Chapter –5: Narrative Analysis : Discourse

The Householder- the novel

The novels and short stories of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala stand in a unique relation to Indian literature in English. A Girl born in Germany, brought up in England and married in India to a Parsi architect always remained an outsider and looked at Indian society from the same position. The Punjabi family of her husband’s business partner gave her the opportunity to look into Indian middle class which always premised her fiction. She always utilized her vantage point of an outsider among India’s bourgeoisie to her advantage. Critics have compared her novels to those of Jane Austen because of her propensity for middle-class characters and the associated theme of love, marriage and family life...Her foreignness gives her another artistic advantage. She can explore with considerable assurance the themes of the expatriate in India and the mixed marriage, of Indian and European. Her novels are never about abstraction such as racial conflict or racial integration: they are about human beings- in love or in marriage- … (Williams 9-10).

Her overt concern with social status, customs, traditions and propensity for being a social satirist also place her in the company of Jane Austen. Haydn Moore Williams believes that though Ruth Prawer Jhabvala herself is a European but she belongs to the tradition to which P. Meadows Taylor, Kipling and John Masters belong. Her close personal experience of Indian life and her creative cult of a novelist take her nearer to indigenous Indian writers like R.K. Naraynan and Raja Rao. Khushwant Singh cites her, together with R.K. Naraynan, as a fine interpreter of contemporary India in fiction.

Whereas Jhabvala brings on the surface the inherent comedy that lies in the Indian customs, she observes from very close quarters their life style, habits and mannerism; “awareness of importance of food and of the rituals of its preparation and consumption in the lives of Indian families” (Gooneratne 3). The first glimpse of Indian family we have is in To Whom She Will, as Pandit Ram Bahadur Saxsena’s family sits down in his ornate dining room to an elaborate Indian meals served by
well-trained servants; a scene later contrasted with another in which the heads of refugee families sit together in the courtyard and have their meals together. But it is only in *The Householder* that Jhabvala has, for the first time in her creative career, focused on lower middle-class people for whom “money plays an important part in its absence” (Agarwal 46).

Though Jhabvala sometimes banks upon Hindu ideology for her narratives, whether it is *The Householder* or *A Backward Place* yet she never overtly criticizes it. She leaves it to her characters and readers to accept it or reject it in different phases of life in which they find themselves. There is of course an overt interplay of ‘East’ and ‘West’ in her novels, which she is careful never to conceal. Her narrative, in contrast to Narayan’s fairy-tale like, is quite realistic and not eccentric. Whatever disturbances come to trigger off the action come from within, never from outside.

*The Householder*, for example, is based on the second *ashrama* (stage) in Hindu view of life i.e. *Grihishtha ashrama* – the stage of householder. It concerns “an ordinary young man’s slow attainment of a status of the householder” (Agarwal 41). When Prem is married to Indu he is still fumbling to find his feet in his personal and professional life. He wants to be impressive just like his father and wants Indu, his wife, to imitate his mother while treating her husband. Prem whose ideas on marriage “have been shaped primarily by his mother’s exemplary deference to her late husband, applies ancient rule and childhood memory to present experience with amusing results” (Gooneratne 131).

In the process of attaining manhood, when he is struggling as a householder, he is enamoured with the life of a religious guru free of all corrosive worldly cares. He meets Hans, a German, who, along with other Europeans, is practicing yoga. This boy who has just stepped into the *Grihasta Ashrama* from the *Brahimcharya*, escaping the demands of the householder, wants to slip away into the third stage. But gradually he realizes that his desire to be a holy man is driven by his avoidance of responsibility. Eventually he, capitulating to the traditional role, comes back to his sybaritic wife, Indu. Prem has grown enough to get pleasure from what he has and in performing the role of the householder. “Led by her Prem is able, by the end
of the novel, to shed the umbilical cord...and formulate his own ideas about the marital relationship” (Chakravarty 128).

Such incidents obviously punctuate the narrative with his struggle while he is progressing to be a ‘man’. Ruth has depicted this progress with a touch of irony and humour. The strength of Jhabvala’s art “lies in its faithful exemplification of the process in terms of authentic character and situation” (Agarwal 41). Both Prem and Indu are like little cherubs made at the back of their bed who have been tied into nuptial knot-a situation they are mentally not mature enough to be in. That Ruth, a European woman, is presenting this situation with objectivity, without making any comments or revealing her intentions though insinuating ironic tone, cannot be denied. “The humour with which Ruth Jhabvala traces Prem’s ‘progress’ is thus given a delicate ironic edge” (Gooneratne 129).

Ruth Jhabvala, who herself is looking at the Indian society as an outsider, has given this novel an exterior omniscient third person narrator that not only knows what is happening in the outside space but also knows what the characters are thinking or feeling at a particular point of time. In the beginning of the novel, when Prem is sitting at the table and evaluating the answer scripts of his students, he, instead of sitting on the floor which, according to the narrator, would have been more comfortable, prefers to sit at a table because “he felt there was a certain dignity about sitting at the table; his father had always sat a table when correcting papers” (TH 7). Narrator goes into the mind of the character and brings on the surface his feelings and thoughts that cross his mind. Prem’s feeling that sitting at the table looks more dignified throws light on an important aspect of Prem’s personality that he has not yet come to terms with himself and is self-conscious about the way he behaves and acts in his daily life. His inability to come to terms with himself is also reinforced by the narrator when we are told that Prem, during his sojourn outside, thought of buying raisins but couldn’t as he was in a dilemma.

Sometimes he thought yes and sometimes he thought no; not because of the money, but because of Indu. He considered that if he bought a bag for himself, he would have to bring one for her too. But he felt shy of doing so. He had never bought her a gift, and he did not know in what way to offer it to her. In the end he bought just one bag of
nuts and raisins and ate it by himself, throwing away the paper before he reached home. But he ate it so quickly and guiltily that he did not enjoy it at all (TH 7).

His confusion over the matter of buying nuts and raisins; his wondering how he would offer it to his wife and his feeling shy of gifting an eatable to his wife show that he is yet to grow as a man. At this point, the attitude of the narrator, which is looking at the institution of marriage in India from a critical vantage point (that itself is quite analogous to the author’s own vantage point), becomes clear. The vantage point of the narrator is analogous to the author’s position as she herself, being an outsider, also looks at Indian society quite critically. In Indian society, as portrayed in the novel, young men are made enter into the institution of marriage. The only criterion behind the decision is the chronological age of the boy without considering whether he is mentally ready or has grown up enough to enter into a relationship and play a householder or not; second, the wife is also chosen by the parents with whom the young man is expected to live happily. Prem is also a victim of this ideological structure of the Indian society. He is mentally so young that he rather feels embarrassed at his wife’s pregnancy because now “everybody would know what he did with her at night in the dark” (TH 8). It is so difficult for him to tell his friend about his wife’s pregnancy that when he was going to tell him “his ears grew hot” (TH 18).

Another aspect of Indian marriages that the narrator–focalizer is critically looking at is the economics of the life of a householder. Both Prem and Raj are finding it difficult to meet the economic demands of the household. Raj is worried that from the next year his daughter would start going to school. That would mean an increase in his expenditures. If Raj is worried about the anticipated expenses of sending his daughter to a school, Prem is worried that he is paying Rs. 45/- as rent and his wife is expecting a baby. Baby’s birth would mean increase in his expenses too. His worries are reinforced when Raj adds that his baby drinks a lot of milk and he wonders that “how quickly a baby can grow out of its clothes. And as soon as it starts walking, there are shoes also and those go even quicker” (TH 19). He feels so burdened by the financial aspect of being a householder that he thinks it is him who has a legitimate right to sigh, not his wife. “‘Then why do you sigh?’ He paced the
room in some agitation. ‘It is I who should sigh. If you know how many worries I have’…” (TH 21). Prem is so worried about the financial side of raising a child that-

The baby did not occur to him very often. When he thought of it, he thought of it more in connection with money troubles and how its arrival would necessitate a higher salary or a lower rent or, better still, both. Only sometimes he wondered vaguely whether it would be a boy or a girl” (TH 36).

While narrating these inner thoughts of Prem, the attitude of the Narrator-Focalizer is quite obvious. Prem is shown intimidated by the economics of raising the child so much that he is not wondering whether it would be a boy or a girl. The thought of having a baby gives him no joy; it rather raises certain fears in his mind that he is too young (mentally) to grapple with. The attitude of the narrator seems to imply that when such young householders find the burden of running a family too heavy for them, they find refuge in spiritualism. Troubled by the demands of playing a householder, Prem goes to Swami ji and finds solace and pleasure in his company as for a moment he forgets all his worries there. Troubled by the worries of Grihstha Ashrama, he seeks happiness in escaping into the third stage of life i.e. Vanprastha Ashrama in which one renounces the world and contemplates on life. He finds such a great joy in forgetting his worries that when he comes back home after meeting Swami ji -

He could not remember how he got home. He felt light headed, and kept laughing to himself. Probably people who met him thought he was drunk. In a way that was how he felt… he lay at home in bed, with Indu fast asleep beside him, and felt as if he were floating, he was so light and clear and happy. He thought yes, this is how one must live—with love and laughter and song and thoughts of God. All his former worries about rent, his rise in salary, his lack of authority as teacher and husband, were noting but a thin scum floating on top of a deep well of happiness and satisfaction. Nothing, he thought, could ever trouble him again (TH 57).
But his state of bliss was transitory because when he felt attracted towards Indu and even made advances towards her, as she slept, but she “jerked him away and muttered, ‘leave me alone’…” (TH 58). Prem was shaken out of his divine but transient joy. The attitude of the Narrator, once again, is critical and ironical towards Prem and tends to ridicule him.

Another aspect of Prem’s personality that has been explored is his failure as a professional also. He is not a successful teacher and fails to impose discipline among his students. He lacks confidence to face his students, his colleagues like Mr. Chaddha and also his boss, Mr. Khanna. Intimidated Prem, at every point of time, adopts his father’s mien. He is struggling to establish himself as a teacher as well and remembering his father words – “Put all your strength into doing the things you don’t like to do” (TH 9) - he grew in conviction that he must talk to his principal for a rise in his salary, but the weak man inside failed him on the occasion as he kept talking about his colleague and friend, Sohan Lal. The scene of his meeting the Principal on this issue has been narrated in dramatic mode, otherwise most of the events so far have been narrated in descriptive mode. When Prem was being scolded by Mrs. Khanna there, the omniscient narrator tells us that Prem was counting petals of each flower on the rug and wondering why there were seven petals as no flower has seven petals. This ordinary seeming description by the narrator also throws light on weak personality of his character i.e. how easily he can be shaken out of his confidence which also comes to him quite occasionally.

