

## INTRODUCTION

There is a mass of Anglo-Indian writing still considered a historians' store-house for dates and data or a basis for historical conjectures. From their pages political, social and economic histories of the British Raj have been evolved. Occasionally they have formed the seminal seeds for soppy novels on Anglo-Indiana. Lately they have also inspired studies that sound literary but are essentially historical or sociological surveys of the Raj. This utilitarian approach has clouded their intrinsic merit and the sediments of factual information they yield. Of-course their value as historical documents is considerable. At the same time they have to be considered an expression of the Eurocentric consciousness in contact with an alien ethos; a transcription and transformation of the British colonial experience. Without these the story of the Raj would be incomplete since as expression of the British mind abroad during a period of great intellectual flux in England, they tell us a great<sup>deal</sup> about the British themselves and the Indian subcontinent.

This study is a modest attempt to evaluate the works of a few nineteenth century Anglo-Indians from a literary

point of view. Though the study covers the span of a whole century it includes only four authors - James Tod, Bishop Herber, Emily Eden and Meadows Taylor - taking in its purview the four major categories of Anglo-Indian writing namely historiography, travelogue, diary (serial journal) and novel. For the sake of convenience these writers are termed as British intellectuals,\* quite a disputable appellation though. They were in India for varying periods, in different capacities. Tod and Taylor devoted their whole lifetime to India while Emily Eden was merely a highbrow Memsahib on a prolonged holiday here. Bishop Heber was snatched away by death quite early leaving his life's mission and literary potentials unrealised. There was, however, a certain similarity in their Indian experience; the long travels, the personal encounters, the fatigue, the ennui and a sense of alienation. Moreover, there was the European ethnocentric conception of the Eastern mystique which either got modified or solidified during their stay in India. This duality of experience namely, the conceptual and the perceptual, influence and interfere with their literary output

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\* Intellectuals. Certainly the authors included in this study were more than mere travellers, more than mere servants of the East India Company and more than mere chroniclers of the exotic Orient. A generous appraisal of their works is bound to sanction the use of the term intellectual even in its modern connotation.

whether fiction or historiography.

The works of the four authors included in this study reflect a bright moment in the Indo-British encounter as they all belong to the pre-mutiny era (1800-1857) wherein the Anglo-Indian attitude towards India was greatly ambivalent. The three main ideological groups operating in India at the time, the Orientalists the liberal Utilitarians and the Evangelicals, were all historically collaborators in the imperial project but they had genuine differences about the methodology of imperialism. The conservative Orientalists among whom were Tod and Taylor, believed in India's cultural greatness and felt that any plan for improving the condition of the Indian masses must be based on India's socio-legal institutions which had emerged through centuries. The Utilitarians held the view that any transformation was unlikely without first demolishing the nineteenth century decadent socio-cultural set up in India. The Evangelicals saw eastern religions and social practices as the greatest stumbling blocks in the path of temporal and spiritual rejuvenation. A splinter group, the Anglicists, subscribing to the utilitarian and evangelical view contented that anglicization was the ultimate solution to India's socio-cultural backwardness. The intellectual climate of the early nineteenth century India was thus

permeated with orientalist leanings towards mystification of native institutions, utilitarian idea of commercialization, evangelical zeal for proselytization and anglicist polemics for a foreign medium. The most lasting imprint was left by the vociferous Anglicists since their objective amounted to an imposition of a dominant language and culture on the colonized. It was a sort of Calibanization of the Indians; a serious mimicry on the part of the natives and an unbeatable language game on the part of the masters. Of-course, as Homi Bhabha sarcastically remarks, "to be anglicized is emphatically not to be English". (128) Nonetheless this policy later paved the way for acculturation and cross-cultural dilemma among the Indian elite, which in turn became the basis for a more precise form of discrimination against them. Ironically the Indian elite today uses the same linguistic tools to exploit the unlettered masses.

As detailed above, the nuances of the intellectual climate in India reflected the shifting currents of opinions in England. Meanwhile the East India Company, a band of traders was gradually turning into a band of rulers with corresponding transformation in their attitudes towards the natives. At the same time culturally India was being invaded by hords of administrators, adventurers,

missionaries, merchants and travellers with no consensus on politics, society, culture, religion and art, but paradoxically, sharing identical prejudices and preconceived notions about the East. Back in England there was an ever growing readership desirous of knowing both the Oriental exotica and the adventures and exploits of their own countrymen. In response to this craving for sensation and knowledge, there was a counterflow of travelogues, memoirs, reminiscences, commentaries and fiction of all hues, penned mostly by Anglo-Indian officials and their wives. As expected, their vision was coloured and limited by European ethnocentrism, Anglo-Saxon insularity and Protestant angularity. Ethnocentrism, the emotional attitude that one's own race, nation or culture is superior to all others, was later extended to embrace the whole of Europe, paving the way to a sort of cultural populism. Like other European colonialists the Britishers too produced a definitive discourse on India. In this context, Michel Foucault's comment on the inner compulsions underlying the evolution of a discourse is worth mentioning:

In every society the production of discourse is at once controlled, selected, organised and redistributed according to a certain number of procedures, whose role is to avert its powers and its dangers, to cope with chance events, to evade its ponderous awesome materiality. (216)

The British in India were exposed to a multiplicity of novel experiences and to an equally multifarious field of eastern knowledge. Out of this enormous quantum of experience and oriental phantasmagoria, they made their own choices or adopted certain discursive practices to project a particular image or series of images of India before the home audience. Through strategies of inclusion and exclusion, restriction and prohibition, ~~over-~~emphasis and underemphasis they could produce an idealized or denigratory version of the East. With the passage of time, as one can clearly notice, the India that emerged from the colonial discourse with its inbuilt systemic controls, was not India but a distorted image of hers. Her reality lay hidden somewhere beneath the gaps and silences of Anglo-Indian literature rather than its spaces and voices. In this context one is tempted to agree with Frank Davey, a Canadian critic who has made a study of some 137 pictorial postcards of the Raj mailed from India between 1904 and 1907 :

(They) present not India - but a specific and arbitrary production of 'an India' - a Europeanized 'India' that despite its diversity is unambiguously knowable by means of representational technology. It is a spectator's India, orderly, optically focused, generically namable, produced for a culture in which the spectator - as reader, watcher, photographer, viewer, witness, investigator, detective, tourist, philologist or scientist - is assumed to be the acquirer of knowledge but not the generator of knowledge. (43)

By the time, the four authors included in this study arrived in India, there was already a well established colonial discourse which visualized the occidental "self" and the oriental "other" through Manichean bipolarities. To most Englishman of the time, India was a land of superlatives; of eroticism and asceticism, of beauty and ugliness, of fabulous wealth and abysmal poverty and of enchanting calm and psychedelic din. They considered it a meeting place of the best philosophies and the worst superstitions, of civilization and barbarity, of human dignity and human degradation. Its males, specially the Hindus, were emasculated, an odd mix of enterprise and inertia. Its females were the most delicate in the world, but a lot most repressed and suppressed; some smothered at birth, some murdered for a whim and some burned as suttees. Her kings were but puppets, her queens but dolls, fit characters for an Eastern puppet show or a European masque. Her gods and goddesses were characterless, worthy protagonists for the worst burlesques. Turning the focus on themselves, they discovered that the Anglo-Saxons were a superior race, specimens of athletic, hardy manhood, upright in character, infallible in their decisions and unflinching in their duties. They were God's chosen battalion sent to an alien land with an inhospitable climate and uncouth natives, with a vocation to police and civilize them. They were

the neo conquistadores and knights of the colonial world. Above all they were the exiles in a diaspora with their individual tragedies and collective epics ultimately longing for the shores of England. Such were, in fact, the contrasting pictures drawn by most predecessors and contemporaries\* of the four writers included in this dissertation.

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#### Some predecessors

N.F. Thomson, Intrigue of a Nabob, London, 1780.

Timothy Touchstone, Tea and Sugar : or the Nabob and the Creole, London, 1792.

Alexander Dow, The History of Hindostan, London, 1768.

William Browne Hockley, Pandurang Hari, London, 1826.

#### Some contemporaries

Bithia Mae Croker, Diana Barrington : A Romance of Central India, London, 1888.

Flora Annie Steel, On the Face of the Waters, London, 1897.

Sir William Hunter, The Old Missionary, London, 1895.

G.A. Henty, Through the Sikh war : A Tale of the Conquest of the Punjab, London, 1894.



Most discussions on the colonial context have a tendency to stop here. The pertinent question, however, is whether this is all that one could possibly say about British colonial discourse. In that case to know one author is to know all, to read one text is to read all texts. Fortunately, there were a few Anglo-Indians like Tod, Taylor, Heber and Miss Eden who, though operating within colonial discourse, strike a different note and a different tone. One cannot possibly say that they were not at all touched by the average Anglo-Indian attitudes. That is hardly possible since as Said shows, everyone has filiation with his or her natal culture and affiliation with it through social ties. Similarly one should rule out the possibility of a complete comprehension of the "other" since as Abdul R. Jan Mohammed states,

Genuine and thorough comprehension of otherness is possible only if the self can somehow negate or at least severely bracket the values, assumptions and ideologies of his culture... However this entails in practice the virtually impossible task of negating one's very being (qtd. in Todorov 175).

Within the colonial context, within any inter-racial set up total affiliation and total comprehension are but impossibilities. Even so that does not negate the probability of generous impulses on the part of colonialists to understand and appreciate the culture and ethos of the colonized. The four Anglo-Indians under study made

sincere efforts to understand India, her people and her culture, a factor that helped to scale down the differences between the "self" and the "other" considerably. They did not believe in a racial or cultural apartheid. Instead, they made a deliberate choice against the prevalent symptomatic British reading of Indian culture and did not employ the idioms of the early nineteenth century colonial discourse. This choice is reflected both in their reactions to Indian situations <sup>in</sup> and their literary output. This change in the idiom can be attributed to their individual family and educational background, their personality traits, their readiness to learn and unlearn truths about the Orient and above all to the bond of friendship they came to develop with the natives.

