.P.Juneja, “Colonial Consciousness and Identity Crisis”, in Colonial Consciousness in Black American,
myth - a myth of superior culture and inferior culture. The social organisations, government, judicial system and educational system support it. It throws the colonised out of the history making process, calcifies his society and deadens his culture. The colonised is forced to accept this myth.

K.R.S.Iyengar is of the opinion that "Colonialism is made possible by the fact that one race has a better mastery of the arts of war and peace than another, and hence is in a position to impose its domination over the 'inferior' race."73

The factors like acceptance and rejection always become a part of the colonial subconscious. Jasbir Jain says that colonial consciousness consists of two stages: one of acceptance of the imperial model and the other turning away from it. They are both dependent and imbalanced relationships and this process can also lead to introspection on both sides. She says that "the third and the final stage is a moving away from these secondary positions to a position of critical identification of one's own culture, of being in a position to sift and to criticise, a stance which is marked by an adult maturity."74

India enjoyed a special position among the colonies of the British Empire. In the case of India, the purpose of the British was to create a

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nation, which upheld the values of Britain. Nirad C. Chaudhary observes: "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." And in this process India also extended its co-operation. G.N. Devy says that the British Colonial Period in India was a period both of confrontation and collaboration and willing participation recurs with an amazing frequency all through the history of the British Colonial rule in India.

Gauri Vishwanathan is of the view that, "Orientalism was adopted as an official policy partly out of expediency and caution and partly out of an emergent political sense that an efficient Indian administration rested on an understanding of 'Indian Culture'." The Indian administrative system was decaying when the British arrived. Zareer Masani tells us about the contribution of the British to the Indian administration. He says: "what was new was the professionalism and integrity they brought to an administration which, by the time the British arrived, had declined into open nepotism and bribery."

Rabindranath Tagore has a very humorous explanation on why India was growing into a kind of a decadent society. There was a clear sense of

75. Nirad C. Chaudhury, "Passage to India", in Encounter, Jun. 1954, p -24
77. Gauri Vishwanathan, Masks of Conquest - Literary Study and British Rule in India, Faber and Faber, London, 1989, p - 28
complacency in the Indians. Someone had to wake them up from their slumber. Tagore is of the opinion that India had already played its successful innings in the game of cultural supremacy long before the British arrived. It was so tired that it was taking rest. Tagore writes in his Rachanavali:

We are old Indians, very old and very tired. Often I feel in myself this large antiquity of our race, when I look into my mind carefully, I find there only ideas, restfulness and renunciation. As if there was a prolonged vacation everywhere; both inside and outside us. As we had accomplished our duties during the morning hours of the world, and now, during the high noon when all others are toiling, we seem to be relaxing peacefully with our doors locked to the world. It is as if we are surviving on a pension; we seem to be quite happy.79

Ketaki Dyson notes that both the Utilitarians and the Evengelicals noticed this decadent symptom and they thought that the Indian society was in urgent need of reform. She writes:

The ironical twist is that it was the conservative approach that was sympathetic towards Indian culture and wished to contribute towards its preservation, emphasising that a new society could be built only on the foundation of its best inheritance from the past, and it was the new radicalism that dismissed Indian culture quite dogmatically and wanted to alter Indian society radically. The colonial context highlighted the latent authoritarian streak in the thinking of the radicals and brought it easily to the service of an imperialist ideology.80

England was very cautious and quite concerned about its approaches to administration in the beginning. The English were very clear about their vision. There were regular dispatches from 'home' to the ruling officials in India on how to move forward cautiously and yet preserve the interests of the homeland. They insisted that no misuse of power or arbitrary act is done to hurt the natives. The rulers were supposed to be inclining to the merciful side and not the rigorous end. These words show us the introspective qualities of the British. There is a concern of a benefactor in the communications sent to India. It is exactly this kind of a concern that makes the imperialistic attitude of England towards India a unique one in its relationship. Denis Judd, quoting one of the dispatches sent in 1714 from England to the British rulers in India, says that there were very clear-cut instructions to administer justice impartially to all and speedily, to govern mildly and yet to preserve authority. No humiliation or insult is done to the natives or that no voice of oppression is heard in the streets and that is the best method to enlarge the Kingdom and to increase the revenues.81

India was a land of great fascination for the Western world in the 16th century. The 'coral strand' of India attracted every one. It became an obsession for many of those who loved adventure and accepted challenges of life and nature. The British reached the Indian shores with business interests in their mind.