Maintaining its objective vantage point and trying to be devoid of any prejudice against Prem (or the male counter part in Indian marriages), the Narrator-Focalizer throws light on another aspect of Prem’s personality. At the same time, Prem is portrayed equally sensitive to his inner thoughts and reflects on his terms with Swami ji. His contemplation was triggered off when he shared his sense of failure with Sohan Lal after the tea party. Sohan Lal did not display any ambition in his disposition and seemed to have reconciled with his reality. Prem wondered whether this lack of ambition was good at this stage of life or not as his father had taught him to strive harder to achieve one goal after another. Following the Swami ji, the lack of ambition would mean renunciation of worldly ambitions and desires. Critical Prem tried to analyse Sohan Lal’s submission by comparing his expressions
that he wore in the tea party to please his principal with Sohan Lal’s carefree and
gaiety outlook when they had visited Swami Ji. Prem wondered - “Why, if he had
truly renounced, should he be anxious to please Mr. Khanna?” This gave Prem an
opportunity to analyse “an inconsistency in his own attitude as well.” He
remembered that he had experienced a sense of exhilaration in the company of
Swami ji which he thought was the pure joy, but the very next moment, when he
came back to his material world, he was tormented by the thoughts of high rent and
low salary. The outcome of this self-contemplation was the realization of the truth
that-

He was not ready for that yet. Perhaps if he had been unmarried; or if
his wife had not been pregnant; or if it had been unexpected of him to
earn a living; then perhaps it would have been easy to go to the
swami and sing hymns of praise. But now he was caught up in the
world. He knew it was important for him to improve his position, and
by this he meant mainly, at present, his financial position (TH 77).

The concomitant of this self-churning was that Prem started growing as a
man and attained better understanding of his duties as a householder. After slipping
into the third stage of life, Prem comes back into the second ashrama i.e. the
householder and is growing into a man strong enough to shoulder his
responsibilities. On sharing Mrs. Seigal’s worries about her daughter, who is not
happily married, Prem understands that every one has his/her own sufferings. This
helps him in reconciling with his troubles and he realizes that “there was no need for
him to be oppressed by them” (TH 81). But his sense of relief is broken next
morning when he finds his mother quarrelling. Every time Prem tries to reconcile
with his condition, he is shaken out of the state of self-assurance. His inner self
moves back and forth between turbulence and peace. This technique adopted in the
narrative helps to show how Prem is growing into a mature man and also influences
the pace of the narrative. Omniscient narrator following the descriptive narration is
going into the soul of the character and opening before the readers what is
happening in his consciousness whether it is his spiritual conflict regarding Swami
ji, his realization of suffering as a ubiquitous phenomenon, his dwelling much on his
happy memories or missing his wife when she had gone away with her uncle.
Gradually he becomes mature enough to accept all the worries of being a householder as long as he was in his wife’s company. “At least with such burdens one was someone- a family man, a member of society…” (TH 92). But the demands of household continue to intimidate him and whenever he was tormented by the burdens of the world, he found refuge in Swami ji. Gradually Prem learns the lesson that the stage of renunciation “should only come when the man has passed through his stage of householder (husband, worker and father.) This is why Prem must reluctantly turn away from the Swami and get back to his flat, his job, and his pregnant wife” (Williams 38). After passing through different stages of struggle, Prem grows as a householder. By the time novel finishes, he has learnt to bear the cross that goes with being a householder. That is why during the wedding ceremony of Sohan Lal’s brother “he looked at the glum bridegroom and smiled with superior knowledge” (TH 133).

The way Prem has been characterized reveals the attitude of the narrator. “Prem seems to be achieving nothing: his employer and his landlord are obviously exploiting him, his students do not respect him…He takes himself very seriously” (Gooneratne 124) whereas no body else takes him as seriously as he takes himself. His friend, Raj has lost interest in the days they had shared, his students do not respect him and Indu is “inclined to deliberately thwart his wishes” (Gooneratne 124). This seeming comic portrayal of Prem carries the undertones of pain of a young uninitiated man. H. Summerfield compares Ruth P. Jhabvala to Jane Austen for wit and Anton Chekhov because her “humour is tinged with melancholy” (Summerfield 85).

The Narrator retains its critical attitude even while portraying interest of Europeans in Indian spirituality. In the beginning when Hans meets Prem for the first time, he is extremely excited about India and its spirituality. He finds everything about India so spiritual that he opines- “we can wash off our dirty materialism when we come here to your India. Off with it!” (TH 30) He has come to India because he had had a dream about an Indian sage who was wearing only his loincloth sitting under a palm tree. Hans was captivated by ascetic’s eyes brimming with love and compassion.
“...His eyes, oh his eyes!’ Hans called raising his hands in rapture... ‘Such pity, such kindness there in those eyes. Such love. And they are looking at me. Yes, at me. Yes, at me. Hans Loewe’ he indicated himself with his forefinger.’ And what do they say to me, those marvellous eyes?...

‘Their message is simple,’ said Hans. ‘It is only this: “Come, Hans”;’ and he smiled, showing his tiny teeth and his gums. ‘Yes, only come, Hans. But it is enough. I take the rucksack on the back, I am here...” (TH 32).

Other Europeans inhabitants in the house Hans was living in were so fascinated by Yoga that Hans’s landlady asked Prem, on their first meeting, about the yoga he practiced. Hans was ecstatic on having some spiritual experiences he got while practicing yoga and yearned for more. Hans, who finds everything about India so spiritual, mis-reads even worry-stricken Prem lost in contemplation. His excitement about Indian spirituality is a typical disposition that every European tends to show in his early encounter with India. By the end of the narrative, Hans is haunted by the thoughts that he is not growing spiritually. Finally, he decides to leave Delhi for South India in search of a Guru who might help him on his spiritual path. We cannot say with conviction that this over-zealous seeker from Germany is growing spiritually or is in the state of self-delusion as he regards insignificant experiences of yogic exercises as deep spiritual attainments. H. Summerfield sums up Jhabvala’s attempt behind portraying religious gurus in her works. Summerfield opines that

The aspect of Indian civilization furthest removed from the rational empiricist outlook, however, is the country’s rich religious life, with its artistic, philosophical, and devotional components. In recent years certain lightweight gurus, very different from the great figures of Hindu philosophy and holiness, have attracted numerous Western disciples, and since the mid-sixties scathing portraits of such men have enriched Mrs. Jhabvala’s works along with a comic and pitiable parade of their gullible European and American disciples (86).
Prem’s personality is revealed to readers by making his innermost thoughts, his complexes, feelings, fears and struggle with himself available to the readers. It is through the access to his innermost thoughts that the reader comes to know that he is struggling to find his feet both as a man and a teacher. As a husband, he feels shy to express his love for his wife; he feels embarrassed imagining what people would think when they come to know of his wife’s pregnancy; his fear while talking to his Principal; his desiring Mr. Chaddha like confidence; his feeling wanting in confidence when he looked at healthy and robust young students; his missing his mother and father to help him in becoming a householder signify that he is still a boy, a grown up boy who strongly needs his mother. He may not be a suckling infant but still wants to be fed by his wife the way his mother fed him back in Ankhpur. “It would be nice to have her here: she would make the flat more comfortable and homelike and also perhaps she would teach Indu how to cook the dishes he liked” (TH 32). Perhaps, that is why he rejoices in the news of his mother coming to him as his desire to be with his mother would be fulfilled. His desire for his mother, for the food he likes and making his flat comfortable is, in Psychoanalytic terms, a boy’s desire for his mother - the state of ‘plentitude.’ Prem is still longing for the same ‘plentitude’, but the subject of his desire continues to be his mother, not wife. Like a typical victim of Oedipus complex, he ‘imitates his father’ and wants to be respected by Indu the way his father used to be respected by his (father’s) wife. That he imitates his father on every occasion is made obvious as in the beginning, while checking answer scripts of his students, he preferred to sit at a table because his father also used to sit at a table; he draws strength of character and conviction from his father’s words. His sense of lack is so strong that sometimes he wishes to have confidence like Mr. Chaddha. On one occasion, when he was feeling over burdened by the weight of demands of running a household, he confesses, “I can do nothing, I am weak and helpless and need the support of a father” (TH 39). His entire journey of attaining manhood can be seen, in the terms of psychoanalysis, as a process of replacing his mother by his wife as a subject of desire and finally he learns to love his wife as a man.
His weaning begins when his wife goes to her parental house for some days. He writes down his amorous desires in a letter to her which the shy boy in him doesn’t dare post but he starts realizing himself as man.

“...I want to kiss you and kiss you everywhere with my mouth and then I want to be inside you....” (TH 103)

On Indu’s coming back, both Prem and Indu express their love for each other overtly. Even for Indu her feelings are too strong to be controlled and she makes an oblique confession of love –

“Yes, now you have important letters to post! But when I am away, not one line could you write to me, though I waited and waited”- (108)

This is for the first time that she is expressing her love for him in words. When she accepts his first gift of sweets, he kisses her and “she did not push him away, nor did he feel ashamed though it was daytime” (TH 108-09). Because both were brought up in an environment where to express love in broad daylight was considered to be impertinent.

Prem buys a sari for her as a surprise. It is a very important moment in novel. He is coming of age. Indu is replacing his mother in Perm’s heart and she herself is becoming the centre of his affection. It is after having attained this stage that Prem was able to get rid of his mother in a very tactful way. He goes to station to see his mother off. “… He did not wait till the train was out of sight but turned straightway and made his way to the exit...He thought only of getting home as quickly as possible, where Indu would be sitting for him” (60-3). His sending his mother away from his house is the stage when Prem attains his manhood and the subtle umbilical connection between two is finally broken. “Prem’s idyllic discovery of a passionate love of his wife coincides with the end of the hot dry season and the arrival of the monsoon rain” (Williams 39).

On the other hand, while portraying Indu the attitude of the Narrator is not so critical. Indu is given beautiful big eyes on a small face on a long neck. When Indu and Prem debating whether Indu should go back to her mother as Prem’s mother was coming to live with them, Prem said

“‘How can you go away when my mother is coming to visit us?’
‘Why not?’ Indu inquired. The innocence\textsuperscript{20} of her voice as she asked this made him quite angry (TH 23).