As hinted earlier, in the nineteenth century Indian colonial context two options were open to these intellectuals; either they could adopt the earlier conservative Orientalistic mode of mystification or they could follow the liberal utilitarian mode of denigration. According to Edward Said, the colonialists hardly ever exercised their options :

Many of the earliest Oriental amateurs began by welcoming the Orient as a statutory de'rangement of their European habits of mind and spirit. The Orient was overvalued for its

pantheism, its spirituality, its stability, its longevity, its primitivity and so forth... Yet almost without exception such over-estimation was followed by a counter response : the Orient suddenly appeared lamentably under humanized, antidemocratic, backward, barbaric and so forth. A swing of the pendulum in one direction caused an equal and opposite swing back : the Orient was undervalued. (150)

In India the pendulum had already swung in the direction of undervaluation. Therefore the choice opened to these writers was between overvaluation-a generous error - on the one hand, and undervaluation - an ungenerous pontification - on the other. It should be noted to their credit that generally they chose the generous error rather than the ungenerous pontification. Indeed according to the canons of Orientalist critique, theirs was a futile effort. What is at stake however, is not whether they managed to extricate themselves from the tentacles of colonial discourse but their articulated purpose and ideal to rise above the paradigmatic partisan attitudes and false generalizations about India and her people. In the course of this study we shall examine instances where they too made their choices, selected or rejected details in order to project their version of India, often as she was or better than she was, but seldom or never, worse than she was. That is precisely the reason why one should not bracket them along with the average colonials of the nineteenth century.

As regards their writings, they fall into different genres, but there is always one unifying theme, India and her people. This demands a kind of holistic approach, each to be looked at in its entirety. Be it a novel, diary, travelogue, memoir or history, its author seems to have meant it to be primarily a human document. Necessarily over and above the core of factual information, there is the effective use of language to add the human dimension to experience. One has also to remember that these are texts written before the rigid fragmentation and regimentation of studies into mutually exclusive subjects, which necessitate a multi-disciplinary approach. In the same way, since these authors and their works had been conditioned by a historical context far removed from the present, some sort of contextualization of the nineteenth century India becomes imperative. In the absence of such a historical backdrop we are likely to accept the stereotyped image of the colonialists and colonial literature and in the bargain miss the multiplicity of Anglo-Indian literary response to the reality that was India. This danger is all the more real in the present intellectual climate dominated by the polemics of independence movements and the debate on colonialism and anti-colonialism. The first chapter "Thematic Source Materials" is intended to provide a glimpse into a

colourful past whose political, social, cultural and economic realities conditioned these writers and their responses. This again is in perfect harmony with Robert Scholes's contention :

The producers of literary texts are themselves creatures of culture, who have attained a human subjectivity through language. What they produce as literary text is achieved by their acceptance of the constraints of generic or discursive norms. Through them speak other voices - some cultural and public, some emerging distorted from those aspects of private need repressed as the price for attaining a public subjectivity in language. An author is not a perfect ego but a mixture of public and private, conscious and unconscious elements insufficiently unified for use as an interpretive base. (14)

In short, for a balanced evaluation of the pre-mutiny era and its literature, one needs to know, even if partially, the voices, the private and public attitudes, the conscious and unconscious responses that gave colour and meaning to the Indo-British encounter during that age of imperial confidence.

An acquaintance with their cultural background as well as their intellectual traditions is necessary for understanding their works. James Tod's Scottish notions of blood feuds and chivalry, Bishop Heber's Evangelical yet humanistic zeal, Miss. Eden's whiggish yet enlivening humour and Meadows Taylor's inherent benevolence and understanding, need to be taken into consideration. That

is the rationale behind the short biographical sketches that precede each of the four chapters on individual authors. They are intended to be preambles, historical and psychological probings for understanding the genesis and evolution of their literary careers. Often the work of an author is the verbal extension of his own life, particularly so when the persons concerned is not specifically "authorial". Taylor's novels, Miss Eden's memoir and Bishop Heber's travelogue, like Dickens's novels, are an extensions of their own biographies. Their lives speak, their writings only echo. As such a true evaluation of these works calls for an understanding of their growth and not merely the history of their words. To put it briefly, unremitting textualism and reductionist contextualism may not serve our purpose.

This study, therefore, adopts two methods of evaluation; first, it compares the works of these authors with those of their literary peers, second, it applies appropriate critical theories to determine their claim as pieces of literature. Emily Eden, for example, share many qualities with Jane Austen. Anthony Trollope was Taylor's immediate model. Sir Walter Scott influenced both Taylor and Tod. Heber had many models before him, practically all the great travelogues. By no means is Emily Eden in the same class as Jane Austen. Nor is

Taylor another Trollope. Tod's claim to be a litterateur is indeed disputable, since in his case the dividing line between the literature of knowledge and the literature of power is quite arbitrary. Yet a substantial part of his history, particularly the History of Mewar, can be shown to fall within the realm of literature in the light of modern critical theories regarding historiography.

Drawing upon Hayden White's ideas on metahistory, specially those of fictional prefiguration, emplotment, mode of argument and ideological implication and George Lukács' insight into historical momentum and historical personages, an attempt is made for a fresh appraisal of the 'Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan'. This study is able to point out that 'The Annals' is the saga of a race cast in the epic mode with romantic and tragic overtones and as such it is an example of the fictionalization of history, more or less in line with Gibbon's 'The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire'.

Bishop Heber, more than anybody else in this group, firmly belonged to the Romantic movement. His 'Narrative of a Journey' naturally fits within the expressive theories prevalent in the early nineteenth century. The Bishop's love for the wild and the sublime in nature, his empathy with the Oriental and the primitive, his predilection for the exotic in time and place and above all his cultural

refinement can be traced to his romantic temperament. His travelogue needs to be viewed from the perspective of the roving eye of a Romantic who happened to be a Bishop. More complex is the case of Emily Eden who was born in the Romantic Age but had an Augustan temperament. The only feminine author in the group, she was by nature and nurture a typical Memsahib but quite atypical in her reactions and pronouncements. Probably, since she was shielded from the materiality and reality of Anglo-Indian cantonments, she did not exhibit the exclusiveness and aggressiveness attributed to her clan. Her serial journal 'Up the Country' exudes a feminine charm and brings a feminine perspective to the Anglo-Indian experience in India. In spite of the inherent difficulty in identifying the elusive feminine mystique in literature, an effort is made to see Miss. Eden's thematic choices, her quaint witticisms and sly humour, her relish for things feminine, her attitude towards British as well as Indian males and females and her innate revulsion from poverty and suffering, against the framework of recent feminist criticism. This kind of exercise illuminates however modestly the mental habits and outlook of the Memsahibs. None of these three was specifically vocational as regards their literary venture on India. Taylor, on the other hand, was a conscious artist who with his half a dozen historical novels; The Confessions of



a Thug (1839), Tippoo Sultan (1840), Tara (1843), Ralph Darnell (1865), Seeta (1872) and A Noble Queen (1892) blazed a new trail in Anglo-Indian fiction. Despite the heavy sociopolitical and psychoanalytical content of each of these novels, when taken as a whole, Taylor's nineteenth century historical fiction lends itself neatly to post structural analysis. Any exhaustive structural analysis according to Barthes' model in 'S/Z' is clearly beyond the scope of this study. Nonetheless Taylor's fiction can be evaluated in terms of the general ideas about tropes and codes. Even an initiative in that direction is adequate to prove his narrative skills and his near mastery of the symbolic and cultural codes of the Indian ethos. More relevant to this study, however, is the emergent fact that a generously disposed foreigner has great potentiality for assimilating the symbolic and cultural codes of an alien system.

Finally, in any study of this kind, the relevance of a note on the mingling of Indian and English words, phrases and idioms becomes self-evident. The Anglo-Indian writers were conscious of the fact that they were writing for an exo-cultural audience. At the same time they themselves were outsiders stationed within an alien ethos and cultural situation. The exotic Orient - was before them in all ~~its~~ splendour, squalor and contradictions, too

elusive to be transcribed through routine words, catch-phrases and literary conventions available to them. This tension is felt in their selection of words and the style they adopted. Their own stock of words and ~~re~~lliches were inadequate to express the variety and colour of their Indian experience. Necessarily just as the vastness of the new continent and the American experience gave rise to the galloping and sweeping rhythm (of a Moby Dick) and a shade of Indianess to American English so also the din and vastness of India, and their own novel experiences gave rise to a typical Anglo-Indian style. This East-West symphony, at times cacophony forms the material for the concluding chapter. Of course the above characteristics are not confined to this group of writers alone. But they were certainly the pioneers who were conscious of the need for such an adaptation and stylistic readjustment to capture their encounter with India with a freshness of perspective. Indian words, phrases, idioms, proverbs and at times whole sentences in translation or metatranslation crept into their works as they endeavoured to register Oriental responses and reactions. Incidentally, Emily Eden and Bishop Heber make only a negligible use of the vernacular since they generally recorded their own personal feelings and emotions for an audience who would readily understand

the European sensibility. Tod and Taylor on the other hand, had recourse to a whole range of Indianisms in their efforts to communicate the nuances of Eastern sensibility to their Western counterparts. They strove to be realistic even if at times they sounded unnatural. How far did they succeed in their effort at authenticity of experience through authenticity of language remains to be seen. Are Indian words and phrases alone sufficient to communicate Indianess to an exo-cultural audience or are they mere linguistic superficialities or anachronisms? These questions remain to be answered. An exhaustive investigation into the factors and motives operating behind the Anglo-Indian usage of Indian language items is not within the scheme of this study and the attempt here is only a modest beginning.

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# INTRODUCTION

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## Chapter I

### THEMATIC SOURCE MATERIALS

Colonialism and neo-colonialism have evolved their discourses and dissenting voices. The stereotypes that have emerged symbolizing the colonizer and the colonized, Prospero and Caliban, Crusoe and Man Friday are but approximations and to an extent distortions of the master slave situation. Caliban, the symbol of the counter hegemonic black nationalism resurrected by the Africans themselves and Prospero, Mannoni's deft compliment to the white marginal man of letters do not satisfy the self-defining needs of the British imperialists and their Indian subjects. Nor will it be true to reality to reproject the gora sahib (white official) and the Indian Baboo through the iconographic dyad of Crusoe and Man Friday, for the simple reason that prior to the arrival of the British, the Indians were not a people without a nomenclature or without their own defences. The usual tendency however, is to view the Indo-British encounter also through these images of colonial prototypes. Consequently, in more than one sense, nineteenth century native India and Anglo-India have been misunderstood and misrepresented by historians and litterateurs and very

often their evaluations have been accepted as authentic, thus stamping prejudices with the insignia of veracity. These conceptions and biases, conscious or un-conscious are but natural when two races with no ethnic or cultural affinities come in contact with each other. No two cultures can totally comprehend one another, or penetrate to the core of individual truths through the mist of divergent philosophies and inbuilt prejudices. So the British understood India as much as the Indians understood Britain, possibly more since the British viewed India from the vantage point of hegemony and had a better general understanding of India than the Indians had of the British. However in the production of discourse about India certain distortions must have inevitably crept in.

