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RECONSIDERING PAUL SCOTT'S *THE RAJ QUARTET*: HISTORY,
GENRE, AND CRITICISM

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ABSTRACT

This study examines conceptions of history, race, and colonial culture in Paul Scott's *The Raj Quartet* (1966-75), and via comparative textual analysis, advances a critical reconsideration of Scott's unique contribution to the coevolution of British and postcolonial literature in the second half of the twentieth century. Following recent critical arguments that have criticized the blatant anti-colonial agenda currently discernible in various branches of postcolonial studies, this work challenges the commonly held critical notion that the *Quartet* exhibits nostalgia for empire and contests Scott's proscriptive designation as either a neo-colonialist or an imperial apologist.

Since its publication, critics have drawn parallels between the *Quartet* and the work of earlier writers of Anglo-Indian fiction, such as Rudyard Kipling and E. M. Forster. Unfavorable comparisons between the *Quartet* and earlier imperialist narratives intensified in the mid 1980s, after an adapted mini-series of the text aired on British television between 1984 and 1985. Notable postcolonial writer and critic Salman Rushdie published a scathing critique of both the film and the text, in which he characterizes the story as derivative and Scott's vision of imperial history as myopic and crypto-racist. To a substantial degree, Rushdie's influential essay has crystallized the current critical opinion of Scott's work within postcolonial and British literary studies.

This study dually addresses limited critical judgments of Scott and expands the scope of existing critical approaches to the text. Chapter I examines how the *Quartet* problematizes many of the traditional thematic motifs of earlier colonial fictions and demonstrates how the text destabilizes the imperial mythos that informed the writings of

Kipling and Forster. Chapter II analyzes Scott's novel in light of recent studies that utilize Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the literary chronotope and delineates how Scott's approach to the historical novel differentiates the *Quartet* from other mid-century sequence novels that also deal with the British Empire's demise within the colonial sphere. Chapter III focuses on the transitional aspects of Scott's writing in terms of the corresponding development of postcolonial sensibility and early postmodern stylistics displayed in the *Quartet*; this chapter also examines how the text's revisionist attitude toward traditional methods of historiography anticipates the concerns of later twentieth-century British writers. Chapter IV provides an expanded postcolonial consideration of the *Quartet*, which involves a critical comparison between the text and the film, a response to Rushdie's critique, and a comparison between the *Quartet* and Rushdie's novel, *Midnight's Children* (1981), which explores their similar approaches to historical representation.

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INTRODUCTION

Paul Scott's large-scale novel sequence, *The Raj Quartet* (1966-75), which examines the twilight years of British colonial rule in India, evinces a revelatory vision of imperial history and exposes a significant paradigm shift in British cultural consciousness; the four novels not only indicate a transition from colonialist to post-colonial modes of thought and representation, but they also crystallize the initial mid-century skepticism of earlier narratives of empire and address many of the fundamental concerns that presently dominate postcolonial studies. From its inception, *The Raj Quartet* has been compared to the work of earlier writers such as Rudyard Kipling and E.M. Forster, and as a consequence, it is frequently characterized as a derivative text—the thematic coda of an outdated mode of colonialist writing. Indeed, the introduction to the latest edition of *The Norton Anthology of English Literature: The Twentieth Century and After* (2006) iterates this sentiment with its singular mention of the work as “nostalgia for old imperial days” (Stallworthy and Ramazani 1841). In wake of the postcolonial explosion in the second half of the twentieth century, literary critical expositions by theorists such as Edward Said, Gayatri Spivak, Frantz Fanon, and Homi Bhabha have tended to focus on either the earlier voices that established the Orientalist discourse of European imperial dominance, such as Kipling and Forster, or on voices of the formerly colonized, such as Chinua Achebe, Jean Rhys, Gabriel García Márquez, and Salman Rushdie. Within critical models that adopt a rigid approach to generic categorization, Scott's work does not easily align with increasingly intransigent labels like “colonialist,” “neo-colonial,” or “postcolonial,” and, therefore, he maintains a

peripheral position in postcolonial literary studies, with the result that postcolonial critics have largely ignored the *Quartet*. Furthermore, a number of recent critical assessments that explore the *Quartet* from a postcolonial perspective do so from positions that impose various anti-colonial agendas on the text, thereby enforcing proscriptive generic categorization. Consequently, Scott's inaccurate reputation as a late imperial apologist has put him at risk of falling into the critical shadows.

In the introduction to his 1998 book, *Paul Scott's Raj Quartet: History and Division*, Peter Childs provides an insightful survey of the various critical readings of Scott's *Quartet*:

Critical views on Paul Scott's *The Raj Quartet* have varied enormously. Edward Said uses the epithet "great" and M. M. Mahood describes it as "an imaginative creation of Tolstoyan breadth and depth," while William Walsh decides it is "not an authentic literary experience of a particularly significant kind." The British historian Antony Copley argues that the *Quartet* is "quite possibly the best novel we are likely to get on the whole mixed sad tale of decolonization," while the Sri Lankan writer, Tarzie Vittachi, believes that Scott did for India what "Dostoevsky did for the Russia of his time, and Gabriel García Márquez for the Andes of his." The only consensus to be found reflects Margaret Scanlan's sentiment that the *Quartet* is "impeccably researched historical fiction." (11)

The broad spectrum of critical opinions that Childs catalogs in the opening of his introduction illustrates the fairly contentious position the *Quartet* has held since the

publication in 1966 of the first novel in the series, *The Jewel in the Crown*. Jacqueline Banerjee notes, before the book was even completed, Indian novels dealing with the same events, such as Kushwant Singh's *Train to Pakistan* (1956) and Manohar Malgonkar's *The Princes* (1963), had already received widespread recognition. While these Indian novels sought to expose the wrongs of British imperialism and contributed to emerging national and cultural identities in India and Pakistan, conversely, Scott's work examined the role of the colonists, and analyzed the effects of colonialism and imperialism on British national and cultural identity ("Paul Scott as an Imperial Author" par. 2). In retrospect, it is understandable why Scott's work had trouble finding a popular audience, and likewise, why his work is now critically neglected. At the time of its publication, the *Quartet* addressed a still tender wound in the British national consciousness. For British audiences in the 1960s and 1970s, Scott addressed a topic that they would likely have preferred to forget. With ruthless attention to historical accuracy, Scott analyzes and critiques the British Raj and the system of imperial ideology that created it. However, Scott's deft use of symbolism in his characters, situations, and imagery allows him to subtly examine the evils and perversions of the colonial system. Furthermore, the *Quartet's* intricately laden metaphorical content, coupled with its ambiguous treatment of Raj society, may explain the wide array of contrasting critical opinions of the text.

For certain postcolonial critics, Scott's white British voice too strongly echoes those of European Orientalism's preeminent representational architects—namely, Kipling, Gustave Flaubert, and to a lesser degree, Forster. This opinion is epitomized in Rushdie's 1984 essay "Outside the Whale." In it, Rushdie harshly criticizes the 1984 ITV

television adaptation of Scott's work, titled *The Jewel in the Crown*, along with a number of other 1980s films associated with an increased public interest in the topic of imperial India—the “Raj Revival” is a term Rushdie and other critics use to describe the cultural phenomenon. In addition to the film, Rushdie also specifically criticizes Scott's novels. He argues that their central plot point, the rape of a white woman by Indian men, only reinforces old colonialist stereotypes—“white society's fear of darkie” (89). Rushdie's cursory judgment of Scott's text has undoubtedly dealt the greatest blow to the *Quartet's* critical reputation, and later assessments, like those found in Jenny Sharpe's *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (1993) and M. Keith Booker's *Colonial Power, Colonial Texts: India in the Modern British Novel* (1997), have followed Rushdie in making similar hasty and unfavorable assessments of Scott's work.

“Until recently,” Peter Morey suggests, “vigorous exclusionary readings often asserted ‘the colonial’ and ‘the post-colonial’ to be antithetical and mutually exclusive entities: the former being associated with colonizer and the latter with those once colonized” (11). The problem that he acknowledges is the product of an ongoing critical disagreement over the use of the term “postcolonial,” and the parameters of its definition. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin's landmark critical work, *The Empire Writes Back* (1989), which examines (as its subtitle specifies) “theory and practice in post-colonial literatures,” provides this definition:

We use the term “post-colonial” . . . to cover all the culture affected by the imperial process from the moment of colonization to the present day. This

is because there is a continuity of preoccupations throughout the historical process initiated by European imperial aggression. (2)

Ashcroft, et al., contend that literatures of “African countries, Australia, Bangladesh, Canada, Caribbean countries, India, Malaysia, Malta, New Zealand, Pakistan, Singapore, South Pacific Island countries,” and the literature of the USA, “are all post-colonial literatures” (2). Additionally, they contend that one of the primary distinguishing characteristics common to all of these literatures is “that they emerged in their present form out of the experience of colonization and asserted themselves by foregrounding the tension with the imperial power, and by emphasizing their differences from the assumptions of the imperial centre” (2). Moreover, the definition of “post-colonial”¹ literature provided in *The Empire Writes Back*, through its articulation of various theoretical models, places emphasis on geographical location (i.e. critically situating postcolonial literature within formerly colonized areas, or being produced by formerly colonized individuals) and on the convergent political content of these texts (a vital aspect of the “continuity of preoccupations” is the process of anti-colonial cultural practices articulated in “postcolonial” writing, which enacts an important dimension of resistance to imperialism [Childs and Williams 3]).