Denis Judd says:

India was a very important part of the Victorian Empire - perhaps the most important part of all. Nineteen percent of British exports went to India, and hundreds of millions of pound sterling were invested there. Also, the Raj was thought to be a superb example of uncorruptible administration of a subject people by an imperial power. Thus for economic reasons, as well as for reasons of prestige, India was thought of as the “brightest jewel” in the imperial crown.\textsuperscript{82}

But their business interest gradually shifted to imperialistic gains. Bagban Prakash takes a view that the Indian coral strand fired the Western imagination to a great extent irrespective of the fact whether they visited the land or not. He says that it was a general tendency to look to the East in a romantic fashion. This fascination was the result of the ‘Voyages of Discovery’ led by Columbus, Vespucci, Vasco Da Gama and many others. The trend could be observed since the days of Queen Elizabeth - I. “As the occupation proceeded and expanded, the legend and the glory that was India, was forced out of the English mind. The apparent proximity bred contempt and the English masters were no longer in a mind to admire things that were Indian. The expansion motif needed an ideological cloak to cover up the sordid greed and as such was expressed in the ‘Civilizing Mission’. The backward land and its people would be given civilization in exchange of the products wanted in Europe and hence the moral justification of a mission.”\textsuperscript{83}

\textsuperscript{82} Denis Judd, \textit{The British Raj}, Wayland Pub. London, 1972, p -77
\textsuperscript{83} Bagban Prakash, \textit{Indian Themes in English Fiction: A Socio-Literary Study}, Mittal Pub., N.Delhi, 1994, pp -34,35.
Asserting India's position in the British Empire, Brian Lapping writes in a slightly different tone. He says that though India was never a treasure-trove for Britain with galleons bringing home gold as they did from South America to Spain, "yet India was unquestionably the most important imperial possession of all time: it was India that made British Empire unique."84

The 'possession' was indeed a 'prize catch'. There was an imminent need to hold on to this imperial acquisition steadfastly. India had become a symbol of status and prestige. Hence there was a need to retain it at all costs. Bagban Prakash observes that the British Empire was enormously important to England as part of the British national identity for generations. People born between 1840 and 1940 grew up with the concept of the British Empire as something very important and integral and India as the most 'precious jewel in the crown'. He says that the term was very appropriately used to describe India's unique position in the British Empire. "In the history of Empires, India was the largest and the most populous territory ever to have been acquired by any imperial power. The possession of such a vast sub-continent and its potential resources had pushed the tiny English isle into a place of great prominence in the world affairs. Hence, India was literally more than a jewel that sustained not only English pride but also maintained, determined and shaped England's Imperial policy."85

K.M. Panikkar elaborates the psychology of the British authority saying that they ruled with a firm conviction of racial superiority. Citing examples from the words of Lord Ketchener, the most distinguished Commander-in-Chief of India, he shows how they defended the conviction of their racial superiority. Lord Ketchener, had declared: "It is this consciousness of the inherent superiority of the European which has won for us India. However, well educated and clever a native may be, and however brave he may have proved himself, I believe that no rank we can bestow on him to be considered an equal of the British Officer."86

Albert Memmi shows how it was an imminent necessity for the coloniser to cling on to his stance to keep up the dignity of his motherland. He explains that the colonialist's existence is closely aligned with that of the colonised. Though the colonised are indispensable for his own existence, he must disown them to maintain the colonial system and must continue to contribute more vigour in its defence to appear heroic and great. The coloniser's privileges seem to rise as much from his glory as from degrading them. The coloniser can persist in degrading them using the darkest colours to depict them and even to the extent of devaluing them and annihilating them.