It has to be conceded that a sizeable number of Englishmen and women made sincere effort to gain an insight into Indian culture and value systems. Despite their sincerity there were limits to the extent of knowledge they could gain since the process involved both learning and unlearning, a mediation between the textual and the contextual. The nineteenth century colonial mind was not a blank state to write upon as it had its moorings in the real and imaginary knowledge about the East. Writers, thinkers and even the man in the street were extraordinarily conversant with the idea of England's eastern

empire since there was a constant flow of information from the East to the West. Gradually the idea of the Orient emerged in the mind of the West, an idea both expansive and limiting in its implications. In its expansive phase the Orient was idealized and mystified whereas in its limiting phase, which slowly gained ascendancy, the Orient was dehumanized and demystified. In the opinion of Edward Said, the conception of the Orient itself turned into a limiting vision :

Orientalism imposed limits upon thought about the Orient. Even the most imaginative writers of an age, men like Flaubert, Nerval, or Scott were constrained in what they could either experience or say about the Orient. For Orientalism was ultimately a political vision of reality whose structure promoted the difference between the familiar, (Europe, the West 'us') and the strange, (the Orient, the East, 'them'). This vision in a sense created and then served the two worlds thus conceived. Orientals lived in their own world, 'we' lived in 'ours'. (43-44)

Essentially, the ideological structure of the history of colonialism in India is based on the interplay, the inner clash and exchange between these two worlds, two civilizations, two cultures and two world views. From their own perspectives the two races either lauded or condemned each other; either saw themselves, the alien and the indigen, as aligning in a bi-cultural symbiosis or drifting into a bipolarity. To a remarkable extent then,

colonial discourse and its antithesis neo-colonial discourse are a clever, subtle and often acrimonious picturization of the "self" and the "other". In this game there is always the danger of the bipolarities switching their places, "on your right the disgusting white colonialists on your left the innocent black victims". (Todorov 178) Hence one has to be alert not to be trapped by either of the discourses. Fortunately in India the relationship between the rulers and the ruled was not one of undiluted antagonism or mutual suspicion and consequently their discursive practices were not always a war of attrition. There were a number of Englishmen both in India and in England who tried to see their empire in the east and their subjects realistically, generously not withstanding their imperialistic blind spots. The images that follow are their own creations. This study attempts to juxtapose the dark and light images in an effort to arrive at a realistic assessment, and argues that there were British writers like James Tod, Meadows Taylor, Bishop Heber, Emily Eden and a few others who could largely dispense with the preconceptions and prejudices about the natives and whose writings collectively present "the history of a consciousness negotiating its way through an alien culture by virtue of having successfully absorbed its system of information and behaviour". (Said 196) Edward Said pays this compliment to Richard Burton.



As hinted above, fundamentally, it was the colonial consciousness which carried impressions from the West, received impressions from the East, sifted them through its own stained glass windows and finally diffused them into ideas or crystalized them into images. The three main aspects of the English colonial consciousness were its Anglo-Saxon racial superiority, European ethnocentrism and British insularity. The one infallible dogma of British imperialism was its belief in the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. England's rise as the greatest colonial power in the nineteenth century, in a way, concretized this myth in the minds of even starving and unemployed workers in Britain. Geoffrey Moorhouse points out the ludicrousness of such a notion :

... Even among the unemployed of the Industrial north, there was conscious acknowledgement and gratification that we were a superior nation whose power extended over his majesty's other subjects spread across the globe. It was solace for the chronic casualties of our society to know that they were not quite at the bottom of the heap, as the evidence around them too often suggested. Somewhere out there was an even lowlier underdog in the form of the native, obliged by divine authority and His chosen British instrument to know his inferior place and keep it just like a mill worker in South Lancashire. (19)

In pure biological and Darwinian terms the racial myth gave rise to a racial blood theory with its attendant physical and moral characteristics. The public school

system tempered this consciousness into the creed of manliness and Evangelical Christianity invested it with its "extra-ordinary combination of arrogance and humility while industrial revolution gave it a sense of material prosperity" (Morris 13) In course of time the lustre of English nationality and the insularity of the British islanders raised this notion of superiority to a legend. Then, "there was the pound sterling, much the most powerful of currencies which could make and break powers. There was Shakespeare. There was Nelson. There was Queen Victoria. There was the sceptred race itself". (Morris 15) This belief in the blue blood theory is reflected even in the Anglo-Indian literature of the nineteenth century. The courage of Taylor's Ralph Darnell or the gentleness of his Cyril Brandon is the expected heroism of the English blood; gentle, chivalrous, generous and manly. This idea is articulated again and again in historical novels in general and in the mutiny novels in particular. The courage and ingenuity of a few Englishmen are enough to beat back wave after wave of native mutineers. The white characters are a class by themselves and their motives and actions are, on the whole, blameless.

The Whites' opposition to interracial marriages, prejudices against eastern sexual mores and the whole gamut of antagonism against Eurasians or ethnic Anglo-Indians

also sprang from the same racial theory. There was an implicit belief that the West was West and the East was East and the twain shall never meet. The strength of the British, therefore, lay in being British through and through. Subconsciously the Englishmen particularly the Englishwomen considered the alliance between the white and the brown nothing short of a sacrilege. They imagined the eastern woman to be a vortex of lust and passion, a positive threat to their prime Protestant morality. Such a visualization was prompted rather by Orientalist fancies than by actualities. For the sexually suppressed Europeans, the Orient was an arcadia of sex; and the prototypes of the oriental woman, Isis, Cleopatra, Salambo, Salome and Queen of Sheba, all appealing yet disturbing. Seen from this perspective, the Orient seemed "to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire, deep generative energies." (Said 188) Today in an inverse process the Orientals consider the West a land of unrestrained libido. The Britishers who came to India with these ideas were in for a surprise, for they found that Indian eroticism had fossilized long ago into temple art or crystalized into classical myth or sex manuals. Indian erotics actually seemed tepid when compared with Ovid's Metamorphosis.

Unlike the "virile" Negro the Indian male seemed like mellow versions of the Victorians in their sex appeal. Since they did not yearn for "white breasts", the memsahibs were quite safe in their company, and often enough they were the only companions they had in their long and arduous journeys. Nor did Indian women yearn for "psychic bridegrooms" (Whites) as the Negro and Mulatto women did - at least in colonial fiction. Exceptions were the ethnic Anglo-Indians who on account of habitual insults from both the Britishers and the Indians became excessively conscious of their physical characteristics. They worried a great deal about the shade of colour they had inherited and they pursued little snobberies within their own community, cultivating the acquiline and snubbing the broad nosed. As for the Mulatto women of Africa, for the average Eurasian girl, the psychic bridegroom was a "Tommy", either a British soldier or a fair skinned one from her own race. She tried to approximate the pureblooded English lady by keeping her hair short, wearing western dresses and not decorating herself with the fineries of the East. She went all out to please the British and snubb the Indian. The rest of Indian females remained aloof from the British. Anglo-Indian writings seldom depict the Indian female as a seductress or temptress. Her charm is passive, her attraction subtle and her sex appeal more covert than overt. The east-west sexual alliance

was a biological inevitability of the colonial set up. In the vicinity of every military camp, Indian or British, the woman assumes the image of unbounded sexual urge. Viewed from this angle Indian female eroticism, her Circean role, was a psychological construct of the Anglo-Indian mind nurtured on the Victorian code of Calvinistic morality, an extension of the whiteman's fear of his own sexuality.

Only a few Englishmen could understand the true nature of Indian sexuality in general and the sexual behavioural patterns of Indian women in particular. Most of them had no insight into sex suppressed and hidden at subterranean levels. The average Indian female, deprived of all social outlets of contact with the opposite sex, was predictably more passionate in her expression of love than her western counterpart who had, even in India, ample opportunities for meeting, sharing and flirting with males. Denied this insight into the eastern feminine psyche, the Westerners branded her a nymphomaniac. Most of the writers of the time imitate Flora Annie Steel in her attitude to eastern love and sex :

Eastern love is a scorching and all consuming experience which involves only the body and is surrender to man's baser instincts whereas Western love is that sentiment that engages the finer feelings so that even when whitemen are attracted to brown (she does not contemplate the opposite) they are succumbing to emotions

which fall outside the range of the true British mode of love. (qtd. in Parry 129)

The case of an English lady's attraction to an Indian male is mostly ruled out. Friendship there can be but that too out of condescension rather than mutual attraction and esteem. While Taylor advocates inter-racial marriages, Mrs. Penny in The Rajah recoils from the very idea of east-west love and rejects any possibility for a lasting, intimacy. Maud Diver in Leelamani dallies with the idea of mixed marriages but is haunted by the fear of half-castes. Emily Eden was quite inquisitive about eastern love but she skips over it in true Victorian womanly fashion. Tod admired Rajput women for their charm, strength of character and sense of honour. Meadows Taylor came quite close to a real understanding of the psychology of Indian women. In Tara he offers this elucidation about their character:

The habits of Eastern people do not admit of those demonstrations and protestations of love which form part of our social habits. But we have no warrant for saying that their feelings are the less ardent and permanent. We think not, and that there, as elsewhere they progress silently and are afterwards called into active existence by occasional opportunity, and with possibly more energy and passion than among ourselves. (290)

Most British of the time thought of Indian eroticism as a manifestation of sexual perversion and a contaminating influence. So from the earliest times of the Company, there was a semi-official creed and effort to ward off inter-racial

unions. Of course the British government did not go to the extent the Portuguese government did. It sent regular cargoes of Portuguese women to Goa and elsewhere for the conquistadores so that they might not be conquered by eastern beauties. In the case of the British, the manhunting expedition of the would-be Memsahibs was directed more by economic considerations than religious zeal. The English were quite frank about it as is evident from Thomas Hood's humorous poem :

By pa and ma I'm daily told  
 To marry now is my time  
 For though I'm very far from old  
 I'm rather in my prime.  
 They say while we have any sun  
 We ought to make our hay  
 And India has so hot a one  
 I am going to Bombay. (qtd. in Edwards 6)

Inspite of the fair cargo called the 'fishing fleet' that landed in India at regular intervals, quite a few Englishmen yielded to the temptations of the East. It will be nearer to truth to say that they seduced Indian women - Anglo-Indian literature is usually silent about how the dusky mistress got into the Sahib's bungalow - and kept them as wives or mistresses according to each one's taste. The resultant progeny of this contact called Eurasians at first and later half-castes, and still later Anglo-Indians became the victims of a tragic circumstance. The class conscious whites nicknamed them "blackie white" or "Chee-chee" and amused

themselves by inventing such jibs as "necessity is the mother of invention and the father of Eurasians". Indians sneered at them just as much with "kutcha bucha" (half baked), "teen pao" (dark coloured) and "adha sher" (light coloured). All the writers of the time express a repugnant feeling about the half-castes. Ideally the union of two Aryan stocks should produce fine results, so thinks Laxman, Leelamani's father. But he is puzzled at the unexpected results, "Yet look how unsatisfactory are the mixed races created in India by such crossing". (Diver 130) Nevil, the hero reminds him that in most cases this had been "the wrong kind of crossing" (Diver 131) Meadows Taylor who painted idealistic pictures of such unions circumvents the problem by arranging premature deaths for his heroines. Noor-ul-Nissa dies apparently for no reason and Seeta is murdered by Asrael Pande's men. The general feelings was that the Eurasians missed the best in both the races.