Although Ashcroft, et al., provide one of the most thorough overviews of postcolonial criticism, in their definition of “post-colonial” literature and theory, they do not address European responses to decolonization, and, therefore, reinforce an

¹ In *Postcolonial Studies: The Key Concepts* (168-73) Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin provide an overview of the ongoing critical disagreement over hyphenation (postcolonial/post-colonial). Because this project adopts usage of the term as it appears in the work of critics like Sara Suleri and Elleke Boehmer (who omit the hyphen), this study also adopts the non-hyphenated form.

oppositional division between writing produced by former colonizers and that of the formerly colonized. In contrast, critics Elleke Boehmer and Sara Suleri have provided a means to broaden the definition of “postcolonial” writing by underscoring the reciprocal narrative connections between colonizer and colonized. Furthermore, Boehmer’s *Colonial and Postcolonial Literature* (1995) devises a redefinition of “postcolonial” literature that largely abandons racial and geographic criteria:

Rather than simply being the writing which ‘came after’ empire, postcolonial literature is that which scrutinizes the colonial relationship. It is writing that sets out in one way or another to resist colonialist perspectives. As well as a change in power, decolonization demanded symbolic overhaul, a reshaping of dominant meanings. (3)

Elaborating on Boehmer’s argument, Morey contends, “Both colonizer and colonized share a history that subverts easy binarisms, both are in part constructed by imperial ideologies, therefore, both are, in their different ways, post-colonial subjects” (12).

Comparable to Boehmer’s definition, Suleri also provides an inclusive interpretation of the “postcolonial condition” in *The Rhetoric of English India* (1992):

The postcolonial condition is neither territorially bound nor more the property of one people than of the other: instead its inevitably retroactive narrative allows for the inclusion both of its colonial past and of the function of criticism at the present time as necessary corollaries for telling stories. (21-2)

With regard to the relationship between England and India, Suleri's work emphasizes the shared history that informs both English and India writing. Likewise, Childs and R. J. Patrick Williams suggest, literary responses to decolonization that attempt to "dismantl[e] . . . structures of colonial control" reached a high point in the 1960s, and "constituted a remarkable historical moment" for both formerly colonized countries and for former colonizers (1). Moreover, in the decades following the dissolution of British India, both countries found themselves in a "world formed by decolonization" (Childs and Williams 1).

The Raj Quartet responds to decolonization via a critique of British colonialism and imperialism and reflects shifting British cultural attitudes toward the discourse of empire in the 1960s and 1970s. In order to investigate the postcolonial aspects of his work, this project adopts the redefinitions of "postcolonial" provided by critics like Morey, Boehmer, and Suleri, which consider postcoloniality in primarily political and cultural terms. Furthermore, this project recognizes that postcolonial texts are those that "partake of oppositional and interrogative narrative practices which recognize and work to dismantle the staple elements of imperial narrative," and "highlight the complicitous hegemonic drives of certain conventions of representation and seek to explore and challenge them" (Morey 12). Additionally, this project adopts Boehmer's delineation between "colonial" and "colonialist" writing; in her work, "colonial" literature relates to time-period, and is "writing concerned with colonial perceptions and experience, written mainly by metropolitans, but also by creoles and indigenes, during colonial times," and "includes literature written in Britain as well as in the rest of the Empire during the

colonial period” (2). Conversely, “colonialist” literature “was that which was specifically concerned with colonial expansion,” and was “written by and for colonizing Europeans about non-European lands dominated by them” (Boehmer 3). Boehmer suggests that “colonialist” writing,

embodied the imperialists’ point of view Colonialist literature was informed by theories concerning the superiority of European culture and the rightness of empire. Its distinctive stereotyped language was geared toward meditating the white man’s relationship with colonized peoples.

(3)

Therefore, in Boehmer’s estimation, “colonialist” writing, which actively promotes imperialist ideology and discourse, directly contrasts with “postcolonial” writing, which challenges the narrative authority and ideological tenets that inform “colonialist” texts. Additionally, the term “colonial” may be contrasted with the term “post-imperial,” which can also be understood as a temporal designation, and can be applied to English writing composed after the dissolution of the British Empire. Additionally, “post-imperial” writing, in a manner similar to earlier “colonial” writing, reflects the post-imperial decline of Britain as a global power. Suzanne Keen notes in *Romances of the Archive in Contemporary British Fiction* (2001) post-imperial historical fictions “invoke historical periods in which the British (often English) national story is central and influential,” and these texts neither “celebrate the national past uncritically nor do they adopt a single philosophy of history” (4). Following from Keen, “post-imperial” literature in Britain responds to erosion of imperial discourse in the second half of the twentieth century;

however, it may or may not specifically address colonialism or engage issues of postcolonialism.

In addition to incorporating an expanded definition of “postcolonial” literature, this study also follows the critical attitudes of recent reevaluations of Scott’s work, such as those found in Childs’s text, Michael Gorra’s *After Empire: Scott, Naipaul, Rushdie* (1997), and Morey’s *Fictions of India: Narrative and Power* (2000), and produces a varied comparative analysis of *The Raj Quartet* that demonstrates how Scott simultaneously reacts to and subverts earlier imperial narrative conventions, themes, and motifs. However, this critical analysis diverges from aforementioned studies by incorporating new revisionary perspectives on postcolonial theory. In his latest work, *The Postcolonial Unconscious* (2011), Neil Lazarus argues, “in postcolonial studies, as in modernism . . . a certain limited optic on the world, a ‘selective tradition,’ has been imagined, and is proposed as a universal” (32). He contends that the development of a “selective” or “attenuated” postcolonial literary tradition is almost exclusively the product of critical discourse, and that this critical orientation has resulted in a rigidly exclusive postcolonial literary canon where the same texts are continually examined under the same critical rubrics (22-3, 32). Furthermore, he suggests there is no single postcolonial literary tradition; instead, he posits, there are “any number of them” (35). Taking Lazarus’s work as its impetus, this study delineates how Scott’s text may be accommodated critically via an expanded approach to the postcolonial literary paradigm.

Lazarus’s critical desire for the acknowledgement of alternate postcolonial literary traditions is of particular relevance to Scott’s fiction. Due to its temporal and

classifactory liminality, the *Quartet*, as Danny Colwell accurately indicates, “inhabits an ambiguous space between the colonial text . . . and the postcolonial” (214). Additionally, considering the relatively early date(s) of the *Quartet*’s publication, Scott’s work does not emerge from a textual tradition that can be easily classified as “postcolonial.” Unlike the work of post-Independence Indian authors writing in English, which, Morey suggests, overwhelmingly fall into India’s unique postcolonial literary tradition of “national allegories” (168), Scott’s writing proceeds from a fundamentally different literary and cultural schema. In consideration of the unique position that Scott’s text occupies in terms of influence, the progressive view that Lazarus takes must be slightly adapted: as opposed to the identification of an alternate postcolonial literary tradition, a consideration must be made for texts that follow alternate trajectories toward the postcolonial sensibility—texts that operate within and across multiple literary traditions.

In order to evaluate the postcolonial aspects of the *Quartet*, this study attempts to elucidate the “ambiguous space” that the text occupies by delineating the spectrum of textual traditions that converge within the four novels. Previous critical explications of the *Quartet* have tended to approach the problem of the text’s marginality through the incorporation of a single critical lens by focusing specifically on colonialist or postcolonial aspects of the text; by examining the text primarily as a historical novel; or by investigating the structural and aesthetic aspects of the text. Critical studies that have adopted an exclusive approach almost invariably yield problematic assessments because, for the *Quartet*, which blurs multiple genre distinctions, a singular critical vantage point results in a skewed perspective. Moreover, Clifford Geertz argues that textual “genre

blurring” is not restricted to the movement between fiction and non-fiction, nor is it limited to experimental forms of contemporary fiction; he notes that the phenomenon can also be observed in fields of non-fiction writing, such as histories, documentaries, scientific writings, and critical works. However, the salient feature that all instances of “genre blurring” share, Geertz contends, is that they are indicative of a cultural shift, “the refiguration of social thought” (165). Scott’s text not only sits at the threshold between colonialist and postcolonial literature, but it also probes the limits of conventional “realist” historical fiction, progressing past modernist epistemological concerns and advancing toward implicit ontological questions concerning the way history is recorded, transmitted, and understood. The complex fragmented formal narrative structure that Scott implements in the *Quartet* indicates a developing postmodern sensibility that prefigures later twentieth century developments in metahistorical fiction and historiographic metafiction. Although these characteristics of the text align it with literary traditions and genres that may fall outside the conventional scope of postcolonial studies, they are fundamental aspects of Scott’s alternate trajectory of development as a postcolonial writer. The various elements of the *Quartet* that constitute “genre blurring,” then, are not indicative of its inherent derivativeness, as some critics have proposed; on the contrary, these are the spaces in the text where, in Geertz’s words, its “refiguration of social thought” (165) is exposed most clearly.