The mother country is so big only because it is beyond the horizon and allows the existence and behaviour of the colonialist to be made worthwhile. If he should go home, it would lose its sublime nature and

86. K.M. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance*, George Allen and Unwin Ltd. Lon., 1953, p. 116
he would cease to be a superior man. Although he is everything in the colony, the colonialist knows that in his own country he would be nothing: he would go back to being a mediocre man. Indeed, the idea of a mother country is relative. Restored to its true self, it would vanish, and would at the same time destroy the super-humanity of the colonialist.*87

Suhash Chakravarty explains the reasons as to why the British followed the Imperial strategy in India. He is of the opinion that India served as a training ground for the British to try their hand on other colonies elsewhere in the world.

The experience of the Raj was put in practice by administrators and soldiers in Nigeria, Ghana, Sudan, Egypt and Rhodesia alike. It offered a blueprint to the European powers elsewhere in their mission abroad. Between the definite perceptions of the Raj of itself and the remarkable flamboyance of imperial braggadocio on the one hand and the consistent line of thought about the 'contemptible' India and its so-called inevitable failure to graduate in the school of self-government on the other, imperial sensibility gathered a wide and influential audience. It was not merely an upper class affair. Even the British working class was attracted by the seductive prospects of a colonial overclass. If Rudyard Kipling and Maud Diver stood at the one end of the imperial spectrum signifying unflinching imperial will and determination, E.M. Forster and Edward Thompson stood at the other end of the same world-view upholding various sentiments to buttress the imperial logic.88

John Strachey thinks from a psychological angle and comes to the conclusion that the trends of imperialism in the British show up, because of

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their sense of excellence in the past achievements. They would get 'fixated' on the same values. But, when world scenario changes, the nation fails to adapt itself and thus loses its past glory. He writes:

Nations, like men, become wedded to their own pasts. And the more brilliant the past has been, the more acute is the danger that the nation in question will be unable to show the power of adaptation to a changing environment, which is a condition of survival. It is just because we British were certainly the most successful and, we at any rate are convinced, the most enlightened, of the latter-day imperialists, that it is such a difficult task for us to find the quite different, but equally significant, role which now awaits us in the world. This tendency of nations to become 'fixated' - to use another of the expressive terms of modern psychology - upon some glorious feature of their own pasts is not confined to an irrational attachment to vanishing empires. Nations, which have for a time led the world in any field of endeavour are apt to fail in adaptability when the world scene changes and new roles become indispensable for them.89

The colonial encounter blew the natives off their feet. The onslaught resulted in the introspection and identity crisis. Fred Dallmayr says: "Under the relentless impact of globalism, indigenous cultures are increasingly pushed into a context of cross-cultural encounter or confrontation, an encounter which forces them to interrogate both themselves and their competitors (the chief competitor in most settings being the West). In many Third World societies - bruised already by many decades of colonial domination -

89. John Strachey, The End of the Empire National Book Trust, Govt. of India, New Delhi, 1959, p - 242
confrontation involves an intense questioning of self identity, a process which often gives rise to a profound identity crisis.\textsuperscript{90}

John Masters is one such writer who weighed this idea in his mind many times. His introspection would tell him that the Indians were right in their demand for independence. He recollects one of the instances where he met some Indian nationalists through his Indian friend, Mr. Reggie Sawhny, in Bombay. All of them represented the best in India. They wanted the British to leave India 'at the earliest possible moment. Though Masters' immediate reaction was of hurt and astonishment, he finds justice in their demand. Masters writes: "I am by nature an iconoclast; but they (Indians) were willing to give us at least as much credit as we deserved - and perhaps more - for what we had done in India, and they did not blame us for circumstances that were the fruits of history, not of deliberate sowing."\textsuperscript{91}

The psychological necessity to retain the territory led to the growth of Imperial attitude towards India. Udayon Misra rightly feels that this imperial attitude was marked by limited objectives and was primarily aimed at preserving the Empire. It was advocated, "mainly by a set of British officials and statesmen who, while possessing little regard for or interest in the country and its people, were guided by the conviction that British power had to be