Indu is portrayed as “innocent,” but to Prem she appears stupid. Prem finds her wanting in social etiquettes, manners that a wife of a lecturer is supposed to display; she even uses foul language while talking to washer-man; does not show proper manners at the tea party. But, the same young lady gives Prem the idea of asking Seigals to reduce their rent. Prem got astonished at this simple but effective looking suggestion. The one who looks down upon Indu is himself looked down upon by the Narrator–Focalizer. Prem’s prejudice against Indu is wanting in mature perspective as Prem himself is growing as a man. He is shown as a weak, helpless young man who needs the support of his father to be a man. He is a weak man- a man who is “oppressed by a sense of failure” (TH 41). The attitude of the Narrator-Focalizer while portraying Prem and Indu is such that the reader also looks at Prem’s observation and prejudice about Indu quite critically. By being so critical about Prem, who is portrayed with a touch of irony, the narrator is critical about the role of ‘Man’ in the institution of Indian marriages and sympathetic toward the female counterpart. Though Indu remains a half-explored character in the novel, the narrator has very skilfully blended “her schoolgirlish frivolity and her basic emotional superiority to Prem. By the last scenes of the novel she is showing every sign of excellence as a wife” (Williams 38). Whereas Prem, in spite of having grown as a ‘man’ is still a failure as he couldn’t get a raise in the salary nor cold he succeed in getting the rent lowered.

The attitude of the narrator is equally critical even while portraying Prem’s mother who is portrayed as archetypal mother-in-law in Indian society- a woman who speaks a lot and listens less and makes several hypocritical complaints to her son against her daughter-in-law. Prem wrongly thought that coming of his mother would help in making his flat a cosy and comfortable place, but “with his mother staying there, the atmosphere in his flat became rather strained. It seemed to him that both his mother and Indu were waiting for him to resolve the strain, but this he always failed to do” (TH 63). Continuing with the critical strain, the narrator throws light at another aspect of Indian marriages in which the man is supposed to pull two

\textsuperscript{20} Stress mine
carts at a time. Mother, instead of becoming help as Prem thought, became a trouble and an intruder in the private space of Prem and Indu. Prem had to take the precaution of her drawing her into the bedroom if he wanted to talk to her. This is another factor which accelerated Prem’s weaning. Initially he was always missing either his father for strength or his mother for comfort. He wanted to fill the sense of lack, which is there because of some deficiencies in his personality, with his parents. It is when he began to realize the paradoxical role his mother is playing in his married life that he started desiring to get rid of her. His initial response was to run away from the domestic tug of war. He started wishing “he would have never come home in the evenings” (TH 63). He found his refuge in Hans’s party and a few visits to Swami ji. It took him some time to realize the actual remedy. Finally he asked his sister to invite their mother to her so that he could ‘live’ with his wife.

One major technique that has been adopted in the narrative is of juxtaposition for achieving the purpose of comparison. Prem is always comparing his present with his past because of which the narrative dwells also on memory. The technique also helps in unravelling the personality of Prem. In the entire narrative, the comparison is done at different levels. As a struggling householder, Prem frequently compares his married life and respect he commands from his wife with the enviable position his father was holding in the family. Prem also compares his wife with his mother as a wife. As a failed teacher, the noisy atmosphere in Prem’s class is compared with orderly atmosphere in Mr. Chaddha’s class room where students are attentive and listen to his lecture. Prem compares his financial position and worry-ridden life with carefree son of the Seigals. Taking this technique of comparison further, when Prem’s interest in spiritualism is put against Hans’s, we find there are two contrasting motives behind their interest in the similar subject. Prem is trying to escape the responsibilities of household and Hans is seeking realisation of another dimension of human personality. Even during their first meeting, if Hans was showing his zeal in Indian spirituality, Prem wanted to emphasise on material growth that India was trying to achieve through the five-year plans. Another comparison can be made at the linguistic level. If we look at the use of language, the omniscient third person narrator has largely adopted single register which is typical of Indian English yet, at he same time, in order to reinforce the
difference between Prem’s weak and struggling personality and successful men like Mr. Chaddha and Mr. Khanna, the narrator has varied the register also. Mr. Khanna’s diction reflects the confidence and ease that comes with the position he is enjoying in the society and Mr. Chaddha’s register “smacks of Victorian pompousness and of ponderous moral tone. This register is, of course, different from Jhabvala’s own register as a third person narrator” (Shahane 266). The comparison in past and present; personality potentialities as teacher, financial conditions and interest in spiritualism helps, in a way, to summarise the errand of extra-diegetic third person narrator- focalizer in this narrative.

**The Householder – the Film**

During the process of adaptation, though fabula remains the same, we do find some changes in the narration and techniques of narration when a fabula is transported from one medium to another. There are certain areas where novel has more scope and space to dwell on than a film. These are the areas that make the process of adaptation challenging as well as creative. While making a film, the domain of a filmmaker is circumscribed by limited discourse time of film, demands of the medium itself and the potentials of communication through images, as images constitute the primary mode of communication in a film.

The film begins with a frame which contains the definition of a householder as given by Manu. It states that the order of a householder is the most important as it supports the other three orders of life. It is followed by an extreme long shot showing domes of a mosque in the background and roof tops of various houses on the locality; thus, establishing the locale of Delhi where the action is going to take place. Prem is sleeping on one of the roof tops and Indu is sitting by his side. She is trying to wake him up. The film opens with third person narration, called by Jahn Manfred as Filmic Composition Device (FCD), which introduces the viewer to the locale and the protagonist. The presence of mosque in the background in the establishing shot helps in giving the ambience of Delhi and also suggests that Prem and Indu are a part of multi-ethnic and multi-racial society. The film narrator is narrowing down from the larger canvas of Indian society, which includes Muslims, Christians, Parsees and other communities, to one particular Hindu family. This increases the backdrop of the film narrative and also thickens its cultural matrix.
Prem tells Indu about the invitation card and in the next sequence, Prem and Indu go to attend a wedding party. There at the party while talking to the groom, Prem unlocks his heart before the groom—his silent audience. Entire film, from this point, moves in flash back and the narration is attributed to Prem and the groom becomes the narratee. But cinematic conventions dictate, such narrations (in which the entire narrative is narrated in flash back) are always attributed to the camera and from narratological point of view, the point of view of the narrator or focalization in the movie becomes important for us. The film is narrated by camera or FCD is reiterated as in the entire film, most of the shots are taken from eye-level, also called democratic shot, not from Prem’s subjective position. Perhaps, the screenplay of the film wants to suggest an objective attitude of the filmmaker while narrating Prem’s story, although it is Prem himself who is telling his own story in the cinematic narrative. This objectivity can be attributed to the FCD only; but, otherwise, since the focalizer is present in the cinematic narrative, the presence of character focalizer tends to make it a subjective narrative.

Prem shares with the groom his experiences of playing a householder. That the emphasis on economics of life is laid in the beginning of the movie is reinforced when Prem shares with the groom how he had to deal with various worries on account of less money in his pocket. The objectivity attained in the cinematic narrative is an artistic requirement as well because it allows FCD to comment on various aspects of the institution of Indian marriages. The film tends to make sharp comment on the economic aspect of a householder’s life and the kind of role groom’s mothers play in Indian social structure. The film looks at these two aspects of a householder; but its primary focus is on economics as it is made clear in the definition of the householder given in the *Manu Smriti*. Unlike the novel, the cinematic narrative doesn’t dwell as much on Prem’s inner thoughts, memory and psychology.

The first shot that shows Prem’s domestic world shows him having his dinner on a very ordinary cot and his wife cooking in the kitchen. Frame 5.1 shows that the walls are neither properly plastered nor white washed. Their married life is circumscribed in a small room shown in the frame 5.2. The simple room has only a bed and a study table. A part of the room is cordoned off to be used as dressing
room. Both Indu and Prem are wearing ordinary clothes. The less than ordinary furniture and house tell about the material conditions in which Prem has started his married life.

It is in the backdrop of his economic problems that Prem’s struggle and growth as a householder begins which also determines the attitude of the narrator. Struggling Prem finds himself caught in a hostile world where nobody understands how difficult it is for a young man to play a householder. Prem feels that he had no worries when he was just a student. Now he has been married to a woman. Prem’s feeling that “he has been married” is an important aspect of Indian marriages as portrayed in the film in which a man is married not because he wants to, but because he has attained the marriageable age. The narrator has emphasized more on the economics of marriage. Prem while talking to Sohan Lal says- “It is not easy to be a married man and support a wife and parent.” At this point, Prem broods over his past and feels he was extremely happy as a student. The burden of financial restraints is so heavy that Indu hesitates to see a doctor as it would cost money. Even when Prem hears about his wife being pregnant, instead of getting excited, he is worried about impending expenditure. It is out of this desperation that he shouts at Indu.

Following the technique of juxtaposition in the novel, in the film too, Prem, a struggling householder, is juxtaposed with Prem, a struggling teacher. Continuing with the technique of juxtaposition, the atmosphere of perfect discipline and silence in Mr. Chaddha’s class room is juxtaposed with Prem’s class where students are not concentrating on Prem’s lecture. The shot begins with Mr. Chaddha’s class room and tracks and pans to Prem’s; this puts two class rooms in sharp contrast. His students are not listening to him attentively. The scene begins with Mr. Chaddha’s
class room where there is perfect discipline and silence (Frame 5.3). The camera starts tracking towards Prem’s class and from a position central to Mr. Chaddha and Prem’s class room, it pans from Mr. Chaddha’s class room to Prem’s class room (Frame 5.4 and 5.5); and in the final frame 5.6, the atmosphere in Prem’s class is shown where students are moving and not paying attention to what Prem is teaching them. If in frame-5.3, students are shown looking at their teacher and listening to him attentively; in frame -5.6, Prem’s students are shown busy in their mischiefs and not paying any attention to Prem.