To facilitate an expanded critical analysis of the *Quartet*’s developmental trajectory as a postcolonial text, the chapters that comprise this study are approximately constructed as a series of freestanding publishable essays, which address specific links

between the *Quartet* and various literary traditions and genres. Chapter I, “Writing in the Wake of Empire,” performs a comparative reading of Scott and his literary forbears in order to examine the ways that the *Quartet* inverts and problematizes many of the literary themes and motifs that contributed to the ideological construction of the East in the Victorian imagination. Compared to the writings of Kipling and Forster, Scott’s vision of India is not underscored by the ideological tenet of enduring British supremacy—what Francis G. Hutchins refers to as “the illusion of permanence” (vi-xv)—which informs earlier colonialist narrative forms. Therefore, Scott’s unique historical perspective, his temporal removal from the sphere of imperial “illusion,” allows him to produce a narrative that actively interrogates many of the founding myths of imperial ideology. The first section of the chapter investigates how the *Quartet* deconstructs the Victorian concept of an ideal imperial ruler that Kipling fashions through his main character in *Kim* (1901). In a variety of ways, Scott’s sadistic police captain, Ronald Merrick, who plays a pivotal antagonistic role in all four installments of the sequence, embodies Kipling’s ideal imperial official. Via ironic inversion of the motif, Scott exposes the perversely flawed aspects of Kipling’s vision of colonial rule; correspondingly, through Merrick, Scott presents a corrupted image of Kipling’s benevolent paternalism, in which the colonial power dynamic is both eroticized and fetishized. The second section of Chapter I explores Scott’s divergence from thematic and narrative motifs in Forster’s *A Passage to India* (1924). Although critical comparisons between the *Quartet* and *A Passage to India* are prevalent in scholarship on Scott, this section investigates the implications of Scott’s departure from Forster’s perception of India as unknowable in relation to the West, which

throughout the novel, Forster characterizes as India's inherent "mystery" and "muddle." Although Forster projects a liberal humanist critique of British colonial power, the novel's construction of racial difference reinforces essentialist cultural binaries and produces an Orientalized view of India as exotic, primitive, and supernatural. Scott's migration away from this form of Orientalized representation denotes a significant shift in the way cultural difference and colonial discontent are conceived in the *Quartet*.

Chapter II, "The Long Goodbye: Constructing Time, Space, History and the Sequence Novel at Mid-Century," considers the *Quartet*'s situation within a larger tradition of extended sequence novels that appeared in the years following the Second World War. The first section of the chapter examines Scott's fiction in consideration of recent studies that expand the critical applications of Mikhail Bakhtin's "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" (1937, 1973); the section analyzes the postcolonial implications of his unique construction of time and space within the text. Following Paul Smethurst's delineation of colonialist and postcolonial chronotopes, the section considers Scott's use of cyclical forms of temporality and dedifferentiation of British and indigenous space and argues that these aspects of the text constitute a postcolonial generic chronotope. The second section of Chapter II proceeds from the critical work in Theodore Steinberg's *Twentieth-Century Epic Novels* (2005), in which he compares Scott's approach to historical fiction to Leo Tolstoy's. The section provides a comparative analysis of Scott's work and two other mid-century long-form novel sequences, Lawrence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet* (1957-60) and Anthony Burgess's *The Long Day Wanes: A Malayan Trilogy* (1956-9). This section contrasts

Scott's "insider" perception of colonial culture with Durrell and Burgess's "outsider" perspective. By adopting an "outsider" view of the colonial sphere, Durrell and Burgess reinforce many of the Orientalist stereotypes that appear in earlier colonialist texts. On the contrary, Scott's "insider" view of colonial culture dissolves the alienness of the colonial sphere and therefore provides a more progressive representational approach to depicting the motivations for friction within the cultural contact zone. Additionally, Scott's "insider" perspective also allows for the recognition of the shared cultural history between Britain and India; as "outsiders," Durrell and Burgess, construct the cultures of the colonizer and the colonized as separate and divisible.

Chapter III, "Revising the Past, Anticipating the Future: Paul Scott and Postmodernism," focuses on the early postmodern aspects of the *Quartet* against the backdrop of later developments in postmodern British historical fiction. The first section compares Scott's historical approach to that of J. G. Farrell in his novel *The Siege of Krishnapur*. The section addresses Booker's indictment of the *Quartet*'s "nostalgia" for empire and challenges his argument for *The Siege of Krishnapur*'s superiority based on this claim. Although Scott's novel does not exhibit the overt parodic elements of Farrell's work, a close comparative analysis exposes the *Quartet*'s more sensitive treatment of Indian characters, as well as its more refined and complex treatment of imperial history. The second section of the chapter examines the postmodern implications of the *Quartet*'s formal narrative structure. Throughout the novel sequence, and particularly in the first novel, Scott engineers an elaborate heterogloss narrative composed of interviews, transcripts, reports, letters, and other forms of false document, as well as episodes of free

and indirect speech. Using the theoretical work of Linda Hutcheon and Brian McHale, and the work of emerging critics like Ansgar Nünning, this section considers the revisionist, metahistorical, and historiographic metafictional aspects of Scott's literary aesthetic. Additionally, the section provides comparative links between Scott and later postmodern British writers, such as A. S. Byatt and Peter Ackroyd, and discusses Scott's similarity to these authors in terms of approach to historical representation and common cultural concerns.

Chapter IV, "Reviving *The Raj Quartet*: Cinematic Misappropriation and the Shared Postcolonial Vision of Paul Scott and Salman Rushdie," provides a critique of Scott's association with and appropriation by the "Raj Revival" phenomenon of the 1980s, and examines how the 1984 film mishandles certain aspects of Scott's text. Additionally, this chapter responds to Rushdie's analysis of the *Quartet* and argues that he is unable view the text and the film as separate works; therefore, he critically judges the text outside of its original social and political context. In comparison to Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* (1981), the *Quartet* displays a similar impulse toward revisionist historiography and deals with approximately the same historical moment. Moreover, the chapter delineates how the two authors approach, in Lazarus's words, "corrective exposition," albeit from two uniquely different perspectives.

Chapter V, "Conclusion," reexamines the overall trajectory of influence and development that advances the *Quartet* toward an overall postcolonial sensibility. Additionally, this chapter contributes an overview of Scott's relevance to current postcolonial and twentieth-century literary studies. Using topical examples, it illustrates

possible applications of the *Quartet* to other areas of literary scholarship, and provides ideas for further research and speculation about the future of Scott scholarship.

CHAPTER I

WRITING IN THE WAKE OF EMPIRE: SCOTT, KIPLING, FORSTER

I

One of the most striking aspects of Paul Scott's *The Raj Quartet*, which differentiates the text from earlier Anglo-Indian narrative forms, is its depiction of colonial India in a state of social and political flux. Scott's portrayal of the colonial social strata contrasts with those of writers like Rudyard Kipling, who tend to produce representations of India that are timeless and unchanging—a pattern of discourse Francis Hutchins terms the “illusion of permanence.” According to Hutchins, by the late nineteenth century,

An India of the imagination was created which contained no elements of either social change or political menace. Orientalization was the result of this effort to conceive of Indian society as devoid of elements hostile to the perpetuation of British rule, for it was the basis of this presumptive India that Orientalizers sought to build a permanent rule. (157)

Hutchins explains that through their fiction, writers like Kipling “constructed the myth of [Britain's] own omniscience” (156), and novels like *Kim* helped to fortify the Victorian imagination with an idealized vision of the foreign empire. However, as historian Judith M. Brown explains, the reality of life in colonial India is not consistent with the idealized vision that early colonialist writers presented:

Indian society was never static, despite what many colonial observers and scholars maintained. What was seen in the nineteenth and twentieth

centuries as ‘traditional’ was often not of many generations’ standing. It was often the unintended product of Imperial attempts to understand Indian social formations, which rested on information given to the foreign rulers by privileged social groups. (427)

Indeed, early narratives of empire, such as Kipling’s, reveal more about the attitudes of the colonists than they do about the realities of life for colonial subjects. Hutchins contends that in addition to constructing an “India of the imagination” in the minds of the British, the “illusion of permanence” that informs early colonialist writings also contributed “a further myth [in which English writers] presumed to describe the ‘real India’” (156).

In contrast to Kipling, Scott’s temporal removal from the imperial period allows him to examine colonial history and critique the conventions of colonialist fiction from outside the “illusion of permanence.” Accordingly, Michael Gorra suggests, “The great English novel about imperialism could not be written until after the empire was gone It had to wait for a writer whose own historical position allowed him to assume that the Raj was a dead letter” (29). By departing from the imperial timelessness of earlier Anglo-Indian narratives, Scott’s narrative withdraws from what Edward Said designates as the tendency of Western writers to depict the East as “static, frozen, fixed eternally,” where “[t]he very possibility of development, transformation, human movement—in the deepest sense of the word—is denied the Orient and the Oriental” (*Orientalism* 208).