\textsuperscript{90} Fred Dallmayr, \textit{Western Thought and Indian Thought: A Comparison}, Journal of Contemporary Thought, MS University, Baroda, 1992, p -5

maintained in India at all costs. This feeling was marked on the one hand, by the belief in the superiority of British rule, and on the other, by the conviction that the Indians were, as a race inferior and weak and their civilisation was primitive.92

It is with this mind-set the British stayed in and served India. India was always viewed in this limited perspective. Their stay for nearly two hundred years in India, did not alter their basic attitude for, they rarely ventured to live in the midst of the natives for the fear of catching contamination. They lived an insular life. This kind of insular life had its effect on their personal, social and psychological life too. John Masters gives the description of the Army officers serving in India and shows how much of personal sacrifice they had to make. Besides, these officers were expected to bear with the stress and strain the system had developed. He writes:

Generally an infantry officer was stationed for perhaps only four years out of every seven in a place where women were permitted to follow him. Last and worst, when the children reached the age of five or six they went home to England unless their parents wished them to grow up spoiled by too many servants. The wife could either accompany them - and for the next fifteen years see her husband only on his furlough every fourth year or she could farm the children out on aunts, uncles and grand mothers in England, while she herself stayed with her husband. Both situations were bad for all parties concerned, and the second has led to some of the most remarkable aunt-complexes known to literature, notably those of Kipling and Saki.93

Zareer Masani tells that one of the oldest established sections of the British Indian business was the ‘plantocracy’. It ran tea, coffee and indigo industries. "Plantation life, with its isolation from the European urban centres, forced them into far closer contact with the real India, represented by their workers. But they remained one of the most politically conservative sections of Anglo-Indian society; and their relations ranged from benevolent paternalism to conditions of near slavery."94

The British continued to live in their own isolated dwellings drawn away from the hub of the native society. They went about imposing their language and culture on the colonised all over the world. G.N.Devy comments:

For in the accident of colonisation, there was something common more than the white man’s pride. It was his belief in the civilising effect of literature in his language. With the other paraphernalia of colonialism - the railways, the regimented Army, the tax collector, the missionary and the law-court - British took their language wherever they went; and out of a solid lack of knowledge about those cultures, and out of terrible absence of respect for the dignity of those cultures, they imposed the English language on the colonized all over the world.95

The imperial attitude of domination towards the ‘natives’ grew stronger as the expansion process got underway. The things that were admired earlier did not continue to enjoy the same value after a few years. Admiration for

things that were native would mean demeaning of the status enjoyed. The change in the attitude was not just limited to the behavioural side. It extended to the extent of likes and dislikes; tastes in the structure of buildings, textures and so on. Beatrice Lamb gives us the details of some changes perceived around that period in the following words:

But in a few short years, as the political balance shifted further, the British turned away from things Indian. British settlements began to resemble English towns. Fashion dictated that instead of the wide, shady verandas so fitted to the climate, the houses of the Britishers must have Ionic columns going up to two flights, though such columns allowed the sun to bake the porches below. It became no longer quite the thing to keep Indian women or to appreciate Indian textiles or other products. British amusements (dancing theatres etc.) were introduced. Having acquired political power, the new Western rulers absorbed many of the autocratic tendencies of the Oriental despots whom they had displaced. A horde of retainers and ostentatious luxury became desirable. Despotic tempers seemed appropriate to their new status. In this sense, Englishmen lived like the Nawabs they had dispossessed.96

The chasm between the natives and the British rulers went on expanding further to all rungs of life and the native was pushed to the second-rate status, no matter how educated or affluent an Indian might be. Many clubs like Gymkhana and other recreational centres came up around this period to provide entertainment to the Sahibs and his family members in total privacy. The nearest Indian could be sighted was in the form of a watchman at the

gate, nearly a half a mile away from the club. He was not allowed to go
nearer to see what the sahibs were doing.