Another complex that Prem suffers from is his guilt over entertaining amorous thoughts. As narrated again and again in the novel, in film it is suggested only once in the beginning of the analepsis. In frame 5.7 Indu is towelling her hair after bath and Prem is evaluating answer scripts of his students. Indu pulls the cloth which is used as curtain to cordon off the small part from the rest of the room, frame 5.8 shows Prem looking at Indu’s silhouette behind the sheet when she is removing her sari. Prem looks at her and the camera, which initially is capturing the whole room with Indu’s silhouette in the background and Prem sitting at the bed, gradually zooms in on Prem and close-up shot shows him having regrets to have looked at her.
in that condition (frame 5.9). His expressions tell that he is ashamed of himself, but soon he, turning his eyes towards Indu, steals a look at her when she is putting on her blouse (frame 5.10). In the novel, the omniscient narrator overtly states his feelings of guilt on account of erotic thoughts and once again he steals a look at Indu; but in the film, though we have subjective narration, there is no-voice over even to tell what he was thinking at that point of time. It is only suggested through images. On the sound track, we hear some diegetic sounds like the sound of water running into a bucket, voice of news reader on the radio. But for these two diegetic sounds, there is no other sound in the entire scene. The silence on the part of characters and absence of non-diegetic sound, the use of close-up and point of view shot suggest what was going on in Prem’s mind.

This is where the cinematic narrative makes another minor but important deviation from the novel. The novel states that Prem decided to work sitting at a table because his father also used to work sitting at a table; but in the film, he is shown evaluating the answer scripts while sitting on the bed itself. His penchant to imitate his father and to draw strength from his father is strongly stated in the novel; whereas the cinematic narrative doesn’t give much space to this characteristic in his
personality. It is only while talking to Sohan Lai that Prem quotes his father’s words that one should do, what ever one does, with conviction and courage.

The cinematic narrative doesn’t explore much the thoughts ever going on in Prem’s consciousness. The emphasis on memory is not as much laid in the film as in the novel; in the film, Prem’s missing his father’s home and the native town is revealed through dialogues not images and Prem as a struggling young man, who is yet to grow in confidence, is dwelt on more in detail in the novel than in the film. For example, in the beginning of the novel it is mentioned that Prem, while evaluating answer scripts of his students, prefers to sit at the table because his father had always worked sitting at a table and it also looks more authoritative; second, he was also confused whether or not he should purchase raisins for Indu. Later, he felt guilty when he ate all the raisins himself as he was feeling shy to give something to her, third, when he went to see the Principal to request for a hike in his salary and he was scolded by Mrs. Khanna. At that time, it is narrated in the novel that Prem was looking down at the carpet and counting flowers with seven petals. Such thoughts and other minor but revealing incidents are not included in the film. The absence of which makes this narrative different. The novel gives more emphasis and space to memory and psychology of Prem. To carry the same psychological overtones and suggestion in the cinematic narrative, in my understanding, was the main challenge while adapting this novel into a film. What made filmmaker take his decisions while adapting this novel are not known to me; but this is where film adaptations allow themselves to be studied either as a different text or as an interpretation of the source novel. Prem’s point of view and narration makes the film narrative little confessional and at the same time, autobiographical in mode; but in the process, the functions the third person omniscient narrator performs in the novel has not been performed in the film.

That Prem repeatedly admits that he is missing his home very much proves that he is yet to grow as a man. The beginning of analepsis shows Prem as a man who is struggling to come to terms with his role of a householder. He wants his wife to cook like his mother, wants her to keep the house tidy and complains a lot about the hard work he is doing and believes that it is his legitimate right to sigh not his wife’s. A mid shot showing Indu in the fore-ground and scolding Prem in the
background shows how sad Indu feels. In the first four minutes of the analepsis, camera shows Prem in the foreground and Indu in the background and vice-versa, hinting at the typical Indian see-saw relation between husband and wife. With the help of overlap technique of editing, the narrative gives a glimpse of their domestic life encumbered with quarrels. In this marriage, it is not only Prem who feels homesick; Indu, too, like any other newly wedded bride misses her home very much. She has not found her companion in Prem who himself feels homesick. The sequence showing Indu’s daily routine full of boredom begins with the diegetic sound of a running fan which is accompanied by non-diegetic sound of background music played on Sarod. Indu is reading a book, leaves it, goes and looks into the mirror; reads Shakespeare’s verse hanging on the wall, leaves it in between; picks up odd things from Prem’s study table and finally broods over her joyful past in her village. The background music changes the mood and finally, when narrative comes back into Indu’s present, the diegetic sound of the running fan is heard once again. The emptiness and boredom of her daily routine is suggested by making a trivial sound of fan so conspicuous and important in the sequence.

Indu decides to look for company in her landlady and shares with Mrs. Seigal her inner thoughts. Her brief meeting with her landlady also establishes the contrast between the two families. Indu’s landlady, playing an indulgent mother, gives her son some rupees for his movie; whereas Indu’s husband, on the other hand, is so poor that he cannot afford to buy wool to enable her to pursue her hobby of knitting. When Prem comes to know about her pregnancy, instead of getting excited over the news, he is worried how he would meet expenses of raising a child. This results in an argument between Prem and Indu. Sound, once again, plays an important role in narration in the scene when the argument between Prem and Indu is going on. Prem is shown having an argument with Indu, but no dialogue is heard. Irate Indu, while doing daily chores, walks very fast on the rooftop and Prem, like a helpless man, follows her. Though Prem is almost scolding her in the entire scene but there is only non-diegetic background music available on the sound track, not what Prem is saying to Indu. There are little dialogues in the scene. Whatever dialogues are given in the scene are there in the novel. The heat of the argument is suggested through fast rhythmic music and gestures of the characters. Out of
desperation Prem threatens Indu that he would call in his mother to ‘teach’ her how to respect him, how to talk to him. Finally, angry wife is mollified when he brings laddoos for her.

Besides economics, the other aspect of the life of a householder which is thrown light in the film is dominance of parents, especially the mother’s in the entire composition of the relationship. She has special affection to shower on her son, but for her daughter-in-law she always shows a stiff attitude. The moment she enters Prem’s house, she inspects the room and complains that Indu’s parents have given very little dowry. She makes very personal comments on Indu’s pregnancy. She says that Indu doesn’t show much. Prem tries to comfort Indu by saying that she is behaving like this because she is tired after a journey. In this power relation, Prem is caught between two poles one being his mother and the second being his wife. The triangular relation between three of them is suggested, as shown in the frame 5.11, immediately on mother’s coming to their house.

The frame 5.11 beautifully articulates the power politics between Indu and Prem’s mother and also shows Prem’s position in the archetypal battle between daughter-in-law and mother-in-law. As soon as Prem’s mother enters the house, she wears stern looks for Indu and Indu’s dislike for her mother-in-law is also apparent on her face. In this battle Prem has been pushed back and becomes the third angle of the triangle of power politics. The subject of the battle is in the background and two claimants and rivals are shown in the foreground. Prem’s mother is either scolding Indu or instructing her like a strict teacher, but hardly ever talks to her like her mother or a companion especially when she is pregnant. At the same time, Prem’s mother makes hypocritical complaints about the tea and Indu to Prem. Prem’s mother is always shedding hypocritical tears to win her son’s sympathy so that she
can make her son instruct his wife little more sternly. If he pacifies his crying wife, the next moment he has to pacify his mother. He oscillates between his mother and his wife. Cinematically his position is made clear in the sequence when Indu shuts herself in the bathroom and his mother is pretending to cry. In the entire scene, Prem’s mother is sitting in other corner of the room shown in the background of the screen and the bathroom, where Indu has shut herself in, is in the foreground. Prem is moving from foreground to background and vice-versa signifying his oscillating between his mother and his wife. In the next shot, following this scene of domestic life, Prem is shown sitting at the window with Indu’s voice over. The shot (frame 5.12) is taken from the outside showing Prem looking sad imprisoned behind the domestic bars and Indu’s words are reverberating in his mind. By using frame within frame technique (first larger frame is given by the camera and the second frame is given by the window), Prem’s feeling imprisoned is reinforced.

When Indu goes to her parents’ house, Prem’s mother tries to woo her son by cooking all the dishes he likes. He writes her a letter, but has to tear it into pieces when his mother enters the room. He shares with Sohan Lal that he has started missing his wife. During the scene, when Prem is writing Indu a letter and even when he is sharing his inner feelings with Sohan Lal, Prem is shown sad and on the sound track is heard a melancholic composition being played on Sarangi. This is how two events though occurring at two different places at different times, owing to their emotive quality, are connected to each other through the same non-diegetic sound (background music).

It is at this stage that the troubled young man and someone who failed on every front of life is introduced to another aspect of life; another stage of life that must follow the stage of householder. Prem because of his distressed state is about to make the mistake of jumping straight on to the next stage. Spirituality to such distressed persons like Prem becomes a natural refuge where they seek solace, surrendering before the will of God. Prem is so much distressed with his state of affairs that he broods over his past and becomes melancholic. Though long before in the narrative, his emotions are aptly expressed in a song that is embedded in the film when he is sharing his admiration for a film actress named Nimmi. He hums the song picturised on her. The original footage of the song from the film Daag (1952)
has been embedded into the narrative of the film. The lyrics of the song also have a touch of pain and longing for a place free from all worries of the life; thus, suggesting Prem’s inner desire to run away from the worries of a householder in search of peace. Thus, a footage which is taken from another film also becomes a part of this narrative. It is to quench this search for peace that he goes to Swami ji. The ambience of the place where Swami ji sits is different from what is given in the novel. In the novel, Swami ji’s place is somewhere in sinuous narrow lanes, but, in the film, he is given a quiet green place outside the city (frame 5.13). Vaanprastha, the renunciation, the third stage of life must follow the stage of the householder. Prem, because of his distressed state, is about to make the mistake of jumping straight on to the next stage. He goes to Swami ji to escape worries of a householder’s life and is tempted by the glimpse of peace that he finds in Swami ji’s company; but Swami ji helps Prem understand the responsibilities of a householder and sends him back to the world he wants to escape. It is only when Prem realises that he is missing his wife and is initiated into the responsibilities of a householder, that he grows as a lover and a calm householder. Relatively mature Prem is guided by his wife while writing a letter to his sister asking her to call their mother over. He is a caring husband now and enquires after his pregnant wife’s health.

The film portrays the spiritual quest of Earnest, an American differently from that of Prem’s. Prem meets Earnest when he is running on the steps in Jantar Mantar in Delhi. The central pillar (frame 5.14) of the Jantar Mantar is seen by the American as a symbol of spirituality pointing towards the sky. Later, Earnest says to Prem, “I am becoming.” Earnest, Prem’s American friend, is excited about Indian spirituality; his other friends are interested in Yoga and one man looks at Prem’s...
face and finds him splendid. Their attitude towards Indian spirituality is suggested through the setting of their room. The big painting hanging in the room has motif of eyes suggesting the vision (frame 5.15). Even on the frame of the chair Prem is sitting has a design of eyes on it. Thus the motif of eyes and vision is strengthened and reinforced (frame 5.16). Though toward the end of the film, Earnest starts feeling disappointed as he is not growing spiritually the way he wants to. Prem takes him to the Swami ji whose discourse helps Earnest in strengthening his faith in search for the divine light and Prem realizes that his wife must be waiting for him home. Both of them find their ways and they set out on different paths.