Furthermore, Allen Boyer notes that with the *Quartet*, Scott takes on the dual role of novelist and historian (64), and in an interview with the *London Times*, Scott states, “you

have to get the historical framework right . . . the action grows out of both the characters and the pressure of history” (qtd. in Boyer 64). Although critical assessments of the *Quartet* vary widely, Scott’s scrupulous attention to historical detail is rarely questioned, and the general critical consensus reflects Margaret Scanlan’s previously noted evaluation that the *Quartet* is “impeccably researched historical fiction” (*Traces* 135). In the text, Scott applies the “pressure of history” to his fictional characters and situations in order to enact what Neil Lazarus terms a “corrective exposition” (116) of the colonial record. Moreover, the text interrogates the ideological tenet of imperial timelessness by challenging the rationalizing myths that sustain its existence.

In Said’s introduction to *Kim*, which appears retitled as “The Pleasures of Imperialism” in *Culture and Imperialism*, he identifies Kipling as one of the major architects of the Victorian conception of India and notes that the novel is “what historians have come to call ‘the invention of tradition’” (*Culture and Imperialism* 149). Perhaps more than any other text by Kipling, *Kim* serves as a prototypical example of nineteenth century Anglo-Indian colonialist fiction, and one of the most salient imperial myths that *Kim* propagates is the idealized conception of a colonial ruling body, for which Kipling uses the character Kim as its metaphorical personification. In comparison, Scott’s departure from the Kiplingesque can be observed in his ironic inversion of this motif. In *Kim*, Kipling jointly fashions Colonel Creighton, a British Army officer and supervisor of military intelligence along India’s northern border, and Kim, the text’s primary protagonist, as exemplary models of colonial rulers. They are intelligent, well versed in the local culture (Creighton is an ethnographer), and both display a paternal compassion

for colonial subjects. Conversely, Scott constructs an image of colonial authority that is ruthless, sadistic, and internally conflicted. Ronald Merrick, the superintendent of police in Mayapore, is the only character who plays a substantial role in every volume of the *Quartet*, and throughout the series, he enacts cruelty on victims that he “selects,” based on his own theories of social superiority, which reflect his contempt for the colonized subject.

In terms of summary, current critical opinions place the date of the events in *Kim* sometime in the early 1880s (Moore-Gilbert 120, 136). Kim is a thirteen-year-old boy, the orphaned son of an Irish military officer, who grows up in the partial care of an opium den keeper in Lahore, India. He speaks fluent Urdu (actually he speaks at least five and understands up to seven languages¹) and his English is heavily inflected with an Indian accent. He comes into contact with Teshoo Lama, a Tibetan Buddhist Abbot, who is on a spiritual journey in search of a holy river—Kim becomes his “chela,” or disciple, and accompanies him on his journey. The two set out as wandering holy men through India. During their trek, Kim becomes involved with British Secret Service as a message courier in the “Great Game,” and comes in contact with Creighton, the head of the Secret Service. By this time, Kim’s identity as a white boy, as opposed to Indian, has been discovered, and he is sent to school at St. Xavier’s, where he gets a formal English education. The lama manages to pay Kim’s tuition, and the two maintain steady contact, and Creighton has Kim trained as a spy. The plot culminates in a conflict between Kim, the lama, and a group of Russian spies in the Himalayas. Although Kim manages to stop

¹ Edward Said notes, “Throughout the book [,] Kim takes on the dialects of numerous Indian communities; he speaks Urdu, English...Eurasian, Hindi, and Bengali; when Mahbub speaks Pashtu, Kim gets that too; when the lama speaks Chinese Tibetan, Kim understands that” (*Culture and Imperialism* 158).

the Russian's espionage plot, the lama is physically and spiritually injured, and Kim becomes ill. Both eventually regain their physical wellbeing, and the lama is able to attain enlightenment through Kim. The novel ends with Kim pledging devotion to the lama but returning to service in the "Great Game."

As a boy's adventure novel, *Kim* displays characteristics consistent with traditional *Bildungsroman* and frontier romance fictions, and as Said notes, it traces Kim's movement from "liminality to dominion" within the domain of colonial India (*Culture and Imperialism* 144). Falling within the tradition of coming-of-age tales, the question of personal identity is important throughout the text; Kim asks himself, "Who is Kim?" thrice in the novel, and always at significant times: the first is in Chapter Seven, during his time at St. Xavier's (186); the second is in Chapter Eleven, after he has undergone his military education (296); and the final time is at the conclusion of the novel, after he survives a life-threatening fever (454). In the final chapter, his wording changes from "who" to "what is Kim?"—his confident answer, "I am Kim," is accompanied by an altruistic shift in perception, and he is overcome by the intimate connection he feels to India and its inhabitants. By the novel's conclusion, Kim personifies the ideal ruler; he moves from liminality to dominion, and becomes a Sahib.

The seemingly organic nature of Kim's process of transformation over the course of the novel is due, in no small part, to Kipling's careful construction of an improbable and supremely anomalous character. Kim's progressive forms of education provide a framing structure for the novel, and his moments of existential introspection signal significant points in his transformation. His educational triptych includes his upbringing

in the bazaar at Lahore and his time with the lama, which provides him with superior knowledge of Indian culture; his time at St. Xavier's, where he receives a formal English education, presumably in the humanist tradition; and his military education under the supervision of Creighton as a spy or "chain-man." From the perspective of a ruling colonial body, the first form serves as a guiding moral education steeped in imperial paternalism, the second trains him as a proper English gentleman, and the third produces a skilled soldier. Thus, not only is the character improbable, but the manner of his education is as well; however, this is far from a revolutionary critique—after all, the novel is an adventure story that often exhibits characteristics of pulp fiction. Notably, *Kim's* heavy-handed ideological didacticism is built on the extraordinary, and the image of India that Kipling constructs in the Victorian imagination is replete with boyish adventure. As Sara Suleri states, "[w]ith Kipling, the story of empire learns how to atrophy its own prematurity" (111).

In Scott's text, the empire has moved past its "golden age" and has reached a point of dissolution. Accordingly, his depiction of colonial rule does not follow *Kim's* trajectory of liminality to dominion; instead, Merrick's development over the course of the series moves in the opposite direction—from dominion to fragmentation, and eventually to disintegration. Merrick is the son of a lower class storeowner in North London and was orphaned at fifteen years old when his parents were killed in an automobile accident (*Division 781*). For Merrick, military service in India provides a chance to raise his social status, but he is highly conscious of his own social inferiority, and this fuels his racialized hatred of Indians:

In India he'd got on far better than he could have done at home. In India he automatically became a Sahib. He hobnobbed on equal terms with people who would snub him at home and he knew they would snub him. When he considered all the things that made him one of them in India—solidarity, equality of position, the wearing of a uniform, service to a king and country—he knew these were fake. They didn't fool him or the middle and upper class people he hobnobbed with. What they had in common was the contempt they all felt for the native race of the country they ruled. (*Scorpion* 800)

If interiority is ignored, Merrick's personal history is an exemplary case of what an ambitious individual can achieve doing the empire's work (later in the series, after the incident of Daphne Manners's rape in Mayapore, he eventually marries Susan Layton, a woman of substantially higher social class). In comparison, parts of his story parallel that of *Kim*'s title character. They are both orphaned at a young age and must rely on their own intelligence and ingenuity to survive; they are both of a lower social class, although Kim is somewhat worse in this regard, being Irish²; and for both characters, imperial service provides a way to increase social worth and forge cohesive social identities within the colonial domain.

The difference between Merrick and Kim, and the nature of Scott's critique of Kiplingesque idealism, rises out of the hypocrisy of imperial ideology that is exposed through Merrick's character. Peter Childs suggests that from the beginning of the story,

² Radhika Mohonram provides insight into Kim's Irishness in her essay "Dermographia: Written on the Skin, or How the Irish became White in India" (2005).

“Merrick is an outsider,” and that “[h]e has traditional qualities endorsed by the Raj but none of the caring sentiments that . . . accompany them” (125). Merrick reinforces the inherent “fakeness” of the imperial mission in India when he recites the “Raj Code”: “Devotion. Sacrifice. Self-denial. A cause, an obligation, a sort of final moral definition . . . The whole impossible nonsensical dream” (*Scorpion* 901). Merrick prefaces this statement by saying, at one time he “fell for it,” but the reality of life under the Raj has left him disillusioned. Therefore, the designation of Sahib is automatic for Merrick, as it is for every white man in India; among the members of the ruling class, the term stands as an empty signifier.

Like Creighton and Kim, Merrick is a good soldier with some background in ethnography; he speaks Urdu and moves easily through the colonial social body. However, as Childs notes, Merrick’s relationships are based on contempt and envy (124), as opposed to the compassionate altruism that informs *Kim*’s construction of paternalism. Thus, Merrick does not experience the connection and sense of unity that Kim experiences at the conclusion of Kipling’s text; in contrast, his sense of personal identity is only secured through rigid division between colonizer and colonized—ruler and ruled. He is the personification of what Daphne Manners identifies as the “white robot” (*Jewel* 460):

They were predictable people, predictable because they worked for the robot. What the robot said they would say, what the robot did they would do, and what the robot believed was what they believed because people like them had fed that belief into it. And they would always be right so

long as the robot worked, because the robot was the standard or rightness.