But in spite of this the social life for the British Officers, writes John
Masters, was a 'gold fish bowl'. He says that the servants knew all about
what was going on and it was useless to attempt to conceal anything from
them. The riflemen in his battalion somehow always got to know, if not an
officer's specific doings, certainly of the nature of his inclination.97

New coinages like 'wog'-(Westernised Oriental Gentleman), or 'Babus'
came into usage to explain the native educated class. Francis Ingall writes
that an Indian could never dream of sharing a railway compartment that is
already occupied by the sahib.98 Departments like judiciary, medicine,
administration and military were not spared from the discrimination. Zareer
Masani opines that though the Raj made some concessions to Indianisation,
the entry of Indian officers remained a mere trickle. Even those officers were
paid very low salary compared to their counterparts. The natives encountered,
sometimes, utterly humiliating moments. "Hostility to Indianisation was far
more open among the non-official European Community; and it focussed
particularly on the fact that the entry of Indians into the judicial branch of
the service spelled the end of the privileged legal status which Europeans
enjoyed as the ruling race."99

98. Francis Ingall, The Last of the Bengal Lancers, Leo Cooper, London, 1988, p - 27
John Masters tells us that he did not like Indians being called with words of distaste. He felt offended at such usage. In his book, *Bugles and a Tiger*, he writes:

"In England I had tried to ape the fashionable ignorance of India, but now already I found myself resenting England's total awareness of this country which she owned and governed at so long a distance of distaste. I did not like hearing Indians spoken of as 'niggers', 'wogs', 'Hindoos' or even 'black-bellied bastards' - the standard terms of the British soldier and often of the British Service Officer."¹⁰⁰ Masters, after going through the old books and memoirs, imagines that the increasing colour bar and the Englishman's initial aversion was from "the Indian customs and habits, especially those connected with Hinduism, and that he gradually transferred this feeling to the colour of the Indian's skin because, whereas the former could be explained, the latter could not, and thus was indefensible."¹⁰¹

V. Longer, in his book, *Red-coats to Olive Green*, describes that the Indian Army reflected the staunchest imperial attitude under the British Raj. "It remained the close preserve of the British even to the extent that, apart from the Indian Medical Service, no Indian was admitted to the Officer cadre of Indian Army till very nearly the end of the Great war and even after. In the steel framework of the British Empire in India the Indian Army was made of the hardest steel."¹⁰² He writes that the Indian sepoys were getting Rs. 6/- per month as salary while his European counterpart was getting Rs. 40/-

- in 1764. The King's Officers were kept above the Company Officers even though they had more number of years of experience.

John Masters himself admits that this kind of treatment did exist. He writes in his fictional biography, *Bugles and a Tiger*, "some British regiments treated their attached Indian Army subalterns like dirt. One even made them sit at a separate table in mess." He explains how the army was segregated based on the colour and nationality basis. He writes:

> These references to the 'British Army' and 'Indian Army' need explanation; for the difference between the two was fundamental factor in the social and military life of imperial India. There were two distinct bodies of armed soldiers in India at that time: first, large detachments of the British Army; and the second, the whole of the Indian Army.103

One of the common beliefs in the imperial mind about India was that Indians cared little for morality and ethics. Saros Cowasjee writes in the introduction to his book, *Stories from the Raj*, that, "The Indians, with a few exceptions, rarely appear as fully realised characters. Though in life they may have filled more varied roles, in much of the early fiction they appear as cooks, bearers, ayahs, fakirs and too frequently as thugs and thieves. No wonder Edward Thompson felt that the Indians have been abused in Anglo-Indian fiction - an opinion with which many Indians, especially Hindus, would agree."104

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Lord Curzon believed that England could remain as the greatest power as long as she ruled India, and no sooner she lost India, England would straight away drop to the level of a third rate power. He was of the conviction that the inferiority complex in the Indian mind was his strength to hold on the post of the Viceroy. This sense of superiority grew out of the colonial psychology. Curzon felt that there was no Indian, in the whole of the subcontinent, who would befit his position. Macaulay was not far behind. In his famous Minutes of Education (1835), he dismissed all Oriental literature as intrinsically inferior to the Western literature and felt that the British should train a class of Indians who 'would be Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals and in intellect.'