Though Prem has succeeded in sending his mother away to his sister, but he still has other problems to grapple with. Guided by Raj, he writes petitions to his Principal and Mr. Seigal for a rise in salary and reduction in the rent respectively. But both of his petitions are turned down. He is scolded by Mrs. Khanna and Mr. Seigal turns him away by telling him how costly a bottle of whisky is these days. Defeated, Prem finally surrenders and says, “No one cares. You think people are going to help you if you are young and have just started out in your life. But no one cares.” Indu finally comes forward to support him and gives him courage. Prem, eventually, gets his friend, his companion in his wife. Supportive wife not only pacifies crying husband like a mother but also assures him that they both are happy.

The analepsis ends here and the marriage procession of his friend’s brother starts. Prem is sitting comfortably along with Indu in a bus and he presents her some flowers which she accepts smilingly. The film, unlike the novel, doesn’t explore Prem’s complex sexuality much; rather it concentrates more on the economic aspect of marriage and the (mis)-role played by mothers. By telling his story to the groom, Prem has narrated his entire growth as a householder and has exorcised his own
demon. At the same time, he has also initiated the bridegroom to the problems that a young householder faces and duties that he is supposed to perform. This is where narration in the film from Prem’s point of view becomes thematically more important and is much more than an artistic liberty taken by the filmmaker.

Narration in the film is an interplay of different aspects of film narrative such as mise-en-scène, camera movement, sound and editing put together. Presence and absence of diegetic and non-diegetic sound in three sequences (Indu’s loneliness in, Indu and Prem’s fight and the use of Sarangi in the background); mise-en-scène in the beginning showing Prem’s domestic world, triangular politics between Prem, Indu and Prem’s mother and the use of eye as motif to emphasise on the ‘vision’; camera movement to show a comparison between Prem’s class and Mr. Chaddha’s class; editing to incorporate a footage from another Hindi film, use of dissolve, cut and overlapping in various shots- all elements of film narration work together to create a comprehensive film narrative.

_Heat and Dust_ – the novel

_Heat And Dust_ is about a young lady who comes to India to unravel the mysteries associated with her Grandfather’s first wife, Olivia. In the process she encounters almost similar experiences that Olivia had had in India in 1920s. This parallelism in the narrative structure allows the writer to set up comparison of Indian society in two different time frames. The novel also explores the scope of inter-racial friendship in pre-independence and post-independence India. Hari Prasanna believes that in _Heat and Dust_ Jhabvala, owing to her sensitive perception of human relationships and juxtaposition of two opposite cultures, “dwells on the cultural and psychological upheavals and the reactions and responses that emerge as the result of the East-West encounter” (Prasanna 30).

The fabula and story aspects of the narrative have been discussed in the previous chapter. So far as issues pertaining to narration, narrator, focalization and focalizer are concerned, this narrative adopts various modes of narration and there are ‘various’ narrators in the sense of the word used by Genette himself. It begins with intra-diegetic first person narrative; it has diary mode of narration and also third-person narrator.
As discussed in the previous chapter, this narrative has two parallel narratives— one running contemporary to the first person narrator’s time and the second in 1923. Following the terminology used in the previous chapter, the narrative pertaining to narrator’s time period would be called the Narrative-I and the second narrative of 1923 will be called the Narrative-II. Both the narrative are so intertwined that the Narrative-II always picks up from the Narrative-I and after the completion of one or two episodes it comes back to the Narrative-I. For example, when the narrator and Inder Lal visit the city of Khatm, it is followed by Olivia’s first meeting with the Nawab in the state of Khatm; the narrator’s second entry in the journal ends with her reflection of the cemeteries in India and the Narrative-II begins with Olivia being strongly affected by the graveyard; if, in the same part, Harry told Olivia about the Nawab’s unhappy marriage, Inder Lal shared with the narrator his grief over being married to an unintelligent wife; when the Narrative-I narrates Husband’s Wedding Day; the events pertaining to the same day are narrated in the Narrative-II. Inder Lal and the narrator enter into a relationship during their visit to Baba Firdaus’s shrine when they were alone as Inder Lal’s mother, wife and Chid had gone to a pilgrimage, it is followed by Olivia’s consummating her love with the Nawab. Moreover, Inder Lal, at this moment, also cracked the same joke about the Husband’s Wedding Day that the Nawab had told Olivia. On the surface level, events and situations in both the narrative are quite similar, but the attitude of the narrator while narrating two different narratives is not so. Two similar seeming narratives end in different fashions. This technique of juxtaposing seemingly similar events of two parallel narratives not only helps in establishing relation of similarity between the two fabulas happening in two different time frames but also allows the reader to have the advantage of comparative study. In both the narratives, there is theme of love between an English lady and an Indian man; both men are unhappily married; both have sick wives. Besides, there are spatial continuities and connections also. If Douglas and Olivia were putting up in Satipur, Inder Lal lives and works there and so does the narrator; Olivia and the narrator both visited Baba Firdaus’s shrine on Husband’s Wedding Day; both the women are made pregnant by their Indian lovers, but the only difference is - Olivia decided to abort the child and
stay with the Nawab; whereas the Narrator decided to have the child and decided to live alone in the monasteries of Town X.

Two British women in the novel and their romantic encounters with Indian men in India give the narrative undertones of inter-racial relations. This makes the study of man-woman relation across cultural boundaries possible. The narrative also gives insight into the psychology of the expatriate as both the women in the narrative are dislocated from their original land and go through romantic encounter in a foreign land. The narrative also reveals narrator’s impression about India as the narrator is also present in the narrative as a character.

While speaking on the nature and function of the narrator in the novel, Yasmine Gooneratne states that *Heat and Dust* employs “a single narrator, whose function is not only to relate two stories- her own and Olivia’s- but to present characters in such a way that they reinforce, without strain or loss of objectivity, this double exposure of event and experience” (Gooneratne 235). The Narrative-I begins with Intra-diegetic narration, which makes it a subjective narrative, and narrates quickly what happened after Olivia had eloped with an Indian Nawab. The first-person narrator is Douglas’s granddaughter from his second wife. She later on tells how she came to know about Olivia, Harry and got Olivia’s letters. By the time she begins her narration, she is already in India to work on Olivia’s story and is also maintaining a journal which becomes a source of narration. “The entire substance of *Heat and Dust* is filtered through the consciousness of the narrator, who becomes (through Ruth Jhabvala’s subtle adaptation of the cinematic technique of flashback) both the instrument and the subject of her creator’s ironic view of life” (Goonerante 236).

Educated and organised narrator, who shaped her days “to a steady routine,” (HaD 48) makes her journals regularly and records her impressions about India. First entry in her journal narrates her observations of India and life in Bombay. Her next entry narrates that she is at Satipur and has found a room in Inder Lal’s house. While narrating her first meeting with Inder Lal, she describes how she is unlike Olivia and quotes from Olivia’s letter written to Marcia. The letter narrates Mrs. Crawford’s visit and her offer of any help that Olivia might need and how Olivia decorated her room. Journal also narrates how the houses of Crawfords’ and
Douglas’ are being used as government offices and Inder Lal works in one of those buildings. Next few entries narrate the narrator’s meeting with Inder Lal’s wife and mother, and also narrates her and Inder Lal’s visit to the Nawab’s palace in Khatm. Narrative here has different levels of narration. It begins with first person narration; within which we find diary mode of narration (though the first person narration continues). In the matrix of diary narration is embedded a small letter written by Olivia to Marcia which narrates the events that happened in 1923.

Since the narrator is narrating from her subjective position, she makes her prejudices against India overt. In the beginning, before she has started narrating the story she, while talking about her impressions of India, says- “they are no longer the same because I myself am no longer the same. India always changes people, and I have been no exception” (HaD 2); and later while describing the behaviour of English visitors at the Guest House she says-

The girl was particularly indignant- not only about this watchman but about all the other people all over India. She said they were all dirty and dishonest. She had a very pretty, open, English face but when she said that it became mean and clenched, and I realised that the longer she stayed in India the more her face would become like that (HaD 21).

Her fearing that “the more she stayed in India, the more her face would become clenched”- when put against her previous statement that “India always changes people,” shows her perception of India as a corrupting and disfiguring land. The narrator of the Narrative-I is looking very critically at Indian society, its customs and people. Images that she gathers of India are of ugly and dirty country; her India is India of beggars and crippled men. Her first encounter with India takes place in Bombay. The images she gathers there are-

I go to the window and look down upon into the street. It’s bright as day down there, not only with the white street lights but each stall and barrow is lit up with a flare of naphtha. There are crowds of people; some are sleeping-it’s so warm that all they have to do is stretch out, no bedding necessary. There are number of crippled children (one boy propelling himself on his legless rump) and
probably by day they beg but now they are off duty and seem to be light-hearted, even gay. People are buying from the hawkers and standing there eating, while others are looking in the gutters to find what has been thrown away (HaD 4).

Later also she comments on Indian habits of sleeping outside in the open especially when days and nights are heating up. When every one brings his/her stringed bed out, the town becomes a communal dormitory. Masters and servants both sleep on the rooftops or in the courtyard. The narrator felt a little embarrassed to sleep in the open, but gradually she got used to Indian habits. She herself started going to bed “like an Indian woman, in a sari” (HaD 52). It is, perhaps, owing to her adopting Indian habits that later she was felt a part of the town at night.

I lie awake for hours: with happiness actually. I have never known such a sense of communion. Lying like this under the open sky there is a feeling of being immersed in space-though not in empty space, for there are all these people sleeping all around me, the whole town and I am part of it. How different from my often very lonely room in London with only my own walls to look at and my books to read (HaD 52).

In the beginning she said that India always changes people and she herself has begun to change.