(*Jewel* 467)

Daphne's likening Merrick to a robot in *The Jewel in the Crown* becomes literal in *The Day of the Scorpion* when Merrick is seriously injured while unsuccessfully attempting to save the life of Teddy Bingham (a fellow army officer and Sarah Layton's first husband) during a skirmish with Japanese insurgents in Manipur. As a result, Merrick's face is severely scarred, and his left arm is amputated. His internal fragmentation is externalized, and through Merrick's disfigurement, Scott reinforces the motif of the ruling colonial body as mechanical, unnatural, and grotesque. Count Bronowsky, the Russian advisor to the Nawab of Mirat, also links Merrick's outward disfigurement to his internal conflict:

He is one of your hollow men. The outer casing is almost perfect and he carries it off almost to perfection. But, of course, it is a casing he has designed. This loss he has sustained—the left arm—even this fits . . . I attempted to say that had he not suffered the loss he might one day have been forced to invent it. (*Division* 580)

Like the empty "Raj Code," Merrick illustrates that the assumed equality of social position under the Raj and the ideological tenets of imperial paternalism are without substance. For all the benevolent characters in the *Raj Quartet*, Merrick reflects the fundamental problems inherent to colonial rule, and this overrides any moral or ethical advancement that other characters attempt. As Sarah Layton says of Merrick in *The Day of the Scorpion*, "You are, yes, our dark arcane side. You reveal something that is sad

about us, as if out here we had built a mansion without doors and windows, with no way in and no way out. All India lies in our doorstep and cannot enter to warm us or be warmed” (902).

Suleri contends that after all of Kim’s collective experiences and education, he is “inexorably reduced to the sum of his utility” (127), which also holds true for Scott’s Merrick. However, where Kipling exalts Kim’s potential for virtually inexhaustible imperial utility, Scott condemns Merrick’s bureaucratic efficiency as mechanical and malign. For Scott, Merrick is a reflection of social reality, and *Kim*, by contrast, reflects an idealized colonialist mythos. Accordingly, Childs contends that Scott’s most direct definition of paternalism comes through the historian Guy Perron in *A Division of the Spoils* (119) and relates directly to Kipling:

that Kiplingesque double-talk that transformed India from a place where plain ordinary greedy Englishmen carved out something for themselves to balance the more tedious consequences of the law of primogeniture, into one where they appeared to go voluntarily into exile for the good of their souls and uplift the native. (*Division* 620)

Merrick exposes bare the jagged rift between the imperial myth and the reality of the colonial paradigm under the Raj. Furthermore, Scott deepens his critique of Kiplingesque idealism by constructing Merrick’s desire for dominance over the colonial subject as both perverse and transgressive, and Merrick demonstrates this through his relationship with another prominent character in the series, the young British-educated Indian, Hari Kumar.

Through Hari, Scott fashions a colonized subject who does not adhere to the conventions of Kiplingesque imperialist fictions. In *Kim*, the characters Teshoo Lama, the Tibetan Buddhist abbot who serves as Kim's surrogate father and spiritual guide, and Hurree Chunder Mookerjee, Creighton's Western educated assistant who aids in Kim's education as a "chain-man," together represent two distinct and enduring stereotypes of colonized subjects. The lama corresponds with the Victorian conception of the exoticized Orient; he is brimming with ancient mysticism but nonetheless remains benevolently devoted to the wellbeing of Kim and, by proxy, the British Empire. Hurree is a prototypical example of Thomas Macaulay's proposed "interpreter class" of educated Indians (Macaulay par. 30)—his extensive Western education supplies him with authority and agency to the extent that they carry out imperial demands. However, Kipling places limits on his authority and agency by casting him as a humorous mimic; Hurree constantly confuses and misapplies classical literary references and peppers his speech with malapropisms. In contrast, Scott virtually de-exoticizes the colonial subject and breaks from stereotypical representation by constructing Hari as an individual of distinct and transfigured hybrid status within the colonial paradigm. Unlike Kipling's lama and Hurree, he is raised and educated in England and only returns to India in his late teens; he is not an Orientalized mystic or an Anglicized mimic—he is English in every respect other than the color of his skin. The physical and physiological trauma that Hari endures as one of Merrick's "selected" victims signals the problematic nature of his hybridity in the colonial sphere; however, Scott does not figure Hari as a social anomaly but as a prescient marker of the hybrid social evolution that the Raj has unintentionally created.

Hari's father, Duleep Kumar, wholeheartedly believes in the "intellectual superiority of the English" (*Jewel* 227) and that Hari's education at Chillingborough will give him "the secret of Englishness . . . [a] magical combination of knowledge, manner, and race" (*Jewel* 213, 226). As a result of his education, Hari ("Harry Coomer," as he is known in England) grows up to be utterly indistinguishable from an upper class English boy in all but one respect: the color of his skin. On the surface, in a similar fashion to Merrick, Hari is symbolic of a venerable success of parental imperialism, a supreme product of the great "civilizing mission" of British colonialism in India. Hari is the actualization of Macaulay's imperial desire in his influential 1835 "Minute on Indian Education":

It is impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and color, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect. (par. 30)

Hari certainly meets Macaulay's colonial desire in all but one vital respect: his education holds no immediate or inherent value to the imperial mission. Moreover, the underlying desire expressed in the "Minute" is not Indian education for education's sake; according to Macaulay, the purpose of Indian education is the creation of willing and imminently controllable Indian intermediaries, who in turn form the backbone of Britain's system of indirect rule in India.

In contrast to Hari, *Kim*'s Hurree adheres to Macaulay's formula in nearly all respects; the foremost value of the Bengali "chain-man's" education is its function in the imperial service. Hurree, or "the Babu," as he is generally called, holds several degrees from Calcutta University, is an expert anthropologist, and assists Colonel Creighton with gathering military intelligence. He assists in Kim's training as a "chain-man" throughout the novel. When he explains the importance of a Western education to Kim, Hurree relates Shakespeare's *Julius Caesar* and *King Lear* to ideas of civil service, and within the subject of mathematics, he emphasizes "mensuration" (measurement) due to its importance to cartography and survey work (258-9). However, Kipling's ambivalence toward the hybrid colonial subject is exposed through Hurree's limited authority and agency. Although he is a tremendous advocate of Kim's education at St. Xavier's and as a "chain-man," his status as an educated Indian often serves as a source of humor in the novel. Said notes,

The native anthropologist, clearly a bright man whose reiterated ambitions to belong to the Royal Society are not unfounded, is almost always funny, or gauche, or somehow caricatural, not because he is incompetent or inept—on the contrary—but because he is not white; that is, he can never be Creighton Just as [Kipling] could not imagine an India in historical flux *out of* British control, he could not imagine Indians who could be effective and serious in what he and other of the time considered Western pursuits. (*Culture and Imperialism* 153)

The humorous aspects of the character are derived from his continual misapplications of Western literary texts and his propensity toward malapropism. Ralph J. Crane notes that Hurree refers to Herbert Spencer at least four times in the novel, and the clearest referenced concept is Spencer's notion of "Social Darwinism," as expressed in his *Principles of Psychology* (1870): "I am good enough Herbert Spencerian, I trust to meet little thing like death, which is all in my fate, you know" (*Kim* 356; qtd. in *Inventing India* 70). Crane suggests that when Hurree "thanked all Gods of Hindustan, and Herbert Spencer" (*Kim* 382), he misapplies Spencer (*Inventing India* 70). Under the guise of humor, minor malapropisms, such as "[t]hat is a creaming joke" (448), where he misconstrues the idiomatic use of "cream" (e.g. "the cream of the crop"), and his unnecessary use of the definite article, as in "there is not accounting for thee³ [sic] taste" (451), destabilize the authority and agency of his education and station by signifying his inferiority and racial otherness. Thus, Kipling figures Hurree as the prototypical Macaulayite—his Western education is important insofar as it serves the purposes of the imperial campaign, and anything beyond that is laughable mimicry. As Bart Moore-Gilbert contends, "Kipling does not, of course, suggest that Hurree represents the future leadership of India" (125).