The ethnic Anglo-Indians are naturally allotted a minor role in the fiction of the period and often cast in an unflattering shade. The mixed-breed ayahs, butlers, peons and footmen are ludicrous nincompoops and doubly ludicrous when they try to ape their masters' language. Nonetheless, Wentworth Patricia in The Devil's Wind paints a real Eurasian villain in the character of Rao Sahib, supposedly Nanasahib's nephew, with a mixture of European blood, capable



of any heinous crime under the sun. It is surprising that though the Eurasians had religious affinity with the English they were treated ignominiously. R. Pearson traces the psychological reason behind such an attitude to the common sexual guilt feeling among the Europeans and to their conscious fear of the Eurasians as a possible threat to their unique position. According to Maunier Rene, the Eurasians broke down the clear lines which divided the races in India offering the possibility that some group might rise and become similar to the British without the necessary racial purity. To a limited extent, the Eurasians' knowledge of English opened up job opportunities for them in the administrative machinery. An occasional preference in jobs or promotions, however, did not compensate for the habitual vilification of their individual dignity and the cultural crucifixion of their race. "The Anglo-Indians were quite the saddest result of British imperialism". (Moorehouse 144)

Besides the inbuilt antagonism towards inter-racial marriages and antipathy towards the mixed-breed, Anglo-Saxon racial superiority exhibited other interesting pathologies as well. In this connection it is intriguing to note how colonial discursive strategies deliberately exclude the huge economic and social benefits accrued to the colonizers from the imperial set up and adopt self-deluding postures

of willing victims and unconscious instruments in the hands of history for civilizing the world. The administrators and adventurers who came to India were mostly of middleclass origins and their principal motives were the economic and social advantages that the East offered. Once in India they often forgot their roots and the initial compulsions that brought them here and began to cast themselves in idealistic roles. Their purely mundane expedition began to acquire the colours of a spiritual mission. Of course several factors contributed to the evolution of such a psychological construct. To begin with, the farflung outposts of the Raj and the enervating heat of the Indian summer were really trying for the insular Englishmen. Then there were the tropical diseases which took their regular toll of English lives bringing a tragic sense of doom to many hearts. This feeling, almost an obsession, was often repeated in travelogues, diaries and biographies of the time as is evident from the following passage :

Here we Englishmen stand on the face of the bound earth, a scanty palefaced band in the midst of three hundred millions of unfriendly vassals. On their side is a congenial climate and all the advantages of which home and birth-place can give; on ours long years of exile, a burning sun which dries up the energies of Anglo-Saxons, often times death far from wife, child, friend or kinsmen. (qtd. in Edwards 169)

Most of the Anglo-Indians tolerated the inclement whether

of the Indian plains with an air of tragedy while a few looked upon it in a lighter vein. Michael Edwards cites the example of Flora Annie Steele and G. Gardiner who tried to view Indian prickly heat from a humorous angle :

Sitting on thorns would be agreeable by comparison, the infliction in that case being local; now not a square inch of your body but is tingling and smarting and shooting pains, till you begin to imagine that in your youth you must have swallowed a packet of needles which now oppressed by heat are endeavouring to make their escape from your interior where they find themselves smothered in this hot weather. (qtd. in Edwards 156)

Oppressed by the heat, the Britishers were in a way, compelled to set up a chain of hill resorts, mini replicas of England in India. These islands of luxury and temperate climate figure more prominently in Anglo-Indian fiction than the native Indian plains. Simla, Darjeeling, Mussoorie, Mahabaleshwar, Ooty and other hill stations in a way, signify the colonizers' escape from the unpleasant to the pleasant.

Parallel to these physical escapes there were also mental escapes or psychic cover-ups. The colonial mind tried to look beyond the unsavoury details of oppression and repression, extortion and exploitation to a point in an idealistic space and to evaluate their deeds and misdeeds in the light of history's unconscious but irreversible march towards civilization. Like the other

colonial powers elsewhere, the British in India began to look upon themselves as agents of providence. Consciously or unconsciously they were trying to prove that British imperialism and western civilization of which Christianity was an integral part, were the only antidotes to eastern despotism and the quagmire of eastern philosophy and social abyss. Thus their imperialistic instincts were given an ideological framework. Colonial discourse in India then was displaced across a whole network of complicitous modalities representing besides the political, social, economic and religious forces. These were the chief enunciatory modalities which created the bi-polarities of self and other, norm and exclusion, centre and margin. To the Westerners colonialism appeared as a civilizing mission. This is obvious from the euphemistic terms used by imperialist ideologists. To the British it was "the whiteman's Burden", to the French "mission civilisatrice", to the Germans "superior culture" and to the Romans-the archetypes for colonialists - "pax Romanum." Most Britons in India held Lord Curzon's view that "they were not simply writing inscriptions on the sand to be washed out by the next tide." They continued to toil because of their belief "in the future of this country and the capacity of our own race to guide to goals that it has never hitherto attained".

(Curzon 454) None of the four intellectuals included in

this study could evaluate British imperialism impartially in terms other than those of "Pax Britanica". Bishop Heber was aware of the evils of colonialism but he praised the rule of law, order and security which it bestowed on India. Emily Eden also disparaged imperialism but condoned it on account of the benefits it could confer on a subject people. They contrasted the generosity and humanity of the British with the cruelty and rapacity of the Sikhs and the Marathas. Their obvious conclusion was that British colonialism was a boon to the native Indians. This was the tendency of colonizers everywhere as Fanon says :

The effort consciously sought by colonialism was to drive into the natives' heads the idea that if the settlers leave, they would at once fall back into barbarism, degradation and bestiality. On the unconscious plane colonialism therefore, did not seek to be considered by the native as a gentle, loving mother who protects her child from a hostile environment but rather as a mother who unceasingly restrains her fundamentally perverse off-spring from managing to commit suicide and from giving free rein to its evil instincts. The colonial mother protects her child from itself, from its ego, and from its physiology, biology and its own unhappiness which is its very essence.-(210 - 11)

However Heber and Eden seem somewhat more critical of imperialism than do some of the recent apologists of the British Raj like Philip Woodruff and others who despite the benefit of hindsight persist in the delusion of their civilizing mission. However deffly concealed this delusion, may be the self-congratulatory note is unmistakably heard

in Woodruff's The Men Who Ruled India. By comparison the discourse of Heber, Eden, Taylor and Tod is less subtle in covering up what Foucault calls the <sup>"</sup>will to power."

At this juncture one needs to add a note of caution since the colonial experience of the Indians was fundamentally different from that of the Arabs and Africans. In the Indian context colonization was more a political rather than cultural reality. The colonial phenomena such as cultural obliteration, local acculturation, banishment of native population and enslaving of men and women can hardly be noticed in the history of the Raj. Similarly the British presence in this land was not of a suffocating nature but one conducive to the birth of an Indian Renaissance. Many well-meaning British administrators conceived this relationship in filial and sexual terms such as father/mother and his/her child like or childish native. For instance, Tod liked to be called "Baba" and Taylor "Appa", endearing Indian terms for "father", that these noble souls cherished as the greatest reward for their labour of love. Unconsciously, however, they were perpetuating the idea of a benevolent colonialism which conceived the native subjects either as child-like or childish as the case may be. Ashish Nandi, in his penetrating study, The Intimate Enemy makes these distinctions clear in the context of British colonialism in India. Under the

influence of calvinist Protestant ethic, Westerners began to think about the colonized or the primitive as childlike or childish. The childlike Indian, for example, was innocent, masculine, loyal, ignorant but willing to learn and thus corrigible. He could be reformed through westernization, modernization or Christianity. The childish Indian, on the other hand, was ignorant but unwilling to learn, ungrateful, sinful, savage, unpredictably violent, disloyal and thus incorrigible. Such infantile primitivism could be reformed only through repressing the childish, controlling rebellion, ensuring internal peace and by providing a tough administration. The ultimate aim of benevolent imperialism was a polarization of the alien and the indigen, a partnership in the liberal utilitarian or radical utopia within one fully homogenized cultural, political and economic world. When compared to repressive colonialism and when judged from the historical constraints of the time, Tod's and Taylor's variety of colonial dispensation benefited the natives even if their ideological bases were questionable and their aims utopian.

Such paternalistic and condescending attitudes in some were counterpoised by studied aloofness and arrogance in others. These mental attitudes were the positive and negative aspects of the selfsame complex of racial superiority. In India most gora sahibs remained aloof and arrogant. In Britain they were nicknamed "heavenborn".

Mostly bourgeois in origin and in attitudes they pretended to be more Brahmanical than the Brahmins, a sort of thrice-born Brahmins and condemned themselves to isolation. Their contonments were oases wherein they lived an exiled life. The sahib's bungalows, <sup>their</sup> the household arrangements that kept up Britishness, the very Protestant churches they built and the clubs and the hill stations in which they sought mutual reassurance accentuated their alienation from the native masses. Here one is reminded of the first chapter of A Passage to India<sup>5</sup> as well as Fanon's words :

The settler's town is <sup>a</sup> strongly built town; the streets are covered by asphalt, and the garbage cans swallow all the leavings, unseen, unknown and hardly thought about. The settler's town is a well-fed town, an easygoing town; its belly is always full of good things. (39)

The white doctor or Chaplain seldom mingled with the natives. And the Memsahibs' contact with the native India did not extend to more than the ayah and the butler. That was left to the missionaries who were looked upon as second-rate Englishmen and first rate Christians with misguided zeal. The Britisher who went native, adopted the customs and manners of the people, was usually called by his colleagues a "white nigger". Richard Burton, the founder of the Royal Anthropological Institute condemned this isolationist attitude among the white sahibs in unmistakable terms :



The European official in India seldom if ever, sees anything in its real light; so dense is the veil which the fearfulness, the duplicity, the prejudice and the superstitions of the natives hang before his eyes. And the whiteman lives a life so distinct from the black, that hundreds of the former, serve what they call their term of exile without once being present at a circumcision feast, a wedding or a funeral. (Guha 3)

There were exceptions to this general image; Englishmen, usually political residents at some native courts who established relations of mutual respect and understanding with both princes and peasants. They were nicknamed Nabobs by the rest of the company servants. Both Tod and Taylor were political residents who won the esteem and love of the natives and returned them in equal measure. The usual Nabobs of the nineteenth century "were famed for the size and extravagance of their households, their gargantuan appetites and the number of their dusky mistresses." (Barr 11)

In those days in the absence of the "fishing fleet", English women were indeed a rarity in India and those available were not, in the opinion of a male resident, "either in education or intellect or heart what an intelligent, reflecting and cultivated man would select as his companion." (Barr 11)

So it was almost a fashion among the English Nabobs to adopt the life styles of oriental despots and keep mini harems to suit their needs. Generally these men were more open and less conscious of racial superiority. The Anglo-Indians, however, had a habit of considering the

Nabobs as marginal whites and their protestations for a more realistic and humanistic behaviour towards the natives, were usually unheeded. Besidethe Nabobs there were also others who raised their voices against the habitual insolent attitude towards the Indians. Several early administrators took it for granted that Indians were astute and cunning and dealt with them with circumspection. This prompted Horace Walpole to comment, "our governors there, I think have learnt more of their treachery and injustice than they have taught them our discipline" (Walpole 28) Similarly Bishop Heber, once he came into contact with the reality of colonialism in India, indicted the "profligates" and admired the philanthropists among the British administrators. Taylor and Tod practised what Heber and men like him preached even though their attitude towards the natives and their espousal of the Indian cause were constant irritants to several of their countrymen in India.