Narrator also makes passing observations on the institution of marriage in India. It is not inter-personal man-woman relationship. Wives are chosen, most of the time, by the groom’s mother. While choosing wives for their sons, all they take into consideration is their (mother’s) compatibility with the girls, prospective bride’s family background and her complexion. Ritu, Inder Lal’s wife, was also chosen by his mother. She decided to have a less educated daughter-in-law. She had been chosen on account of “her suitable family background and her fair complexion. His mother had told him she was pretty, but he never could make up his mind about that” (HaD 49). Ritu’s being less-educated, not much intelligent in Inder Lal’s opinion, his not being sure whether his wife is pretty or not contribute in making his marriage unhappy. Having stumbled upon a marriage in which his wife is chosen by
some body else, he finds his friend, his companion in the narrator and he enters into a relationship with her. So is the marriage of the Nawab. He is also married to a sick wife who never appears in the entire novel. He also found his companion in Olivia which later resulted into a devastating relationship for Olivia. Through the two relationships, the narrator is trying to make a statement about man-woman relationship that transcends the boundaries of time, race and culture. By showing similar relationships in two different time frames, the narrator is trying to show “a way for harmonious life by bringing to light the causes of disharmony. When there is a marriage without love, there is love without marriage” (Chadha 29). The Nawab and Inder Lal entered into a relationship with Olivia and the narrator respectively largely because of their unhappy marriages.

One aspect that the narrator is overtly critical about is Indian spirituality that the Europeans come here to seek. Europeans generally are introduced to Indian spirituality either through discourses of an ascetic or Indian scriptures which is followed by their strong urge to seek spirituality in India and finally, they arrive here. Once they arrive here, the process of their being cheated several times begins; all they get on reaching India is dysentery and they realise that realising spirituality following the instructions of an Indian Guru is a tough job for them and finally, they decide to quit disappointedly. It is in this light that the character of Chid or Chidananda has been portrayed. He got interested in Indian spirituality through books and came to India.

For months he had lived there, like an Indian pilgrim, purifying himself and often so rapt in contemplation that the world around him had faded away completely. He too developed dysentery and ringworm but was not bothered by them because of living on such a higher plane; similarly, he was not bothered by the disappearance of his few possessions from the temple compound where he lived. He found a guru to give him initiation and to strip him of all personal characteristics and the rest of his possessions including his name. He was given an Indian name, Chidananda (HaD 23).

From this perspective, Anglo-Indian ascetic is jeered at, thrown stones and he finds it difficult to sleep under trees as directed by his guru. When the narrator
brings him home, Inder Lal is very much impressed with his knowledge of Hindu religion but the narrator feels that such ascetics are in no way better than “sturdy set of rascals to me- some of them heavily drugged, others randy as can be, all it seems to me with shrewd and greedy faces” (HaD 63). In her opinion, Chid needs sex desperately and he also expects the narrator to give him sex as easily as she gives him her food and room. Chid is dirty and “bathing is one Hindu ritual that he doesn’t practise” (HaD 80). Her attitude towards Chid and Indian spirituality become more comprehensible when, after the pilgrimage, Chid is transformed into a Christian. If pilgrimages are meant for giving comfort to aching souls, to help one realize one’s inner self and to rejuvenate one’s inner self, then Chid’s removing his orange attire and coming back into Khakis signifies his disillusionment with Indian spirituality, his coming to terms with himself, his realising his real Christian self. He is Christian once again is reinforced by the narration that follows which describes his changed behaviour.

Apart from trips to the bathroom, he is mostly asleep in a corner of my room. He hasn’t told me anything about how or why he parted with Inder Lal’s mother and Ritu...The most he will say is “I can’t stand the smell” (well of course I know what he means - the smell of people who live and eat differently from oneself; I used to notice when I was near Indians in crowded buses or tubes). Chid can’t bear near Indians any more. He will only accept plain boiled food, and what he likes best is when I make him an English soup (HaD 139).

Pilgrimage, which is supposed to rejuvenate one spiritually, leaves Chid sick and broken. The man who has come to seek spirituality in India is left alone with his ailments given to him by India and he finds his nurse not in any Indian but in the narrator, a British woman.

Among these seekers of spirituality, there is one Indian woman named Maji who is earnestly portrayed as a woman with special powers. Though she is not as rational and scientific in her outlook as the narrator, but she, in the narrator’s opinion, is mature enough to understand the unsaid. When Anne advised Inder Lal psychiatric treatment for Ritu, Maji advised them to go on a pilgrimage, a superstitious treatment. But, at the same time, she was wise enough to ask
Chidananda to accompany them. She did it not because the narrator asked her to do it, “but she seems to know things by herself” (HaD 83) and this left the narrator and Inder Lal alone behind. This gave them an opportunity to come close to each other. The narrator also became pregnant and unlike Olivia decided to have her child.

The narrator “belongs to a new generation of liberal-minded educated travellers from the West, who consciously strive to communicate with India” (Gooneratne 22). The second parallel narrative of 1923 is narrated by the first – person narrator of the Narrative-I. As she always remains outside the Narrative-II, she is extra-diegetic narrator of the narrative-II. It does seem that the Narrative-II is narrated by invisible third person narrator, but her claim in the beginning that “this is not my story, it is Olivia’s as far as I can follow it” (HaD 2) establishes her as the narrator of the Narrative-II as well. However, she has succeeded in maintaining her objectivity while narrating the Narrative-II as compared to Narrative-I in which she continuously stops and makes narratorial comments and expresses her observations on varied subjects; while narrating the Narrative-II, she does this minimally. However, at the close of the novel, however, when Olivia’s letters have come to an end and the narrator must piece together other kind of evidence, reflect on the picture as a whole and reach her own conclusion and decision, it becomes evident that her writing has begun to lose its objectivity: she begins to seek, not illumination or truth, but confirmation of her own wishes (Gooneratne 238).

Since she is not a participant in the Narrative-II and is looking back at a story that happened almost 50 years back, she always remains an outsider and the whole Narrative-II is narrated from a temporal distance and with objectivity of the third person narrator. It is in this capacity that, we find it to be an omniscient narrator as well. It takes us into the mind of various characters as a third person narrator generally does but makes no narratorial comments like the comments made on Indian life style, people, Indian spirituality in the Narrative-I. Her working as an omniscient third person narrator can be justified for one reason that she has come to India to research on Olivia’s life. She is sharing with us whatever she has discovered.
about Olivia in the process though the tone and nature of narration is neither journalistic nor subjective.

It brings on surface how boring and dull Olivia found India. “She had by that time been in Satipur for several months and was already beginning to get bored…” The rest of the time Olivia was alone in her big house with all the doors and windows shut to keep the heat and dust out” (HaD 14). During the dinner hosted by the Nawab, Olivia was looking at everybody present there making her silent observations. Among them, Olivia’s admiration of Douglas is narrated- “She stole a look at him: yes, he was right. As always, he was sitting up very straight; his nose was straight, so was his high forehead; his evening jacket fitted impeccably. He was noble and fair” (HaD 16) and, at the same time, Olivia’s observations, especially about the Nawab, are also made available to the readers. Keen observations on characters’ habits such as the Nawab’s taking his own Vodka wherever he goes; his sprawling himself on Olivia’s sofa and Douglas’s habit of stuttering when amazed are also made.

The observations made by the narrator also help in giving a personality to the Nawab. He is fond of entertaining the British. His sitting sprawled at Olivia’s sofa signifies the confidence he carries being a Nawab. His characterisation is also done by what Harry, his close friend, thinks of him. The narration during Harry’s meeting with Olivia is very suggestive and helpful in establishing the Nawab’s character- Harry shot her a look, then lowered his eyes: “He’s a very strong person. Very manly and strong. When he wants something, nothing must stand in his way. Never; ever. He’s been the Nawab since he was fifteen (his father died suddenly of a stroke). So he’s always ruled, you see; always been the ruler.” He sighed, in a mixture of admiration and pain (HaD 34).

The Nawab later manifested his strong desire not only to have Olivia but, in the opinion of others, his revenge as well. Harry’s opinion about the Nawab also helps in revealing another dimension of his personality. In his opinion, he is a generous friend who “wants his friend to have everything. Everything he can give them. It’s his nature. If you don’t want to take, he’s terribly hurt” (HaD 35) but, at the same time, he also opines that it is extremely difficult to know his mind. It is difficult to
judge whether he respects individuality of his friends or not. “Who knows? With him you can’t tell. One moment you think: yes he cares- but next moment you might as well be some…object” (HaD 35).

The technique of two parallel narratives within one narrative also helps in setting up a comparative study of Indian society, and possibility of inter-racial relations and living with passion in two ‘Indias’- the first, pre-independence India and the second, post-independence. In India of 1923, in the novel there is only one character, Olivia, who, overlooking the call of the intellect, follows the dictates of the heart. She pays the price for this penchant in her personality. She became pregnant, got her baby aborted, left her husband and lived the rest of her life as the Nawab’s mistress in a house that the Nawab gave her. She almost lived a life of obscurity and anonymity there. Though the narrator also became pregnant, yet she decided to have her baby. Perhaps the suggested meaning is - this proposition could be possible only in free India, not in the British India.

Friendship between Harry and the Nawab also makes an attempt to give a convincing argument for inter-racial relations. Even the Nawab himself reacts strongly at Harry’s cool disposition and says to Olivia-

“Now he is playing the Englishman with me. So cool and quiet and never losing his temper. He is playing Major Minnies with me. How different from these terrible orientals. Olivia, do you hate and despise orientals? Of course you do. And you are right I think. Because we are very stupid people with feelings that we let others trample on and hurt to their hearts content. English people are so lucky- they have no feelings at all. Look at him,” he said, pointing at Harry (HaD 144 - 45).

What is ironic is even after a long friendship lasting for so many years, they continue to be two different men.

At the same time, Olivia does believe that two persons, in spite of their different ethnic origins, can be friends and with this hope she befriends the Nawab. But in critical situations, the refuge of inter-personal relations tends to deceive its strong believers as Olivia got nothing but social disgrace and appellation of a “rotten
woman” out of this relationship. Undoubtedly she managed to spend the rest of her life with the Nawab, but as his mistress not a wife. The relation between Olivia and the Nawab “existed only at the physical level” (Chadha 27) which happened because if Olivia, on the one hand, had an unknown, unnamed desire for a companion in her dull, boring and lonely life, on the other hand, the Nawab too was living in an unhappy marriage. Both complemented each other in filling up the ‘lack’ in their respective lives. Moreover, this relationship also gives an opportunity to explore the possibility of emotional bond between the English and Indian people.