Through Hari Kumar, Scott does not construct an evolution of the Western educated Indian archetype; instead, he exposes the stereotypical and temporal nature of the motif. Duleep, who is educated at the Government College in India before moving to England, follows a pattern of colonial mimicry that parallels Kipling's Hurree to a greater

³ The misspelling is intentional. Kipling uses double letters at the end of words throughout the novel to indicate dialect.

degree than Hari. Dubbing himself “David Coomer” and Hari “Harry” (*Jewel* 236), Duleep advances Hari as his surrogate in order to achieve his desire to become a proper Englishman. This is unattainable for Duleep, which Homi Bhabha confirms theoretically in his seminal work on the subject, *The Location of Culture* (1994): “colonial mimicry is the desire for a recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite* . . . mimicry is at once resemblance and menace” (122,123). Duleep mirrors this sentiment when he compares his heavily inflected English with Hari’s spotless upper class British accent:

There came a time when [Duleep] was able to say ‘It is not only that if *you* answer the phone a stranger on the other end would think he was speaking to an English boy of the upper classes. It is that you *are* that boy in your mind and behaviour. Conversely when I was your age, it was not only that I spoke English with an even stronger *babu* accent that I speak it now, but that everything I said, because everything I thought, was in conscious mimicry of the people who rule us. We did not necessarily admit this, but that is what was always in their minds when they listened to us. It amused them mostly. Sometimes it irritated them. It still does. (*Jewel* 216)

Duleep, then, represents an evolution of the archetype of Western educated Indian; he is an individual who has become discontented with his Otherness. However, his high regard for the English, and his desire to be accepted as one of them, is informed by the imperial grand narrative of British superiority. Thus, his beliefs and desires are jointly products of

the Victorian imagination. As Gorra indicates, Duleep can never be “Anglo-Indian,” a term which Duleep misapplies in the text, because this term could only be used for an Englishman who had either spent his career in India or retired there; Duleep can only ever be “Anglicanized” (39-40). However, as Bhabha contends, to be Anglicanized is “*emphatically not to be English,*” it is “*almost the same, but not quite*” (qtd. in Gorra 40, *Location of Culture* 123).

In regard to mimicry, Hari is a different case altogether. Where Duleep and Kipling’s Hurree are educated in Western schools in India, presumably with other Indians, Hari is educated in England with English boys. The only language he speaks is English, and he speaks with no Indian inflection. In the sense that Duleep and Hurree are mimics, Hari is not. He is brought to England in 1922 at the age of two, and does not endure the colonizer/colonized social environment of the Raj. By supplying Hari with this personal history, Scott breaks from the established archetype of the Western educated Indian and produces a new type of hybridized individual. Hari’s existence, then, is indicative of the evolution of the colonial relationship between England and India and reveals how Macaulayism itself is ideologically driven by the “illusion of permanence.” Therefore, Hari is both a transcendent and liminal figure within the scope of Anglo-Indian literature. He is the product of what Bhabha calls “classificatory confusion”:

The ‘unthought’ across which colonial man is articulated is a process of classificatory confusion . . . This results in the *splitting* of colonial discourse so that two attitudes towards external reality persist; one takes

reality into consideration while the other disavows it and replaces it by a product of desire that repeats, rearticulates ‘reality’ as mimicry. (130)

Hari does not fetishize the culture of the colonizer, like Duleep and Hurree, nor does he carry the majority of stereotypical signifiers of Otherness (accent, custom confusion, tendency towards malapropism). Thus, when Hari returns to India, neither the identity of Englishman nor Indian fits (Childs 100). His shift into unstable liminality comes swiftly when he finds that “once past Suez the English people who would have spoken to him freely enough from Southampton onwards” begin to ignore him (*Jewel* 262).

Scott’s redefinition of conventional representations of colonial rulers and colonial subjects challenges the validity of the colonizer/colonist binary construct. In the Kipling text, the colonizer/colonist binary reinforces the ideological legitimacy of British paternalism by portraying the point of contact as a space of social and cultural unification. Kim and the lama share an altruistic paternal bond that is solidified through spiritual communion, and Kim is likewise able to achieve a stable personal identity by accepting his role as a spy in Great Game, thereby assuming beneficent dominion over the colonized subject. In the *Quartet*, Scott upends Kipling’s idealized motif of unity and shared cultural altruism by exposing the explicit division that the colonizer/colonized binary construct implies. Merrick “selects” Hari as his victim in order to prove, emphatically, that social and cultural unity between England and India is impossible. Hari’s unique hybrid status threatens Merrick’s sense of superiority because it exposes race as the only source of Merrick’s power in India. Hence, Scott critiques the idealized nature of Kipling’s benevolent unifying vision of imperial paternalism by exposing its

development into a malevolent, fetishized, perversely uneven struggle for imperial dominance.

Childs contends that Hari's dual name (Hari/Harry) represents the division of his world (99) and notes that Scott himself indicates that the main theme of *The Jewel in the Crown* is the "failure" of the British to unify India under its imperial system. In a notebook he kept while writing the novel, Scott writes, "[e]very aspect of this novel should be a variation of the general theme of our failure to unify" (qtd. in Childs 98)⁴. In consideration of the novels' overarching theme of imperial "failure," the relationship between Hari and Merrick functions as a cogent symbol of irresolvable colonial division. Scott constructs their conflict as the representative death of the Kiplingesque desire for social and political unity under British colonial rule. Additionally, Scott's critique of Kipling's idealized notion of colonial unity involves a transformation of the point of cultural contact from a space of social and spiritual communion, as it is figured in *Kim*, into a transgressively sexualized space, which is characterized by the fetishized desire for dominance. In Kipling's text, the relationship between the Kim and the lama begins with this curiously worded desire:

The man was entirely new to all his experience, and he meant to investigate further: precisely as he would have investigated a new building or strange festival in Lahore city. The lama was his trove, and he proposed to take possession. (19-20)

⁴ Childs supplies the following note: "Scott, Brown Spiral Notebook (Tulsa: II: 2: 3)" (154). This notebook is held in the Paul Scott archives at the University of Tulsa.

However, Kim's desire for possession is mediated through cultural exchange when he submits to the lama and becomes his "chela" (disciple). This initial submission to the lama, which evolves over the course of the novel into a symbolic father/son relationship between the lama and Kim, functionally serves to suspend the question of alterity until the conclusion of the novel—deferring the question until it can be framed in paternal compassion. Accordingly, the three-tiered structure of the novel, which roughly equates to Kim's different forms of education, can be understood as Kim's movement from dispossession to possession. Suleri suggests that the "ambivalence of the narrative" does not offer a simple resolution to question of possession concerning the relationship between Kim and the lama (117-8); however, Kipling's emphasis on the symmetrical nature of the constituent relationship belies the hierarchical implications of the colonizer/colonized binary, and Kim's cultural marginality contributes to the preservation of the illusion of equality between himself and the lama. In Chapter Fifteen, the concluding chapter of the novel, Kim confronts his own liminality when he proclaims to the lama, "I am *not* a Sahib. I am thy *chela*," and the lama ponders that in a past life perhaps he was a Sahib and replies, "[I was] never a Sahib like thee. I swear it" (433). This exchange distills the implicit theme of unification that characterizes Kipling's desires for of the colonial rule; in order to become an effective ruler (i.e. Sahib), Kim must be a successful student of the colonized body, and only through this intimate connection can he understand the moral purpose of the imperial mission. The story remains open-ended, as does the colonial relationship—unity is only possible because it is sanctioned by the "illusion of permanence" that informs the work.

In the *Quartet*, Scott transforms the sphere of cultural contact from a space of unity into a space of division, and an example of this can be observed in what Crane refers to as the “erotic triangle” involving Hari, Merrick, and Daphne (“Playing the White Man” 20). When Hari arrives in Mayapore, ironically, he faces more racism than when he was in England and reluctantly finds employment as a writer for the local newspaper, the *Mayapore Gazette*. He comes into contact with Daphne through another marginalized Indian character, Lady Lili Chatterjee, the widow of a prominent Indian dignitary, Nello Chatterjee, who was knighted for his service to the British. Lady Chatterjee, while respected by many members of the Raj, is also excluded from many places and functions because she is Indian. When Daphne meets Hari, she is staying for an extended visit at Lady Chatterjee’s residence, MacGregor House. Scott figures Daphne’s dual affection for Lady Chatterjee—she takes to calling her “Auntie Lili”—and attraction to Hari as evidence of the possibility of social equality between England and India. However, the grim result of her relationship with Hari, which results in her eventual rape and death, and Hari’s torture and imprisonment at the hands of Merrick, reaffirms Scott’s running theme of “failure to unify.”

Merrick, who simultaneously desires Daphne and Hari, albeit for different reasons, constitutes the third point of the “erotic triangle.” Although Merrick lays designs on Daphne as a means to social advancement—the Manners family is of significant social status within the Raj—he only turns his attentions toward her when she begins associating romantically with Hari; he comments about their relationship: “It’s a direct challenge to everything sane and decent that we try to do out here” (*Scorpion* 690).

However, Bronowsky, a homosexual character, recognizes the nature of Merrick's latent sexual attraction to Hari, and the subtext of his comments to Nigel Rowan, another military officer and former Chillingborough student, exposes this:

When I met [Merrick] I talked to him at great length and as we talked I got this other impression that Miss Manners had never really interested him at all, that he had scarcely noticed her until her association with the Indian boy had begun, and that he could not avoid noticing her then because he had had his eye on the young man for a long time. The young man was an obsession, an absolute fixation. Perhaps even Mr. Merrick does not fully appreciate all the possible reasons why. (*Division* 579-80)

Therefore, after Daphne and Hari consummate their relationship sexually in the Bibighar Gardens, and a gang of Indian onlookers subsequently rapes Daphne, Merrick uses the incident to wage a personal attack against Hari. Out of fear for Hari's safety, Daphne remains silent about his involvement. Despite lack of evidence, Merrick has Hari imprisoned on suspicion of rape, along with several other Indian men, and holds him under the Defense of India Rules.