Fortunately colonial India had a host of such administrators. Moreover the British government and the East India Company took effective measures to curb and control the rapacity and profligacy among its administrative staff. As a result several of the nineteenth century travellers in India including Bishop Heber and Emily Eden have favourable impressions about most of the English

officials of the time. The first crop of administrators, as stated earlier, was nicknamed Nabobs for their lavish life styles. The second generation of English recruits was called by different names in different places. In Bengal they were named "quihais", in Madras "mulls" and in Bombay they were referred to as "ducks" by their own compatriots. Whether they belonged to the first or second generation, the English administrators were generally similar in their attitudes, habits and prejudices. Among them were partisans of the Company like Marquis of Hastings and Lord Amherst, megalomaniacs like Lord Dalhousie and Lord Wellesley, great administrators like Bentick and Lawrence and humanitarians like Ripon and Canning. Apart from this top cadre of bureaucrats, there were also others with imagination and initiative about whom Elphinstone spoke as "men always ready to listen to a peasant and to right a wrong, men half the day in the saddle, spending what leisure they found in writing histories as Mark Wilks did for South India and Henry Pottinger for Sind, men witty, generous and hospitable, a band of brothers nobly emulous". (Woodruff 225) Bishop Heber formed a similar estimate of the Anglo-Indian administrators of the pre-mutiny era during his travels through the length and breadth of this country. Most of these administrators were sympathetic to the natives and even if not overfriendly had the good of the people at heart. Malcom in Madras, Elphinstone in

Bombay, Norris in Kutch, Barnwall in Katteawar, Miles at the North West frontier, Grand Duff at Satara, Mr. Trail in Kumaon and a number of others of all ranks favourably impressed the Bishop. The reason behind their success as administrators was a unique synthesis of the ideological currents of the time, a judicious blend of the conservative and liberal points of view. The Bishop honestly felt that the Company Raj was a genuine deliverer of the people from the tyranny of native despots. In Kumaon, for example, he found that "the British government was most popular and we are still regarded as the deliverers of the people from an intolerable tyranny". (Heber 402) Nonetheless, the Bishop did not fail to hear that the French officers, though often oppressive and avaricious, were more conciliatory than their English counterparts. Being a thorough English gentleman he was pained to notice the exclusive and intolerant spirit of the British in general and their foolish national pride in particular. He compares the other European colonizers with the English and concludes, "we are not guilty of injustice or willful oppression but we shut out the natives from our society and a bullying, insolent manner is constantly assumed in speaking to them." (Heber 343-44)

This isolationist stance of shutting out the "other" - native Indians - from their social concourse as well as the habitual imperial arrogance, pretended or real, had its

psychological after-effects upon the colonizers themselves. Most of them felt a gnawing sense of alienation and a sense of exile inspite of their involvement with day to day administration. This, in fact, forms the major articulated theme of every Anglo-Indian novel, diary or travelogue. Almost all the observers of the Raj era also have noticed and commented on the imperialist isolation. The Anglo-Indians were cut off not only from the natives but also from the British at home, who began to look upon them as a race apart; " -- mute, snobish, not obviously clever, and obviously ill-educated, stewards of great mysteries, who don't want to understand any race but their own white --." (Diver 49) This isolation was the price they had to pay for keeping up a colonial power. E.M. Forster names this phenomenon as the underdeveloped heart while Aime Ce'saire, the Martinique poet terms it as the decivilization of the colonizers. Even a man like Meadows Taylor was not free from the decivilizing effect of the colonial set up. In spite of his attachment to the natives, Taylor felt intense loneliness and cultural isolation. He once wrote to his friend Henry Reeve, "The years of solitude which I must pass will be welcome if I can only come to you again and renew my connection with civilization while my heart is green and fresh enough to understand it". (Letters 191) Time and again, in his correspondences, Taylor voices the

alienation and cultural stagnation which the Anglo-Indians felt in general :

I often feel as it were a narrowing of my ideas and a stagnation which I feel inseparable from a complete segregation like this. I have no time to study, no intercourse with anything or person of intelligence. I have low cunning in its most repulsive forms constantly to combat and it is difficult at times to throw off or rise superior to the disgust it creates. (Letters 259)

Subjectively, this was the feeling of an individual whiteman cut off from his people and natural habitat. Objectively it was the price that every colonizer had to pay for his involvement in the imperial set up.

An attempt has been made in this section to define the Britishers' image of racial superiority, their cocoon like existence in India as well as the imperialist mask most of them habitually wore and the stiff upperlip they ceaselessly cultivated. More intriguing, however, is the image of the "other" or the "Asiatic" that gradually emerged as an outcome of their contact with the East; with the postulate of an - other history and with an-other culture. The nineteenth century British perception of the primitive way of life was conditioned by Darwin's theory of evolution and new findings in anthropology and archeology. Literature in turn reinforced this perception in the minds of the average Europeans. True, the Asians were not perceived as primitive whereas the Africans

were. The Asians were decadent and pagan and the emphasis was on the exotic nature of the others' culture.

Street in 'The Savage in Literature' illustrates the process through which the image of the alien is distorted by false generalization and then passed on as authentic :

Popular fiction inevitably distorts the image it presents of 'primitive' man. For not only is the image derived from the scientific theories of the age, which have been rejected by science today as themselves distorted, but it is also conditioned by the nature of the medium itself. Such popular literature tended not to create rounded characters but rather stereotypes, as it did with more domestic subject matter. It was also directed at a mass audience and a big sale, so the exotic, exciting and savage side of 'primitive' life was emphasized at the expense of the everyday, commonplace and therefore dull. (12)

While encoding their Indian experience Anglo-Indian writers, even the most open-minded among them, adopted a selective process in addressing the exo-cultural audience in England and often ignoring their own limited experience of India which is not a country but a continent. Among them there was a noticeable predilection for the weird and the foreboding in Indian life and rituals that would either shock or amuse western sensibilities. Gradually it became a beaten track for the writers and an entrenched prejudice in the minds of their readers.

This image building was not a onesided affair as both races indulged in it. There was a sort of cultural

incompatibility between the two cultures; one, very old with its mystical world view, and the other dynamic, outgoing and technically advanced. To a certain extent the distorted images were perpetuated by the two coding systems. The British misinterpreted India because they interpreted her through their own codes. Those who did understand the real India made considerable attempt to transcend their own codes. In general it was an instance of two prides and two prejudices looking askance at each other. Indians despised the Britishers' seeming immorality - "picnics and adultery," their addiction to drink and meat, their worldliness and the superficiality of their philosophy and religion. The English despised Indian filth, laziness, crookedness and the eastern addiction to hypocrisy and psuedo asceticism. The most vocal were militarymen and memsahibs. Army men professed that their own women were demoralized by coming to India, an inferior land. White women were more exclusive and racist than their male counterparts. They despised "those horrid natives" for their unseemly habits and sexuality. To some the natives were too unpleasant and dirty to correspond to the noble savage of literature. The unseemly habits included in the first place, lubrication of

the body with oil, sometimes coconut, but often castor or margora oil... a most disgusting and nauseating smell; chewing betel which causes a copious red expectoration which is freely distributed on all sides and dyes their teeth of



every shade from crimson to jet black, worst of all their habit of belching on all occasions without the least-attempt to restrain... at it were by way of grace. (qtd. in Edwards 150).

Emily Eden, a true blue stocking, was disgusted with the betel chewing habits of the natives especially the begums and nautch girls. It appears that she preferred the native animals in her menagerie to the natives around the cantonment judging from her letters. To some extent the so called filthy habits of the illiterate masses kept the English from getting closer to them.

The attitude towards the high castes, both Hindus and Muslims, was not substantially different. At best it was condescending, at worst no better than their opinion of Indians in general. The high castes, especially Brahmins, carefully kept six paces from the whites so that they might not be polluted by the touch of the flesh eaters. The whites did not fail to light a cigar whenever they felt a whiff of the curry smell emanating from a Brahmin. The racial oddities tickled the sensibilities of both but there was a studied effort to suppress the chuckles. On the whole the Muslims were seen in a favourable light. Common source of religion, a familiar world vision and similar food habits were points of affinity between European Christians and Indian Muslims. Consequently the fictional images of Muslims are a shade better than those of Hindus. Even so Hindu women are

idealized in Anglo-Indian fiction probably due to the fact that they approximated the Victorian ideal of womanhood. The Muslim heroes are portrayed as hyper masculine, manifestly courageous and superbly loyal men. So also are the Rajputs and the Kshtryas loyal to the English and who indirectly mirrored the British middle class sexual stereotypes. Barring these, the average Indian male in Anglo-Indian fiction exhibits hermaphroditical characteristics. In the case of women such of dehumanization is less manifest and they are idealized to an extent. Broadly these images correspond to Ashish Nandi's appraisal of the colonial image of eastern men and women :

Colonialism replaced the normal ethnocentric stereotype of the inscrutable Oriental by the pathological stereotype of the strange, primal but predictable Oriental - religious but superstitious clever but devious, chaotically violent but effeminately cowardly. Simultaneously colonialism created a discourse where the standard mode of transgressing such stereotypes was to reverse them : superstitious but spiritual, uneducated but wise, womanly but pacific and so on and so forth (72).