The second possibility can be explored through other English families which, even after the freedom of India, decided to stay back in India. Tessie’s sister and her husband also, thinking that “they have spent best years of their lives here and loved the place above every other” decided to stay on and purchased a pretty cottage at Kasauli. “However, after some years they found it was no longer as pleasant for them as it had been...They too came home and bought a house in Surrey near enough to Douglas and Tessie for frequent visit” (HaD 155-56). Even after spending the best years of their lives and a strong desire to stay on in India, they are forced to go back to England- their ‘home’. This is where this narrative seems to suggest a bleak picture of the dream of a successful inter-racial relationship. Though Olivia continues to live with the Nawab, but not in the palace. So far as Chid’s staying in India is concerned, the narrator is clear that he cannot stay here; but, at the same time, she has met few English people in different parts of India who had been living here successfully and want to die in India. Prejudice of the British against India is revealed in the Major’s writings which he got published. Although the Major was sympathetic to India, this piece sounds like a warning.

He said that one has to be very determined to withstand- to stand up to- India. And the most vulnerable, he said, are always those who love her best. There are many ways of loving India, many things to love her for – the scenery, the history, the poetry, the music, and indeed the physical beauty of the men and women- but all, said the Major, are dangerous for the European who allow himself to be loved

21 Emphasis mine
Even Dr. Saunders, while discussing Olivia after her running away from the hospital, was of the opinion that “there was something rotten about Olivia: something weak and rotten which of course the Nawab (rotten himself) had found out and used to his advantage” (HaD 170). Both the characters talk about India’s habit of finding out the weak spot and hitting on it and thus, their prejudice against India is made obvious.

The theme of inter-racial union is dealt in terms of sexual relation between Indian men and British women. Both the British women are “bewitched by Indian spirituality and sensuality and male sexuality in their own respective periods” (David 18). Starting from her own parents, the narrator also throws light on the way man-woman relationship was/is seen in Indian society. Her grandmother Tessie and Great Aunt Beth didn’t like to talk about Olivia and the Nawab till they were very old. They preferred to shy away from the subject which they thought was “dark and terrible” (HaD 2). Since the narrator is “liberal” and “educated,” she allows the man-woman relation to be seen in different perspectives within the narrative itself. The way the relation between Olivia and the Nawab is seen by the English society in the Narrative-II differs from the narrator’s own perception. Through her own relation with Inder Lal, the narrator has allowed the man-woman relationship to be seen through the eyes of “the modern narrator and Inder Lal” (David 21). On the contrary, the perception of the Nawab’s nephew, Karim lacks seriousness as he calls the Nawab as a “naughty boy.” Karim is not shamed of his ancestor’s doings. Rather, he takes it as a part of his life style. In contrast to Karim, Yasmine Gooneratne finds the narrator “as a morally fastidious person, with a background and outlook of such sturdy, if understated, idealism that we are not surprised” (Gooneratne 222). It also gives the narrator an opportunity to throw light inter-racial prejudices. Mrs. Saunders strongly believes that Indian men are sexually perverted and one can never know “what goes on in their heads” (HaD 119). However, Hilda David perceives Mrs. Saunders as a “demented woman, hallucinating about the sexual fantasies of her Indian servant” (David 24) and opines that Mrs. Saunders’ “inability to conceive makes her afraid of their sexuality” (David 24).
Sex and pregnancy constitute the rhythm of the novel. Nawab takes Olivia to the shrine of Firdaus, tells her the secrets of Husband’s Wedding Day and of lady’s getting pregnant. Afterwards he makes her pregnant. The narrator gets pregnant with Inder Lal’s child. But both the events are different in nature. In the former, the Nawab is proud of Olivia’s pregnancy. Whereas in the latter case, the narrator wants to conceal it from Inder Lal, the father of the child; Olivia gets the baby aborted; the narrator, though initially wants to do the same, but later decides to have the baby; if Olivia is consumed by India, the narrator is assimilated in India as she decided to stay on in a village in the mountains. “She decides to have child by Inder instead of aborting it like Olivia. But whereas Olivia stays in India out of necessity the narrator does so out of her choice…” (Prasanna 35).

There is an attempt to ascribe symbolic connotations to season which has been used not only to suggest passage of time but also to reinforce the mood of setting and character. Similarly, the name of the Nawab’s state and even the title of the novel are also ironic. “The moisture of the rainy season delicately matches the sadness of Harry’s mood as he contemplates departure from India” (Gooneratne 232); the Nawab’s state is called Khatm, a Hindustani for nothing. Ironically his state and his days of rule also finish by the end of the novel and lonely and bored Olivia “succeeds in keeping away the heat and dust of India by shutting all the doors and windows, she succumbs to the heat of passion in herself” (Prasanna 35).

The novel which has been praised for being an artistic expression of East West encounter; for dealing with the “problems of the expatriates, their psychological turmoil and cultural schizophrenia” (Prasanna 35); artistic treatment to inter-racial relation; juxtaposition of two diametrically opposites cultures; touching Indian sensuality and giving insights into man-woman relationship beyond cultural boundaries has provoked hostile responses also. Nissim Ezekiel feels that Heat and Dust is worthless as literature, contrived in its narrative structure, obtrusive in its authorial point of view, weak in style, stereotyped in its characters and viciously prejudiced in its vision of the Indian state…The intercultural encounter was secondary, minor, interesting but not in any sense disturbing. Heat and Dust did not generate any
heat or raise any dust in England. It did both in India, partly because of the Booker Prize which put on the novel the stamp of English approval, naturally without any concern for Indian sensibilities. The gulf between the two viewpoints seems unbridgeable.

Ramlal G. Agarwal, who finds the novel “remarkable for its structural innovations,” (Agarwal 74) defends the novel by quoting what George Orwell has said about Charles Dickens. To quote:

Orwell points out that what critics thought were Dickens’ defects—loose plots, monstrous characters, static pattern of action etc—and goes on to show because of these excesses Dickens has acquired a permanent place in English literature. What Orwell says about Dickens could also be said about Jhabvala. (Agarwal 77)

Heat And Dust- the Film

As already stated, the film begins in the Nawab’s palace with the visit of British officials including Olivia. The following numbers then introduce us with two different time frames and important characters in both the parallel narratives.

Continuing with same terminology of classifying two parallel narratives as narrative-I and narrative-II, the first event narrated in the film belongs to narrative-I in which Douglas is sent for by Dr. Saunders and the latter informs the former that Olivia has left the charge on her own accord and he has no idea where she has gone. Douglas goes to his residence to look for Olivia. The house is, as stated in the novel, decorated in English taste with tapestries, light colour on the walls and flowers to add beauty to it. When this small scene ends, we see that Harry was narrating the whole event to Anne. Harry also tells her that Douglas was married soon after his divorce “to someone far more suitable than Olivia.” Anne is in England and she is already working on Olivia’s life. Harry gives Anne two golden rules to take care of her health while in India.

Anne is young, skinny and, as mentioned in the novel, also almost flat chested. Anne’s voice-over stating that she always wanted to research what happened to Olivia is heard. Anne’s voice-over states-

I always wanted to research - search out what happened to Olivia.

She was my grandmother, Marcia’s sister and wrote revealing letters
which my grandmother gave to my mother and she to me. But now I am getting involved not only in Olivia’s life, but in others’ of the family I board with.

Anne’s voice-over stating the purpose of her stay in India and that she is getting involved in the life of the family she is living with indicates that it from Anne’s perspective that India of 1982 of the narrative-I is seen by us. Thus, modern India of 1980s is seen from the position of an outsider, an English woman who has come to India to discover Olivia’s life. Anne, while researching on Olivia’s life and her relationship with an Indian Nawab, discovers her own India, enters into a relationship with an Indian man, her landlord and also discovers her relationship with India.

Frame– 5.17  Frame– 5.18  Frame– 5.19

She is shown moving comfortably in the bazaars of India and she has already got her accommodation at Inder Lal’s house. The bazaars of India are shown colourful with shopkeepers hanging their bright clothes and bangles outside for sale and, at the same time, it is bit chaotic with beggars and ordinary people in dirty clothes and bullock carts moving along with the men on the same road. The scene begins with a medium shot showing Anne moving comfortably in the market and the rest of the scene is either in long shots or very long shots showing her as a part of the crowd she is moving in. The position of the camera is such that Anne is, most of the time, at the background of the screen and the foreground is occupied by bullock carts, rickshaw puller or women in black veils. Thus, the sequence signifies what has been narrated in the novel that Anne has become one of them. The emphasis is on dominating Indian ambience rather than on Anne. Inder Lal’s house is also equally simple and ordinary. Anne’s room has one bed and one working table which is used by shopkeepers to maintain their account. In her room, she opens Olivia’s letters and
reads them. While she is reading Olivia’s letter, Olivia herself appears and speaks out the contents of her letter. Coming back to the narrative-I, Anne has become accustomed to Indian ways of living and is comfortable with them. She sleeps out in the presence of every body, eats with hands while sitting on the floor. Through her interactive sessions with Inder Lal, she comes to know the circumstances under which Inder Lal married Ritu, who suffers from epilepsy. She discovers that he prefers to rely more on quacks or those practising black magic than qualified doctors for Ritu’s treatment.

Another aspect that Anne is critical of is the people who come to India while chasing their spiritual quest. Though there aren’t many Europeans, as in the novel, seeking spirituality in India. The one whom Anne meets during her visit to the Baba Firdaus’s Shrine is Chidananda or Chid. He has forsaken his Christian name and has been given a Hindu name Chidananda, the bliss of soul. Anne never appreciates his zeal for Hindu philosophy. He is more interested in soul than in body. As portrayed in the film, this seeker of spirituality could impress Inder Lal’s mother with his scanty knowledge of Holy verses and knowledge, but not Anne. From her point of view, he is shown as a sexually frustrated man. He tries hard and furtively to persuade Anne to give him sex the way she has given him her room and food to eat. Later, when he goes on a pilgrimage along with Inder Lal’s mother and wife, he comes back clad in western dress, in utterly poor health and cries out of fear of death. Anne takes him to a doctor. He realises, as opined by the doctor as well, that the bodies of Europeans are not made for leading the life of an ascetic in India. After his recuperation with the help of one who doesn’t believe in Indian spirituality, he is happily seen off by Anne when he decides to go back to his country.