John Masters feels that the line dividing service from dominion is thin and wavering. He says that some who thought to be lords of creation ended by sacrificing themselves for their servants. He adds: "If we loved and served, we were the heralds of some truer service yet to come in the world, running our blind courses in the darkness of our time and throwing a little light in a few places. We were intruders, yet there are illogical necessities in history, which India understands, because India sees no truth in logic. We were imperialists, and perhaps it was for empire that my uncle Dandy died at Festrubert and Sikhs died across his feet."105

The Anglo-Indian fiction stands out as a testimony to the Imperial attitude. The mask of a 'master' narrowed his vision, thus preventing him from understanding the realities of the culture of the natives. The gap persisted till their exit. Most of the Anglo-Indian fiction gives us sufficient clues to a kind of lop-sided approach to the Indian life.

The attitude is described in different phrases such as 'Prospero-Caliban', 'father-child', 'master-servant', 'teacher-student' etc. Anglo-Indian fiction reflects all these qualities. Bagban Prakash comments that "despite continuous exposure to the 'Natives' through various means and manners, the writers had hardly any sympathetic insight into the lives and minds of the colonised Indian. Their work form a compendium of stereo types about the natives and the list is a depressing familiarity."106

Authors like Rudyard Kipling, Edward Thompson, E.M.Forster, George Orwell or Sir Edwin Arnold and many others were considered to be the soft advocates of the cause for Indian Independence. But the post-colonial critics insist that even these writers were not free from the sympathy for the imperial cause. There was a kind of a dilemma in them, which they were unable to resolve for themselves. Edward Said comments on Kipling's *Kim* and says that there was a portrayal of 'antithetical' relationship between India and England.

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He says:

Kipling's novel *Kim*, for example, occupies a very special place in the development of the English novel and in late Victorian society, but its picture of India exists in a deeply antithetical relationship with the development of the movement for Indian independence.\(^{107}\)

Talking about Edward Thompson's novel *The Otherside of the Medal* (1926), Said accepts that the book is not just powerful and admirable, but deeply symptomatic in two ways. First, because the author admits the paramount importance of culture in consolidating imperial feeling and secondly, the process of history making is tied to the extension of the empire. Said lauds him as one of the earliest and most persuasive metropolitan who attempts to understand imperialism as a cultural affliction for the coloniser as well as the colonised. "But he is bound to the nation that there is 'a truth' to events involving both sides that transcend them. Indians 'lie' because they are not free, whereas 'he' (and others oppositional figures like him) can see the truth because they are free and because they are English."\(^{108}\)

K.R. Mahishi, in his article, *Sir Edwin Arnold and India*, writes that despite Arnold's love for India and her culture he was an imperialist because he demanded 'the quiet continuance' of the British rule for at least a century to complete the task of 'good government and profound peace' to the natives.

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108. Ibid; p - 249
Sir E. Arnold’s views on the political relations of India and England show him to be, despite his love of India and her culture, an imperialist, albeit an imperialist of an integral part of the British Empire; he did not envisage the end of the British Rule in India for at least a century.109

Similarly Meena Shirwadkar wonders how these British authors could describe Indian women when they could not have possibly seen them from close quarters because of the social restrictions imposed on the Indian women. And even if they had seen a few, whom they came to know, they could be either rich, Westernised, or Christened or some servant women, who did not display the nature of the majority of Indian women. Most of these writers ended up in portraying a dim view of Indian women. They only saw them from a narrow, biased angle of the ruling race. She quotes an example from the novels of Fennimore Cooper, and says that they (women) resemble exotic flowers, wilting on the hot plains of India, and flirting in the world of the hill stations.”110

But, on other end, the Anglo-Indian fiction also shows us the signs of deeply hidden admiration and attraction of the coloniser towards the colonised though it is not openly admitted, sometimes, for the fear of losing the Englishman’s superior status. John Strachey analyses the situation of the sudden dissolution of the Empire and its tremendous impact. The sentiment expresses a genuine love of some subject people. “It is nearly always a

possessive kind of love. And we all know the tragedies to which possessive love leads in family life. The same tragedies await the expression of this kind of love by the old matriarch of the Commonwealth.\textsuperscript{111}