The whiteman's attitude towards educated Indians was still more intriguing. In England they were treated with the air of equality and comradeship. In India the story was entirely different. A typical brown judge in 'Letters of an Indian Judge to an English gentle woman' complains that his chief who is a Cambridge product has put away the Cambridge ideals and the precepts laid by liberal England. "He is not

inclined to be very friendly with me and I fancy he has been more than a little annoyed that it is an Indian who is sent down to him and not an young Englishman. So I do what I can to live down my dark face and trust in time to succeed (21). In the same way his Oxford educated D.C. is quite unOxonian though clever. "He treats me as if I were a dog. A nice dog, quite well-behaved. I can be certain, of punctual bones from him, I feel, but between us there is no point of contact that I can discover yet." (21-22) It sounds paradoxical that the British who were fervent advocates of modern education despised the products of that very system. The educated Indians with their Babu English and western airs were not the ideal "romantic" Indians whom the British were supposed to defend <sup>and</sup> ~~and~~ civilize. Education made them less Indian than the toiling peasants, the adivasis and aborigines steeped in the superstition and naivete of the East. "The little bit of western education that most of the educated Indians are able to absorb is only enough to leave them between the two worlds. They are either ridiculous petty trouble makers or are tragic characters who don't know where their place is or how they are supposed to act" (Greenberger 71). A sense of cultural alienation was felt by most educated Indians as is made explicit by A.E.W. Mason in his The Broken Rod. The hero of the novel, Oxford educated Shere Khan finds himself a stranger among his own folk.

"When I left England I was in doubt, I could not be sure whether my home, my true home, was there or in Chilistan... I am no longer in doubt. It is neither in England nor in Chilistan, I am a citizen of no country. I have no place anywhere at all. I wish to heaven that I had never seen England. (Mason 137) Similarly the young judge while in England dreamt of a new heaven and a new earth but on reaching India and mingling with the English officialdom he realised his folly. The English, brought up under the protective umbrella of the crown and nurtured on the ideals of democracy did not advocate the same system for India. They blamed eastern despots but did not blame the system which produced such demi-gods. Western education presented to educated Indians the ideals of democracy but at the same time they were made to realise that these ideals were beyond their reach. It was only in 1892 that representatives of the Indian masses found a place in the legislative councils of the Provincial Governors.

It was this ideological imperative which did not permit educated Indians to be in an intermediate position either culturally or politically. Their sense of independence was a challenge to the paternalistic attitude of the whites who expected child like loyalty from the native masses. Again the educated Indian's intelligence ran contrary to the theory of stupidity attributed to the eastern races. So too his

industry and ability were question marks against the widespread belief that the Asiatics were indolent and incapable of governing themselves. Moreover the English guessed that the natives influenced by western ideas would see through their shallow motives, their exaggerated bravado and the gulf between their professed ideals of *laissez faire* and actual practice. Above all, they feared oriental cunning and racial prejudice as possible threats to their dominance. Notes of distrust and warning to this effect were sounded quite early in Anglo-Indian literature. Hunter's 'Old Missionary', for instance, warns of the effects of western education on Indians :

In due time you will have on your hands an over-grown clerky generation, whom you have trained in their youth to depend on government allowances and look to government service, but whose adult ambitions ~~not~~ all the offices of the government would satisfy. What are you to do with this great clever class, forced up under a foreign system, without discipline, without contentment and without a God? (64-85).

In fact, for a considerable time, the prime question in the minds of the company rulers was whether to educate the Indians or not. There was a group in Britain and in India who wanted to keep the natives ignorant so as to perpetuate their colonial rule and thus assure themselves steady profits. Bishop Heber made a fervent plea against such notions. In his opinion;

With subjects thus inquisitive, and with opportunities of information it is apparent how little sense there is in the doctrine that we must keep the natives of Hindostan in ignorance, if we would continue to govern them... They are in a fair way by degrees to acquire still more knowledge for themselves and the question is whether it is not the part of wisdom as well as duty to superintend and promote their education while it is yet in our power and supply them with such knowledge as will be at once most harmless to ourselves and most useful to them. (qtd. in Krishnaswami 215-216).

Once education was accepted as a function of dutiful imperialism the question was whether to educate the natives in English or in Vernacular. The Orientalists wanted the spread of western ideas through the revitalization of Oriental languages and institutions. The Anglicists, on the other hand, wanted to propagage British ideas through the English language. Both these groups had a poor opinion of nineteenth century India. According to the former the salvation of the land lay in the revival of ancient learning. The latter considered such learning as thrash and so they advocated the spreading of new ideas through a foreign medium. The Orientalists believed that the past could redeem the present; the Anglicist thought otherwise. Both groups wanted a change for the better. Many in India still hold the view that English education was introduced to groom Indians into a servile, brainwashed and middle order race. That seems hardly to be the motive of the much maligned group headed by Macaulay since his spirited defense of

western education against the Orientalists tells a different story. "Are we to keep the people of India ignorant", he argues, "in order that we may keep them submissive? In fact, instructed in European knowledge, if in some future age the Indians demanded European institutions that will be the proudest day in English history". (qtd. in Chhabra 65) The battle was finally won by the pro-English group and English education was formally ushered into India. Knowledge of English brought many Indians closer to the Anglo-Indians linguistically. Yet, in spite of sharing a common language and being partners in a common task - administering the subcontinent - contact between the two races, barring a few exceptions of personal friendships, largely remained a superficial one.

The Oriental remained a tortuous and slippery entity in European perspective. So was the case with Oriental religions, philosophies and social institutions. If viewed from the Victorian perspective it was nothing strange since to the Victorians even the Catholics were an idolatrous sect. In India the socio-religious practices such as suttee, child marriage, infanticide, inhuman treatment of widows and occasional human sacrifices served to shock their middle class Protestant sensibilities. So the average Englishman simply barricaded himself against the demoralizing influence of the East. Unlike the Portuguese and the Dutch

the English were hardly concerned with the spiritual aspects of the colonized nations and at least in the beginning adopted a policy of religious neutrality. That does not however mean that they were indifferent or impervious to the prevailing religious atmosphere of the age. Even a liberal minded lady like Emily Eden felt that the British in India were surrounded by the over powering presence of paganism. "It was odd and rather awful to think that sixty Christians should be worshipping God in this desert which is not their home and that 12,000 false worshippers should be standing round under the orders of these few Christians on every point, except the only one that is of any importance, idolators too being in their own land and with millions within reach who all despise and detest our faith". (350) Miss Eden was not interested in theoretical religion and temperamentally liked the Hindus better than the Muslims since they (the Hindus) "consider trees sacred and that makes their country so much prettier". (368) Bishop Heber too considered the peace loving Hindus as ideal subjects. He was convinced from his own experiences that "they are constitutionally kind hearted, industrious, sober, peaceable... all that is bad about them appears to arise either from the defective motives which their religion supplies, or the wicked actions which it records of their gods or encourages in their own practices". (351)



When judged from the Judeo-Christian norms the Hindu gods and goddesses are distinctly different from "the pale Galilean". Miss Eden, for instance, was more than amused when the Brahmins of a place took away a captain's pet monkey to worship it as Hanuman. Krishna's pranks also appeared to her in the same light. After her visit to Brindaban she wrote to her sister in a rather flippant tone;

And then they have a tradition that Krishna (who seems to have been a larking sort of Apollon) played various pranks here, and amongst other little jokes, stole all the clothes of the wives of the cowherds when they went to the river to bathe, and carried them to the top of a tree, to which they were obliged to come and beg, before he would give them back. He is adored here for the delicacy of this freak and a temple has been built to commemorate it. (350)

In short, the ludicrous and the erotic elements in the Hindu pantheon caught the fancy of Anglo-Indian writers as well as their readers at home. Moreover the worship of Kallee the blood-curdling practices of Aghorees and the inhuman penances practised by eastern ascetics stood in the way of a true appraisal of Hinduism. An insight is given into the psychological frame of mind behind the European prejudice against Hindu Gods and goddesses by Heinrich Zimmer :

To us of the West brought up under the shadow of the Gothic cathedral, where the benign figure of the blessed Mother, immaculate and uncontaminated by the darker principle, the

poison brood of the serpent whose head she has come to crush, the hell brood and the gargoyle brood that swarms over the outer walls and up the spires - India's mother eternal, horrific - beautiful, caressing, murdering symbolization of the totality of the world creating, destroying, eating - eaten one seems more than difficult to love. In these we too may discover, if we will pause, something that will speak to us of a wonder beyond beauty and ugliness, a peace balancing the terms of birth and death (215).

Almost a similar bias was operative in the British attitude towards Indian saints and heroes. Even the liberals among them could not avoid this pitfall. Bishop Heber, to cite a typical case, was eager to meet Swami Narayan since one Mr. Williamson had told him about the salutary effects of the Swami's preachings on certain clans of Gujarat; "As he was said to have destroyed the yoke of caste, to have preached one God, in short to have made considerable approaches to the truth, that I could not but hope he might be an appointed instrument to prepare the way of the Gospel". (Heber 143) It is not likely that the Bishop hoped to convert the Swami but wished him to be kind of John the Baptist to prepare the way for Christianity in Gujarat through social reformation. Coincidentally the Swami himself sent his disciples for an appointment with the Bishop, then on his way to Kaira. The two met at Nadiad in the forenoon of March 26, 1825. To the Bishop, the Swami appeared "as a middle sized plain looking person about my own age with a mild and diffident expression of countenance, but nothing

about him indicative of any extra-ordinary talent". (Heber 146) The two discussed their respective ideas on the God-head and the Hindu pantheon. So he altogether dropped the idea of inducing Swami Narayan to accompany him to Bombay. In fact the Swami did not approach the Bishop to exchange ideas on Christianity or his own brand of Hinduism. His was just a diplomatic meeting to make use of the Bishop's influence over Mr Elphinstone for an endowment for a Lakshmi Narayan temple, a hospital and a pilgrim centre in Gujarat. If the living saints failed to impress the dead ones had still less chance to do so. The saintly queen of Mewar is a case in point. James Tod, generous to every Rajput legend, did not believe in the popular version of Meerabai's life. He rather believed in the other version which pictures her as an unsatisfied woman who left the conjugal bed in order to seek personal fulfillment elsewhere. This in a way conformed to the Dionysian concept of Krishna luring away women. The idea of sublimating human sexual urges into an overpowering love of the divine did not appeal to Tod. His opinion of Meerabai reflects this bias :

Meerabai, the daughter of the Rathore of Mairtha was married to Khoombho. Whether she imbibed her poetic piety from her husband or whether from her he caught the sympathy, which produced the sequel to the songs of Govinda we cannot determine. Her history is a romance, and her excess of devotion at every shrine of the favourite deity with the fair of Hind, from the Yamuna to the world's end gave rise to many tales of scandal (Annals I, 289).