In the Narrative-II, Olivia is shown with all the charms that one can associate with English ladies of colonial India. She is properly dressed up, her hair too perfectly tidy. She has maintained her house in English taste with flowers, curtains and light paint on the walls. When the film shows the Nawab’s world, it is entirely a different world. If India of 1982 is India of people with average living standards and colonial India of Olivia is given English ambience, the world of the Nawab is entirely different in nature. Women always remain in Parda. They are dressed up in bright clothes; the Begum, the Nawab’s mother, chews Paan so much that her lips
are permanently bedewed red. The Nawab is surrounded and assisted by his courtesans. The Royal world is entirely different from two other worlds shown in the film. Thus, this narrative which operates in two time frames has three contrasting worlds to portray and mise-en-scène becomes important to create three entirely different worlds in a single narrative.

During the visit of English officials to the Nawab which also happens to be Olivia’s first visit to the Palace, camera plays an important role in narration. The scene begins with low angle long shot showing the Nawab sitting on the throne in full. Low angle used in the scene helps in establishing high status of the Nawab (Frame-5.20) and entering British official are shot from the Nawab’s position and thus, his point of view in the scene is suggested. But largely the scene is shot from the position of FCD or the third person point of view. FCD shows us Begum sitting along with other women of the Palace and looking at the whole ceremony (Frame-5.22). In the shot, camera is placed outside the room and the Nawab’s mother is shown sitting behind a screen. Similarly, film narrative witnesses another change in point of view as Begum’s point of view is also used in the scene when Olivia enters. Frame 5.23 shows that the Nawab’s mother looking in a direction. The very next frame (Frame 5.24) shows, from the Begum’s position, Olivia entering. Since the shot is captured from the mother’s position, we see Olivia behind the screen. The use of Begum’ point of view at Olivia’s entry becomes important little later because Begum would express her prejudice against Olivia. The Begum never liked Olivia’s frequent visit to the Palace. Once, she dubs her as a *firangi churail*, Hindustani for a ‘white witch.’
FCD takes into the hall where the Nawab is receiving his English guests. The use of close up shot shows that the Nawab is fascinated by Olivia’s charms on the first look. In the rest of the sequence, the Nawab receives the rest of his guests and the sequence is shot using the Nawab’s point of view shot (Frame -5.21). Otherwise, it is FCD that narrates the rest of the sequence from third person’s point-of-view. This is how in a film narrative, at micro-level, point of view changes whereas in a novel it generally remains coherent and similar. We find FCD, the Nawab and the Begum as three focalizers in a scene lasting for 2 mts. and 15 seconds only.

Later after Olivia’s visit to the Nawab’s palace to see ailing Harry, the film exhibits another fine example of the use of the point-of-view shot. During her meeting with Harry, the anxiety ridden Nawab enters the room without knocking at the door. He asks Olivia what she thinks of him in relation to the rumours that have become subject of the song. He almost makes her say that she trusts him. In the very next scene, Olivia is sitting in the veranda of her home. Mr. Douglas is talking to some Indian people (Frame 5.25) who have come to request for more police protection to save them from the wrath of the brigands, who are patronised by the Nawab. Olivia, sitting in the veranda and crocheting, looks at them (Frame 5.26). The scene begins with a long shot capturing the shot from the veranda where Olivia
is sitting. Then Olivia is shown looking at them. Thus, with the help of editing a point of view shot is created to signify what Olivia is looking at. When Mr. Douglas comes in, she asks him who they were and what they wanted. The use of point-of-view shot, here, is important because Olivia had been made to believe by the Nawab that the latter is innocent, but her husband tells her that the Nawab is the real culprit behind as he is using brigands for his own ends. Olivia, who is befriendng the Nawab, finds this information contradictory to her understanding of the Nawab; though she had already seen the Nawab with the chief of the gang of the dacoits. It so happened when on her visit to the Nawab’s palace, she was lost in the sprawling palatial veranda of the palace and by mistake, she entered another room where the Nawab was talking to the chief of the dacoits. But terrified and confused Olivia couldn’t take a serious note of that. The narrative gets a touch of irony here when she gets lost in the Nawab’s palace during the party. This is what happened to her as she lost herself in the Nawab’s palace.

Later, when Olivia visits the Nawab’s guest house in his state, he meets a group of brigands. The Nawab left her alone to have a talk with them. Standing alone there, she remembers the incident of Amanullah killing his foes entrapping them in the canvas of the tent. The Nawab had told the British the whole story during the dinner offered to the British officials. The drama of killing the enemies entrapped in the tent is ‘shown’ in the film. It is followed by a montage. The shot, in which Amanullah’s soldiers are killing their enemies, of white canvas stained with red blood is juxtaposed with a shot showing crows on a mountain covered with thick snow. Amanullah’s conspiracy of putting murder and feast together (frame 5.28) is juxtaposed with the idea of death like white and cold snow and birds of prey there (frame 5.29).
In yet another incident, montage plays an important role in narration. When Harry, during the season of storms in India, visits Olivia’s house to stay with her for some days, Olivia is playing on a piano. Harry, while listening to the music, starts relaxing (Frame 5.30). Listening to English music makes him nostalgic.

Two frames (Frames 5.31 and 5.32) in succession show British landscape which is followed by two frame showing a cathedral near Harry’s house (Frame 5.33) and finally Harry’s house (Frame 5.34). After a succession of still frames, comes again Harry (Frame 5.35) and this time pain of missing his house and nostalgia is overtly written on his face. In the case of novel or ecriture, it would have been overtly stated that Harry was missing England very much, but in a cinematic narrative communication takes place through images. In this case, montage of several frames put together make the similar statement. Various frames when juxtaposed with one another, in the context of the film, create the ‘third meaning.’ During the entire montage, the music that is heard on the track is intra-diegetic as it is the composition Olivia is playing on the piano. Finally with the notes of the same composition, narrative comes back to the point from where it had taken the leap.

In the film narrative, sound also plays an interesting role. When Olivia and Douglas are in bed and are planning to have a baby, Olivia says that she wants a
baby like him, to which Douglas answers that he wants a baby like her, like Olivia. With an expression of guilt on her face she remembers her meeting with the Nawab which she has not disclosed to her husband so far. The Nawab had taken Olivia to the room where his piano was lying, which was out of tune. The entire scene, which is expressing what Olivia is remembering lying on her bed along with her husband, is given echo effects suggesting it is not just an ordinary recollection of a past event; rather, it is reverberating in Olivia’s mind and haunting her. During her meetings with the Nawab, Olivia presses a key of the piano and it produces a discordant sound. This adds ironic touch to the narrative as even her relationship with the Nawab also produces a discordant sound when she realises that if she delivers his baby, the colour of the baby would tell the world whose baby it was. To avoid the embarrassment, she decided to abort the baby and also became a subject of the song among the British circle.

Voice-over is another element of sound, though quite a simple technique of narration, which has been used in the film. There are various incidents of narrative-I which are narrated by old Harry to Anne and Olivia’s and Anne’s voice-over is also heard in the both the narratives on number of occasions. So if Anne is present as a character-narrator in the narrative-I; Olivia is also a character narrator in the narrative-II. Harry, is playing dual function in the narrative. He is a character-narrator in the narrative-I but only a character in the narrative-II as it is old Harry who is narrating in narrative-I and the young Harry is only a character in narrative-II. The presence of Anne as a character-narrator in the narrative-I gives the narrative Anne’s view-point and the viewers also see the world through Anne’s eyes and while Anne was researching on Olivia’s life, she saw a major part of Olivia’s life through Harry’s eyes as his point-of-view becomes important there and Olivia’s letters. Thus, the cinematic narrative acquires various focalizations and narrators such as Anne’s, Harry’s, Olivia’s and the FCD’s.

Editing plays a very important role in juxtaposing two narratives intertwining each other. The technique of parallel editing also helps in juxtaposing events happening in the lives of two British women and their respective experiences in both the narratives. With the help of editing, the description given by Anne the buildings once used for residential purposes by the British are being used in the
present to serve various government offices. Two shots showing Olivia standing in her room is followed by superimposition of the shot showing clerks working on their type-writers in the same room move in two different time frames. Olivia coming out of her bungalow is followed by Inder Lal’s coming out of his office. Inder Lal and Anne entering an office is followed by Olivia’s entering the same building which was used as Mrs. and Mr. Saunders’ residence. Though the relation between the buildings is different from what is there in the novel, yet it has successfully established the relation between the past and present.

It is not only in relation to the buildings that the parallelism has been established; as in the novel, parallelism is seen in two relationships between Olivia and the Nawab on the one hand and Anne and Inder Lal on the other. In both the inter-racial relations, men are Indian and women are British; if the Nawab is the Prince and Olivia is lower in position though not his subject, Inder Lal is the landlord and Anne is his tenant. The narrative is structured in such a way that one incident happening in the life of one woman is juxtaposed with the similar incident happening in the life of the other woman. Anne is shown at Satipur, in the next sequence Olivia is shown visiting the palace; Olivia and the Nawab visit the shrine, in the next sequence, Anne is at the shrine but with Inder Lal’s mother; Anne and Inder Lal make love, this is juxtaposed with consummation of love between the Nawab and Olivia; Anne goes to Maji to get abortion and changes her mind, Olivia tells Douglas and then the Nawab about her pregnancy and asks Harry to find her an abortionist and got her baby aborted. The dust storm in the 1982s is also juxtaposed with dust storm in 1920s and Anne also stays in the house where Olivia and the Nawab used to live after the latter lost his kingdom to the British. The parallel structure of the narrative helps in putting two parallel narratives together and performing a comparative study. This allows the reader to look into possibilities and nature of inter-racial relationship in two time frames- one, pre-independence India and second, post-independence India. Critics have generally seen Anne’s decision to keep her baby as a sign of positive possibility for an inter-racial relation which is in contrast with the colonial India where Olivia had to get her baby aborted. But these two relationships cannot be so easily generalised as the nature of these two relationships is quite complex. If Anne decides to keep the baby and Olivia had to
abort it; at the same time, Anne had to move out of Inder Lal’s house and Olivia and the Nawab remained together though in a separate house purchased by the Nawab. It cannot be said that the relation between the Nawab and Olivia terminated after the abortion. They tried to live together though in their own possible way.

Thus, the film-narrative of *Heat And Dust* is an interesting interplay of voice-over of Olivia as character-narrator for the Narrative-II and Anne and old Harry are the character-narrator of the Narrative-I; FCD; mise-en-scène to show three different worlds within one narrative; montage to suggest symbolic meanings and editing to play with temporal and spatial re-arrangements of events when compared with the novel.

**References:**