John Masters bursts out with emotion to proclaim his liking for India. He writes:

\begin{quote}
To hell with justification. Let someone else worry about that. I was in love with India, and she'd have the hell of a job getting rid of me. Men everywhere - kind men and cruel men; some women - the Grukha girl, faces and fingers, caressings and scoldings. The regiment, a part of whose honour I held in my hand. India, which was not my mother but my lusty, disinterested mistress.\textsuperscript{112}
\end{quote}

Ketaki Dyson shows how the British community was deeply indebted to the Indian women who served as wet nurses and 'ayahs'. They sacrificed their own necessities for the sake of their masters' children. Dyson writes:

\begin{quote}
The British community in India were specially indebted to the Indian women who worked as wet-nurses, without whose assistance the British could not have reared their children in the Indian climate in those days. The lives of the children of the wet-nurses themselves were often sacrificed so that the white infants being breast-fed by them might survive.\textsuperscript{113}
\end{quote}

She cautions at the same time that "without some detailed knowledge of the interaction between the two countries it is easy, especially in the intellectual climate of our times, to fall into the acceptance of a stereotyped

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\textsuperscript{111} John Strachey, \textit{The End of Empire}, National Book Trust Govt. of India, 1959, p -241
\textsuperscript{113} Ketaki K. Dyson, \textit{A Various Universe}, OUP, India, 1978, p - 61
\end{flushright}
'colonial' image of Indo-British relationship, a relationship between the exploited and exploiter. Exploitation was real enough, but so was mutual enrichment.\textsuperscript{114}

Not only that, the diversity in Indian flora and fauna charmed the British with a magical spell. They loved hunting and adventure. In fact, India was described as the land of elephants and tigers. Elephant ride was considered to be an opportunity of a lifetime for the visitors. So also hunting of a tiger in the Indian forests. Hunting lists top on the imperial taste. Almost all the writings invariably bring in the scenes of hunting the tigers, snake charming and palanquin rides. The Anglo-Indian fiction would be incomplete without these references to hunting and adventure. Killing of a tiger satisfied the imperial ego of machismo. Jim Corbett, for example, is worshipped as a hero in some parts of Northern India even today. John Masters describes his own experience of hunting a tiger in February 1938 and recollects how the natives sung a song in his praise. Other things that include the love-hate list of the imperial psyche are; heat and dust of India, monsoon and diseases like plague and malaria.

Thus, we observe that the terms like 'imperialism' and 'colonialism' are broadly used to convey a sense of domination, assertion, superiority, greed, annihilation, suppression, humiliation etc. And underneath this attitude we

\textsuperscript{114}Ketaki K. Dyson, \textit{A Various Universe}, OUP, India, 1978, p - 25
also see a strange yet a unique kind of love-hate, dominate-ruminate, respect-regret and accept-reject relationship. All this is a part of the 'colonial psyche', developed out of the imperialistic attitude.

Explaining the need to study the Anglo-Indian Fiction, M.K. Naik writes:

The co-existence of fact and fancy in a novel would not normally be a matter demanding special attention, since novelists have never been adverse to the use of autobiographical material. But the special interest in so called "Anglo-Indian" fiction for Indian readers, is the unavoidable conjecture regarding the possible presence of actual happenings whereby the author has betrayed himself. True appreciation of prose fiction does not seriously concern itself with whether a novel's narrative actually happened or not. But we often read Anglo-Indian novels, even when they are inferior as literature, because of the natural curiosity to know what Englishmen have thought of this country which we shared for two centuries and also because we must try and understand the whole mystique of Britain's involvement with India - an involvement which no social scientist has yet explained away satisfactorily. The novelist, even amidst his failures as an artist in fiction, may offer us a clue, which the historian or the economist or the political scientist has not yet been able to offer.  

The following chapters make an attempt to study these imperialistic attitudes manifested by some of the colonial English characters towards the colonised Indian characters in the Indian novels of John Masters and how these characters and themes fit into the framework.