Such treatment was extended to Indian political heroes as well. Shivaji of Tara for example, is not at all the Shivaji of popular belief or myth. Taylor picturizes him as a mere "Maratha Robber", "a wolf", a treacherous individual who kept or changed his allegiance with the kingdom of Beejapore or the Moghul power solely on the exigencies of personal ambition. Shivaji's mother Jeejeebai is also cast in an unpleasant light as an ambitious and unscrupulous woman who goads her son through pretended visions of Bhavani and cries of revenge. Similarly Taylor gives a totally different version of the historical meeting between the Maratha chief and his arch-rival Afzoolkhan. According to the novelist it was not Afzoolkhan who was treacherous but Shivaji who did not keep a soldier's promise : "Shivaji stooped to embrace and as the Khan's arms were laid upon his shoulders and he was thus unprotected, struck the sharp deadly tiger's claw dagger deeply into his bowels, seconding the blow with one from the other dagger which he had concealed in his left hand". (Tara 443) An equally fairminded Emily Eden, though impressed by Ranjit Singh's sway over Punjab and his just ways, compliments him in her own characteristic manner : "He is exactly like an old mouse, with grey whiskers and one eye". (Eden 198) For her the Lion of Punjab was a stupendous eastern joke. Such denigratory attitudes find their culmination in the Mutiny

Novels wherein many Indian heroes and kings are portrayed as unworthy of respect, much less of kingship.

The intriguing question here is why even the liberals harboured prejudicial attitudes towards India's religious, social and political institutions and personalities. An argument could be advanced that often they were following the official rather than the individual view, consciously or unconsciously adhering to an already established colonial discourse. "Theirs was a studied attempt to prove their superiority in every field of human endeavour and enquiry. The political reins of most of the subcontinent came into their hands as if by a miracle, of-course a miracle engineered by astute human agents. Foreign imperialistic designs succeeded in India since the political climate was ideal for such a development. The popular view that the English conquered India through their political philosophy of divide and rule is only a half truth. Recent opinion attributes the political unity of India to the Raj. The Moghul empire, as we know, did not constitute a single political unit. After the Moghuls the Marathas attempted to establish a Hindu empire in India. But the very Hindu qualities of casteism and class consciousness and the non-Hindu qualities of plunder, rape and rapine alienated the other Hindus from the Marathas and that ended Shivaji's dream of a Hindu Rashtra. The Muslim

camp was no different, in fact worse. Hence the petty rajahs of North India preferred to ally themselves with the British because the foreigners respected their status, their wealth and the chastity of their women. The Moghul despot did not care either for their ego or the chastity of their women. The Marathas did not care for their self-esteem and their right to private property. These political and social conditions favoured the growth of British imperialism in India. A recent article in the Times of India, "An Identity So Frayed" explodes the whole myth of India's unity in the past :

In 1858 or 1757 we did not have the native skills and aptitude for forming and running one nation or even several small, culturally homogenous nations. If only we had the aptitude and the skills, Shivaji, Hyder Ali, Mahadji Shinde, Ranjit Singh, Lakshmi Bai and several others could have served as node points of a nascent national pride; and even an alliance of nation states drawing strength and sustenance from their peoples might have succeeded in defeating the British... India was not done down by foreign aggressions because it was a divided sub-continent. It was conquered because it was neither united or divided; it simply was not there. The cultural continuities of Char-dham (four pilgrim centres) firmament were unable to match the imperial continuum of the British, and our narrower loyalties also were not intense enough to offer resistance. Our unity could not cope, nor could our divisions. (Mathur 3)

Naturally enough, even a band of traders could transform themselves into rulers. And once this metamorphosis was effected they traded no longer in the ordinary sense. They

were here to conduct India's civil and military affairs according to the wise counsels or impractical whims issued from Hailebury and Addiscomb. The would-be administrators were trained in the four Gospels of the Greek Testament, in the classics of Greece and Rome, in ancient history, geography and philosophy, obviously very useful in the India. On reaching India, the new recruit was allowed a year to master any one language, a factor that brought many an Englishman close to the Indians and their languages. It should be recalled that the earliest administrators like Hastings and Wellesley were influenced by British enlightenment and they had an admiration for oriental society and culture. In their case political aggrandizement and conservationist policies went hand in hand. This period, historically the last decades of the eighteenth century, may be called the orientalist phase wherein the British administrators though proud of their race, culture and religion, were willing to acknowledge the greatness of India's past. Early nineteenth century saw far reaching changes in England and consequently in India. In the new era the strongest type of English gentleman was often evangelical. Nicknamed "saints" they were disliked for their narrow Puritanism and intellectual feebleness. They laid great stress on social reforms and active home and foreign evangelism. As expected they were censorious of Indian religious and social set up and found this country in urgent need of social and moral reforms.

The utilitarians on the other hand, stressed political and economic reforms. The attitude of these groups is summarised by Hutchinson in the following terms :

To the evangelical and utilitarian reformers India remained in urgent need of reform. Both Mill's and Grant's estimation of Indian society represented a radical departure from which had been held by both Burke and Hastings... The new reforming generation replaced this impression of India as a rich and highly developed civilization with one which depicted India as existing in the grossest sort of degradation (6).

So the colonialists impelled by the moral zeal of evangelicals and the reforming urge of utilitarians, initiated movements which in the long run had salutary effects on the socio-political structure of the subcontinent.

During the reign of Lord Dalhousie and Lord Bentick, the momentum of reforms in the political, social, religious and economic spheres was such that the native population could not absorb it without apprehension. The process of change began to be misinterpreted as a process to westernize and Christianize India. The 1857 mutiny was the ultimate expression of this growing native resentment and it turned out to be a great dividing line in the Indo-British relationship. It was not only a military and political upheaval but also an emotional and psychological upheaval, a racial divide. The pent up suspicion, hatred, jealousy and social and religious animosity of a subject people found expression in an orgy of violence.



As Michael Edwards remarks, "The mutiny was a war carried on with sometimes bestial ferocity on both sides. Crazy with fear, the sepoy's murdered English women and children and the British retaliated with lynchings and village burnings which made no discrimination between the guilty and the innocent (128). Consequently the mutiny left deep and indelible marks on the psyche of both the races. The relationship between the two became adversarial. Among the four writers under our consideration only Meadows Taylor was in India at the time of mutiny. He was simply overwhelmed by the wave of hatred and cruelty. He could only see it as a resurgence of the power of darkness against the light of civilization.

After the orgies of violence and bloodshed indulged in by both "the Pandies" and "the Feringees", the Proclamation of 1858 was a welcome relief as it contained some provision or other satisfactory to every faction except the directors of the East India Company. The assumption of power by the crown was a timely answer to the psychological need for an emperor or empress among the Indian masses in need of a centralized power structure. This in a way explains the sepoy's' rallying round the tottering imperial power of Delhi during the mutiny days. After the fall of Shah Alam the common masses and petty princes needed a rallying point. Transfer of their allegiance to Queen Victoria was a timely

answer to such a need. Knowing fully the Indian mentality and the eastern love of pomp and splendour Lord Lytton, the Viceroy, organised a grand durbar at Calcutta to proclaim Queen Victoria the empress of India. His grandiose scheme was thus a well calculated move. N.J. Nanporia in his review of "The Spectacle of Empire" by Jan Morris, emphasises this point :

The notion of the empire was not a fulfillment of economic and political purposes but of the perfection of style, somewhat in the manner of a great actor in the greatest role of his career after which he has professionally nothing more to offer. Probably no empire in the world has been nearer the theatre than the British one, with its dependence on spectacle, ostentation effrontery, arrogant self confidence and an assured egotism... On the part of the natives both in Africa and in India there was a tacit willingness to participate in the fun and applaud this theatre. For most Africans and Asians the uninvited presence of the British was an act of God, not something to get too intense about and to be tolerated until it ended as it undoubtedly would. Psychologically then, they were well conditioned to watch the British spectacle, when necessary to take part in it, to relish the finer nuances of its gestures and to salute the traditions to which it gave rise. (8)

Indian responses to the 1858 Proclamation seem to support such a view. For instance in the Calcutta durbar, one of the native princes paid his obeisance to Queen Victoria thus; "O ! Mother, O ! Beloved. O! residing in the palace of London, the descendents of the great emperor of Delhi are burnt in the fire of your might. Surely today angels will sing your majesty's glory in the heavenly regions" (qtd. in Edwards 143).

There is no reason to suppose that such expression of loyalty on the part of Indians were a mere lipservice. To the unawakened Indian masses Queen Victoria symbolized the might and splendour of royalty and to the queen the dark races of the Indies were symbols of loving loyal subjects, (the exotic jewels in her crown. Her enlightened policies and conciliatory attitude helped to maintain peace and progress in the subcontinent till her death.

This chapter has so far briefly outlined the colonizer's self vision, the vision of the alien, its gradual valorization and the resultant resistance as well as realignment of forces on the part of the natives. The Indo-British encounter is unique in the history of colonialism. Its story is incomplete if one treats it as <sup>yet</sup> another historical instance of political opportunism, cultural oppression and economic exploitation. There were certainly such elements in the making of the Raj but there were also other things besides. While building and administering their vast colonial empire they became the agents for the whole process of the expansion of western culture into the East. In considering the British impact as a whole, it is necessary to take into account the contribution of its functionaries. Their influence on Indian life was felt in many areas ; administration, legislation, trade, communication, industrialization and urbanization. In the field of culture they exerted pressure through the work

of scholars, educationalists, missionaries and social workers. The idea of a secular law in the face of religious obscurantism, the idea of positive promotion of public welfare as against the Indian tenet of protection alone, a secular education policy and parliamentary form of government, these are the main legacies of the British to India.