What takes place between Merrick and Hari during the interrogation symbolically constitutes a distillation of Scott's motif of "failure" of the imperial enterprise. In the scene, the metaphorical power struggle between England and India, which Scott describes as "locked in an imperial embrace" (*Jewel* 5) is underscored with erotic desire. In the *Quartet*, the homosocial interplay that characterizes the compassionate component of Kipling's imperial allegory is transformed into a transgressive homoerotic desire for

the colonial Other. During the interrogation, Hari is stripped naked, tied bent over to a trestle, and whipped by Merrick, who relays the “symbolic” nature of his actions to Hari:

‘He said that up until then our relationship had only been symbolic. It had become real.’ [. . .] ‘ . . . He said for a moment we were mere symbols . . . It wasn’t enough to say he was English and I was Indian, that he was a ruler and I was one of the ruled. We had to find out what that meant . . . ’
(*Scorpion* 798)

Danny Colwell suggests that during the interrogation, Merrick ironically displays his most devoted allegiance to the Raj’s imperial authority while giving in to his contradictory desires; he notes, “[Merrick] covets the Indian’s body as both carer and chastiser” (219). Evidence of this duality occurs in Hari’s account of what takes place after the beating:

At one point he smeared his hands over my buttocks and showed me the blood on his palm Then he smeared his hand on my genitals
Afterwards he came in alone with a bowl of water and a towel. My wrists and ankles were manacled to the legs of the charpoy. . . . I was still naked. He bathed my lacerations. (*Scorpion* 801; qtd. in Colwell 219)

Gorra suggests that Merrick’s display of imperial dominance over Hari constitutes a symbolic anal rape (53). Moreover, Scott constructs corresponding instances of sexual violation—Daphne and Hari—in order to illustrate the utter impossibility of cohesive social integration under the Raj.

Through the Merrick/Hari binary, Scott reveals the tremendous pressure of history through the symbolic significance of their interaction. Both characters are products of imperial ideology that descends from idealized Kiplingesque notions of imperial identity. However, both expose the illusory nature of the collective ideology that informs their existence. Merrick is an able police officer, and later soldier, who seeks to increase his social status through military service in India—an idea which texts like *Kim* wholeheartedly reinforce—but he openly acknowledges that the ideological tenets of the “Raj Code” are fundamentally false. Likewise, Hari’s extensive Western education makes him a prototypical example of Macaulay’s desire for Indian education, but instead of inclusion, he finds himself to be an outsider in both England and India. Both men expose Scott’s disillusionment with idealized notions of imperial paternalism and the violent eroticized nature that the colonial binary engenders.

The Raj Quartet, therefore, fractures the “illusion of permanence” that characterizes *Kim*’s vision of the British Raj. In accordance with this notion, Francine Weinbaum suggests that Kipling belonged to an “era of pride,” and *Kim* radiates a “sense of pride in British accomplishment, a faith in the success of ‘imperial purpose’”; in contrast, she contends that Scott writes from an “era of melancholy,” and he “laments the failure of imperial ideals” (“Paul Scott’s India” 101). Critics like M. Keith Booker consider Scott’s theme of imperial failure to be an indication of imperial “nostalgia” in the novel: “In its decline, the empire remains nostalgic for this past, but, recognizing its inevitable demise, it also becomes . . . nostalgic for the present” (12). Furthermore, Booker views *Kim* and the *Quartet* as operating within the same “nostalgia” mode; he

notes, “The frequent denial of history in text from *Kim* to *The Raj Quartet* is itself a symptom of this very phenomenon” (12). However, through Merrick, and the reflections of his character that are exhibited in the observations of Sarah, Perron, and Bronowsky, Scott acknowledges the fallacious unreality of the Kiplingesque version of imperial history; likewise, he illustrates how Kipling’s imperial myth construct supports cultural division, as opposed to unification. Furthermore, Salman Rushdie’s criticism that Scott’s depiction of Merrick displays an “instinct for cliché” (“Outside the Whale” 90) does not take into consideration the opposition to generic conventions that the character represents. Hence, the *Quartet* does not nostalgically recall earlier colonialist fictions; instead, novels like *Kim*, as urtext, contribute to the overall historical milieu that *Quartet* attempts to revise.

II

Paul Scott’s extrication of *The Raj Quartet* from colonialist narrative models is perhaps best illustrated by its thematic engagement with E.M. Forster’s *A Passage to India*. Although the two texts are most commonly compared in terms of their use of a rape scenario as a centralized motif, the overwhelming critical focus on this significant thematic connection has largely overshadowed other notable aspects of Scott’s palimpsest revision of Forster’s novel. In relation to the Indo-British imperial connection, Scott saw India as a “mausoleum” for “the last two great senses of public duty [the British] had as a people . . . the sense of duty that was part and parcel of having an empire . . . [and] the

sense of duty so many of us felt that to get rid of it was the liberal human thing to do” (*On Writing* 69; qtd. in Gorra 25). Michael Gorra aligns the first sense of duty with Rudyard Kipling’s view of empire, and the second with Forster’s, and he suggests that the two writers illustrate the dominant ideological contrast between paternalistic and liberal humanist approaches to the Raj:

Kipling subdues the subcontinent to description, establishing a close connection between its imaginative and its literal possession

Forster’s India, in contrast, seems knowable only in its unknowability; and for him that itself is a reason why Britain ought not keep it. (25).

Gorra views these two rhetorical positions as “two sides of a single coin,” which work to produce similar representations of the Raj (25). Although Forster’s representational approach abandons the myth that English writers possess the ability to “describe the ‘real India’” (Hutchins 156), Gorra argues that like Kipling, Forster writes from within the confines of the “illusion of permanence”: “although there’s never any doubt about his hatred of the Raj, Forster’s account now seems limited . . . by the fact that his India, like Kipling’s, remains essentially abstracted from history” (28). Moreover, the strong anti-imperialist sentiment displayed in *A Passage to India* emerges from a fundamentally problematic premise—in the novel, the veritable “unknowability” of India precludes a stable cultural relationship between the two nations; therefore, the imperial project in India is destined to fail. Furthermore, this premise implies essentialist notions of racial and cultural difference, which reinforce Orientalist patterns of representation despite the novel’s overtly anti-imperial political message. The assertion of India’s “unknowability”

provides the foundation of *A Passage to India*'s critique of British imperialism, and Forster constructs virtually all of the major events and characters in the novel to reinforce this theme. Scott's rejection of this premise not only exposes the different function of the rape motif within his text, but it also reveals his transition out of the essentialist modes of representation that underscore Forster's historically abstracted vision of the colonial sphere.

Notably, Forster's India exists virtually devoid of any contemporary social or political references; Gorra suggests that the novel "appears to float in time, unconnected to any sense of a continuously unfolding—indeed rapidly changing present," and he observes that Forster's characters are seemingly "unaffected by Amritsar, Congress, Gandhi, legislative reform, or the growth of communal tensions" (28-9). Accordingly, the *Quartet*'s significance as a post-Forsterian text is its focus on and explication of contemporary historical issues. In his 1972 essay "After Marabar, A Post-Forsterian View," Scott describes what he sees as the difference between the two novels:

Forster was a great writer, and *A Passage to India* is a very great novel. My admiration for it has increased on each of the three occasions I've read it, and I've found new things in it on each of them. As my own understanding of the British Indian past grows [,] so does my understanding of Forster's British-Indian novel. I see it now as a novel with a powerful prophetic element, as a philosophical novel, not a social novel. I read it for the first time after my return from India, post-war. It was then the social aspect that I saw as central to it—and in that regard I

had certain reservations. They weren't strong enough to be pointed to as a source of my own subsequent concerns as a writer about India But the reservations persisted, [and] grew stronger the more I studied the history of British India and attempted to pass that history through the selecting mechanism of my own experience and recollections.

(Appointment 122-3)

By actively addressing and examining specific events in the past, Scott diverges from Forster's representational model and fashions the *Quartet* primarily in the tradition of "realist" historical novels¹. For Scott, an investigation of the colonial sphere absolutely requires an exhaustive reconsideration of imperial history; in contrast, for Forster, exploring India from a British perspective necessitates the creation of an extrahistorical plane. Peter Childs explains that *A Passage to India* and *Kim* are similarly "stories of travel, and each concerns itself with a metaphysical journey as well as geographical one" (29). As a result, Foster's representation of India tends toward "mystification and obfuscation," whereas Scott "refus[es] to see India in metaphysical terms," and through the *Quartet's* overt historiographic emphasis, Scott's text avoids *A Passage to India's* characteristic "otherworldly feel" (Childs 32, 33).

Scott's deviation from conventional post-Mutiny rape scripts is integral to the *Quartet's* post-Forsterian representation of colonial India. For colonialist writers, the 1857 Mutiny functions as a primary point of anxiety about the possibility of indigenous uprisings—specifically, the Mutiny gave rise to fears about the potential for the rape of

¹ See Chapter II, Section I for an additional discussion; additionally, see Steinberg, ch. 4.