But for the British India still would have been at best a confederacy. It is not easy to change the mental attitudes and thinking process of a people. The diverse forces operative in the Indian policy were quite evident even to a foreign administrator like Lord Curzon who said in his Derby speech, "India must always remain a constellation rather than a single star, must always be a continent rather than a country, a congerie of races rather than a single nation. But we are creating ties of unity among those widely diversified peoples, we are consolidating those vast and outspread territories and what is more important we are going forward instead of backward". (Curzon 454). The earliest dreams of an independent and modernized India began to appear only in the second and third decades of the nineteenth century. Men like Elphinstone and Macaulay dreamt of such a possibility, but little was done to promote it for eighty years. Even in 1857 Indians thought only along the monarchist lines of a Moghul Badshah or a Maratha Peshwa. H.F. Owen sees the

Indian nationalist movement as an odd mixture of the traditional and non-traditional in its very essence :

The nationalist movement when it began was at once a 're-assertion' of traditional values and symbols against alien intrusions, and itself an alien, modern, untraditional phenomenon. This paradox is embodied in the different brands of nationalism represented by such figures as Bankim Chandra Chatterjee, Dayanand and the Arya Samaj, Aurobindo, Tilak, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and the Aligarh school, Annie Besant and above all Gandhi and the National Congress as he influenced it. (Owen in Basham 391)

Broadly speaking, the nationalist movement espoused the traditional values of the Gita and the Vedas. It catered to the tastes of the masses by popularizing the festival of Ganesh, glorifying the deeds of Shivaji and above all by inventing a secular goddess the "Bharat Mata" as an embodiment of the ageless spirit of India.

Paradoxically, the inspirational source of this movement was the non-traditional English education. Politically English developed and strengthened the consciousness of national oneness more effectively and more profoundly than had ever happened before in Indian history. It also linked this consciousness to democratic aspirations. The intelligentsia took to English readily impressed by the scientific knowledge it revealed and charmed by a literature that seemed stimulating. All this would have come to India sooner or later but historical circumstances

made the English language an agent of this revolutionary ferment. In the words of Krishna Kripalani, "English had the historical advantage of coming to India at a time when Sanskrit and Persian had long played out their roles as languages of enlightenment and had become mere custodians of past glory and a refuge of orthodoxy. (In Basham 471). English literature also helped in the development of modern Indian literature. All the vernacular literatures have been enriched by this contact. The new era of modern Indian literature may be said to have begun in 1800 when Fort William College was established at Calcutta and the Baptist Mission Press started functioning at Serampur. To quote Krishna Kripalani once again, "in most of the Indian languages the early spade work was done by Christian missionaries who helped to fashion the basic material on which the development of prose was built. (In Basham 412). Both English and vernacular press asserted the need for a common national destiny. Of course, occasionally Anglo-Indian and the vernacular press indulged in allegations and counter-allegations, vituperation, calumny and mutual vilification. However, amidst all these storms there were men who were genuinely interested in understanding India :

They spent years and years in learning our language including Sanskrit and Pali and understanding our past. In fact they re-discovered it. For we too had forgotten about it. There was for example, no mention

of Ashoka in any Indian text. No Indian could decipher the script on the Ashoka pillars. The truly breathtaking and enchanting Ajanta and Ellora lay buried. These men literally gave us our past and with it our self-confidence and pride. (The Times of India 1st Nov 1981, 6).

The investigations by Indologists like Holwell, Alexander Dow, Charles Wilkins, William Jones, Alexander Cunningham and several others culminated in the birth of Indology aimed at a scientific and systematic study of India's past.

The transformation of ideas and attitudes in the minds of men especially the educated, gradually began to assert its influence on the Indian mind. India woke up overnight as if from a long slumber and Indians began to look beyond the age old religious and social boundaries. If one takes the status of women in a nation as an index of its degree of civilization, the 19th century Indian society was certainly at its nadir. It had ceased to live. Consequently right from the days of the Company rule conscientious Englishmen were appalled at some of our social and religious practices. More shocking were the Thuggee and human sacrifices but they were confined to isolated pockets. Among all the social evils of the time it was the plight of women that caught the imagination of most of the nineteenth century Anglo-Indian writers. Tod, Taylor, Heber and Emily Eden felt that women in India were the most exploited and suppressed lot. Summing up Miss Eden's reaction to the

plight of Indian women, her biographer has this comment to offer :

The longer she stayed in India, the more thankful she was not to have been a woman native to this terrible land. She could laugh and talk about rebellion but what chance had an Indian woman of rebelling against anything when life was held so cheaply? Men killed their wives for a caprice, a whim, a suspicion, a passing jealousy. Only when they were young and desirable had women any influence over their husbands and then all must be done by cunning, when they were old they could command obedience, but this again must be gained by dubious ways. Emily knew that not for all the emeralds in India could she have borne such a life (Dunbar 194).

Many Englishmen and women of the time shared this view and therefore their literature is often a literature of social concern. The plight of widows figures time and again in their diaries, travelogues and novels, Taylor in his works waged a literary crusade for the cause of widows. His most prominent heroines like Tara and Sita are widows who remarry outside their religion. Taylor blazed a new trail, opened new vistas for the hapless women of India. Tod so identified himself with the Rajputs that he could see most of their customs and rituals from a Rajput point of view. Nonetheless he raised his voice against the inhumanity of infanticide. "Man alone", he wrote, "of the whole animal creation is equal to the task of destroying his offspring for instinct preserves what reason destroys.



The wife is the sacrifice to his egotism and the progeny of her own sex to his pride; and if the unconscious infant should escape the influence of the latter she is only reserved to become the victim of the former at the period when life is most desirous to extension." (Tod 335-36)

Concern for social change can be noticed right from the beginning of the Indo-British encounter. Education was thought to be a panacea for all social evils. As early as 1823 Bishop Heber had predicted that female education alone would change the plight of the Indian women. Education and social change was a constant theme among the proponents of western education in India. Gradually the indirect seepage of western ideas through education and the direct onslaught of Christian missionaries on Hindu practices began to exert their influence. In the wake of nineteenth century Indian Renaissance the educated began to question the validity of customs and practices hitherto held sacrosanct. Social reformers and religious thinkers began to advocate far-reaching changes. Most of them supported the social reforms initiated by the British administrators. As a result the Indian society began to get rid of social pests like dacoits, Thugs and Pindaries and social evils like suttee, child marriage, infanticide and human sacrifice. The momentum of social change held unabated till Hindu and Muslim fundamentalism reacted against it before and after the 1857

mutiny. Once the power was transferred to the Crown, the English became rather cautious in their approach to social and religion problems in India. Britain wanted her officials to respect the religious sentiments of her subject nations.

The concern of the British for reform in the fields of education and social and agrarian reforms was certainly genuine even if at times it was paternalistic. One has to admit that there was a basic difference between the English and other conquistadores of India. Others conquered by the sword. The English conquered more by tact and intelligence and conscience played role in the decisions they made. All the same their political and economic pretensions were highly selfish and hypocritical. One need not condemn European humanism as an ideology of lies. There were a number of whites both in India and in England who opposed Britain's policies in India. Several Englishmen were genuinely interested in the uplift of the Indian masses, especially the farmers. They were keen to introduce new cash crops like indigo, jute, tea and better varieties of cotton. Development of indigo plantations in Bengal during the eighteenth century and of cotton in central India during the early decades of the nineteenth century brought prosperity to many farmers in India. However the interdependence of the British and Indian economies and the policies meant to protect

the English manufacturers made a damaging impact on Indian economy. A modern historian has summed up the situation thus, "The British had given an impetus to the destruction of the old economy but did not permit the rise in its place of one more suited to the modern age. India served as supplier of raw materials to Britain's new industries and as market for her manufactured goods". (qtd. in Parry 10) This was detrimental to India's own traditional industries like textiles, glass, paper, metal and iron smelting. General Frazer, resident at Hyderabad complained that the Indian weavers were reduced to beggary. In his opinion the English had robbed them of their daily bread by inundating the country with their cotton twists.

The gap between the precept and the actual practice pained writers like Heber, Tod and Taylor. As insiders they knew that "the British rule was hardly the altruistic undertaking advertised by mission-happy Anglo-Indian officials" (Parry 11). Bishop Heber could not anticipate the long term repercussions of the economic policies espoused by the Company Raj. However he could see through the unreasonableness behind the British taxation policy. In a letter to Charles William Wynn he remarked:

Neither native nor English agriculturalist,  
I think, can thrive at the present rate of  
taxation. Half the gross produce of the soil  
is demanded by the government and this, which is  
nearly the average rate wherever there is not a

permanent settlement, is sadly too much to leave an adequate provision for the peasant even with the usual frugal habits of the Indian and the very inartificial and cheap manner in which they cultivate the land (Heber 413).

Another factor that weighed on their conscience was the utilization of the Indian revenue for Britain's imperial ventures in Asia and the Middle East. The revenue collected from this land financed the administration, the Indian army and the organization of Indian affairs in England. Contrary to the prevalent thinking of the time Bishop Heber advocated a policy of drawing less money from the natives and spending more of what is drawn within the country itself. He gave a clarion call to open some door to Indian industries in Europe and to involve more and more Indians in trade, industry and administration. Taylor waged a relentless battle for a more equitable tax structure and the uplift of the masses entrusted to his care. Tod was more volatile. In his reaction to the British indifference towards the plight of Indians he wrote :

We dare not say 'our yoke is easy' while our tribute is galling and our imposts on our immediate subjects are heavy and impoverishing. Gainsay it who may, every fiscal and financial enactment of our government is framed not with a view to better them but to fill our own treasury. When Rome, the mother of nations, conquered and colonized the most remote regions of Europe, she introduced her arts, made the conquered the instrument of government and left monuments of her power and sway, in works of grandeur and

utility many of which still survive at least attest her power. What has Britain done in this way? What portion of the millions of gold extorted from the industry of her Indian subjects has she applied to their benefit? (Travels 66)

As a matter of fact economic issues figure only nominally in the writings under consideration. But whenever they come up they seem to generate more than average heat. None of the Anglo-Indians sympathetic to the native cause could ignore the economic realities both under the company and the Crown.

In conclusion one can say that nineteenth century India in all its myriad aspects, in all its varied realities provides the raw material, the thematic source for this phase of Anglo-Indian literature. The mystery and mystique of India, her past and present, her ethnic and cultural diversities, the sublime and the ludicrous in her social life, all seem to have cast a spell on the traveller as well as the administrator. In effect this literature is a struggle to give a kind of form and shape to an epoch making cultural encounter. The Anglo-Indians chose to cast their Indian experience in a problematic form. Many of them had the skill to transform experience into fictional structure without being self consciously literary. They reveal qualities of literariness such as the ability to capture the whole scenario of cultural chaos, formulate

human crises into objective structures, the ground for critical appraisal. Moreover like Mark Twain they also had the knack of seeing things beyond these facade and the ability to bring out the oddities and eccentricities from individual encounters. The literature of this era is important to us as it reaches out to an India in all her multiplicity and contradiction, sets up a much better and rich cultural encounter, points to the loss of opportunity of unbiased cultural exchange resulting in the mutiny and the widening of the racial divide. In its most humane manifestation it offers a tantalizing glimpse of a different India that could have emerged if the encounter had been less political and more cross-cultural.

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## Chapter I

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