English women (Colwell 216). Additionally, Jenny Sharpe explains that Mutiny novels functioned to mitigate criticism of British imperialism and disempower Indian resistance through inflated depictions of indigenous savagery. She further suggests that the implementation of images of Indian sexual violence against white British women endowed Mutiny novels with ideological currency: “During the course of the nineteenth century, Anglo-Indian fiction gave coherence to the Mutiny narratives by lending a literary imagination to what was ‘unspeakable’ in the first-hand reports” (2). However, Forster’s use of the rape motif (which only involves the accusation of a sexual violation) only reaffirms collective British fears of miscegenetic sexual assault, and disregards the cultural and historical foundations that constituted the recurring moral panic within minds of the British colonizers. Childs suggests that Adela Quested’s assault by Dr. Aziz (which the text implies to be the product of her imagination) “is depicted as a rude awakening from her dream of a quest for the ‘real’ India” (25-6). He further suggests the rape scenario in *A Passage to India* is part of a “spiritual design” that Forster engineers throughout the text, and he notes Frederick Crews’s contention that the text “passes beyond humanistic morality to a basically metaphysical critique of man’s fate . . . its main point is that God’s will, if it exists at all, cannot be known in human terms” (qtd. in Childs 26). The ambiguity of the actual event, coupled with the ominous mystery attached to the location where the event occurs—the prehistoric Marabar Caves—underscores Forster’s metaphoric construction of the scenario. Adela’s perceived assault serves to illustrate her developing perception of India’s “unknowability.” Additionally, her inability to comprehend the particulars of the event reinforces the “spiritual” and

“metaphysical” implications of the motif—Aziz’s actions do not cause lasting trauma: “He never actually touched me. It all seems such nonsense”; instead, the memory of the cave itself haunts her: “there is this echo I keep on hearing I can’t get rid of it” (183, 88). Moreover, Forster figures the incident of Adela’s assault as representative of an essential cultural incompatibility between India and England—an idea that issues from Orientalized constructions of racial difference.

In contrast to Forster’s fashioning of the colonial rape, Scott appropriates the narrative convention in order to challenge the ideological underpinnings of the collective paranoia that the motif conveys. The *Quartet* actively engages the motif, and the events in the first two installments of the sequence are assembled around the rape of Daphne Manners in the Bibighar Gardens. Scott links the event of Daphne’s rape to a historical progression of violence; as Jacqueline Banerjee explains,

The rape evokes memories of two events that really happened. One was the massacre . . . in the Bibighar . . . in 1857. The other . . . was an attack . . . on the mission school supervisor Marcella Sherwood in 1919 [which was the primary catalyzing event for the massacre at Amritsar]. (“Women of Affairs” 70)

Within the text, the event serves to expose the narrow limits of colonial vision, and the rigid cultural division it engenders. In the eyes of the Raj, the romantic relationship between Daphne and Hari Kumar is perceived as a threat to the colonial power structure. Ronald Merrick distills this sentiment when he remarks, “It’s like a direct challenge to everything sane and decent that we try to do out here” (*Scorpion* 690). However, the

irony of his statement is revealed by Daphne's observation that in the eyes of the Raj, shared love between a white woman and an Indian man is indistinguishable from rape (*Jewel* 460). The inference can easily be drawn from Merrick's words; what, exactly, the British are "try[ing] to do" is subjugate the indigenous population indefinitely. Hence, where Forster applies the rape motif to reinforce the notion of essential cultural difference, Scott reverses this application, and uses the motif to illustrate how the ideology that informs Raj rule utterly precludes cultural integration. However, many of the *Quartet's* critical detractors, most notably Salman Rushdie, oppose this view, and have argued that Scott's use of the rape motif manifests the same paranoia exhibited in other post-mutiny fictions that employ the device. Rushdie advances this perspective in his comparison of the *Quartet* and *A Passage to India*:

The Raj Quartet and the Kaye novel [*The Far Pavilions* (1978)] are founded on identical strategies of what, to be polite, one must call borrowing. In both cases, the central plot motifs are lifted from earlier, much finer novels . . . [T]he rape of Daphne Manners in the Bibighar Gardens derives plainly from Forster's *A Passage to India* Where Forster's scene in the Marabar caves retains its ambiguity and mystery, Scott gives us not one rape but a gang assault, and one perpetrated, what is more, by peasants. Smelly persons of the worst sort. So class as well as sex is violated; Daphne gets the works. It is useless, I'm sure, to suggest that if rape must be used as the metaphor of the Indo-British connection, then surely, in the interests of accuracy, it should be the rape of an Indian

woman by one or more Englishmen of whatever class. But not even Forster dared to write about such a crime. So much more evocative to conjure up white society's fears of the darkie, of big brown cocks.

("Outside the Whale" 89)

Considering the historical basis for Scott's rendering of the motif, Rushdie appears to misread the implications of the scene, and he misinterprets the historical foundation for the act. Within the scope of Scott's metaphor, "the rape of an Indian woman by one or more Englishmen of whatever class" has already symbolically occurred, as Ralph J.

Crane explains:

the rape of a British woman by a group of Indians is, symbolically, a response to the British rape of India; it is a way a culture can get its own back. The rape of Daphne Manners, then, is an inversion of the British rape of India, rather than a parallel with it. (*Inventing India* 114)

Following Crane's point, Daphne's rape by a gang of Indians (who are never caught or identified) is figured as an ironic critique of colonial injustice, and it functions as an illustrative act of defiance against the Raj—not to illustrate Indian barbarity, but to forcefully reflect the severe inequities visited upon India by the British.

Although Rushdie provides a fairly contestable reading of the rape scenes in the *Quartet* and *A Passage to India*, another aspect of his comparison between the two texts provides a transition to a larger discussion of the developing post-Forsterian perspectives displayed in Scott's fiction. In the previously supplied passage from "Outside the Whale," Rushdie shows preference for Forster's retention of "ambiguity and mystery" in

the Marabar Caves scene, over the more graphic and arguably more realistic episode in the *Quartet*. Rushdie's preference for the "ambiguity and mystery" in *A Passage to India* is problematic because these aspects correlate with the "illusion of permanence" that pervades the novel; likewise, these characteristics are a consequence of Forster's method of, in Child's words, "seeing India in metaphysical terms" (33). Rushdie's preference for Forster is likely tempered by the overt anti-imperial message that the text provides; however, Scott's revised optic, which discards the "ambiguity and mystery" that characterizes Forster's representation of the colonial sphere, ruptures India's timelessness and produces an image of both India and the Raj that are jointly molded and haunted by the past. Although the *Quartet's* political position may appear more opaque than *A Passage to India's*, Scott's alternate representational schema should be evaluated in postcolonial critical estimations of the text.

In consideration of Rushdie's comment about the Marabar Caves in Forster's text, and in an effort to expand this comparative reading beyond the rape motif, one of the primary means by which *A Passage to India* transmits "ambiguity and mystery" is through his depiction of geography. Childs explains that linking the physical with the metaphysical is a recurrent trend in colonialist fiction, citing Richard Schechner, who contends, "Ramayana, after all, literally means the goings of Rama. The idea of a processional movement is important in India. India is a geometaphysical place" (qtd. in Childs 29). Sara Suleri argues that although Forster's text "opens and ends with evocations of geography . . . [it] does not suggest a 'natural' landscape" but instead a "hollow symbolic space" (144). Forster's organizational triptych "Mosque," "Cave,"

“Temple,” replicates this motif of immense hollowness; additionally, the Marabar Caves serve as the centerpiece for the novel’s opening description of landscape:

League after league the earth lies flat, heaves a little, is flat again. Only in the south, where a group of fists are thrust up through the soil, is the endless expanse interrupted. These fists and fingers are the Marabar hills, containing the extraordinary caves. (7)

The expansive anthropomorphic image of the Marabar hills gripping the flat landscape is matched by their temporal grip on the plain; they are “older than anything in the world,” older than the Ganges and the Himalayas, but surrounded by encroaching soil, “slowly reentering the curve of the earth” (115). To a large degree, the surreal quality of the Marabar hills and their surrounding landscape can be attributed to the extrahistorical manner in which Forster frames their description. Hence, the text’s initial construction of geography sets up an implicit unknown/known binary that corresponds with the division between East and West.

The Jewel in the Crown, too, opens with a description of landscape that features a contextually infamous location: “Imagine, then, a flat landscape, dark for the moment, but even so conveying to a girl running in the still deeper shadow cast by the wall of the Bibighar Gardens an idea of immensity, of distance” (5). Scott initially associates the Bibighar Gardens with images of darkness and immensity but contrasts Forster’s surreal plane by expanding the opening view to reveal a landscape that displays the definite imprint of colonial history:

the moving water of the river and the still water of the tanks, the shiny stubble, the ploughed earth, of distant fields; the metal of the grand trunk road. In this landscape trees are sparse, except among white bungalows and civil lines. On the horizon there is a violet smudge of hill country.

(Jewel 5)

Scott's initial scene is not one of temporal vastness, but of an India that has been touched, in no small measure, by westernization; *Kim*'s grand trunk road remains, but now with automobiles, and the gleaming tracks of the imperial railroad's "civil line" connects cities to outposts, and communities of "white bungalows" (military cantonments) clearly mark British settler communities. From this opening image of landscape, Scott separates his text from Forster's by fashioning a prospect that is inhabited by representative forces of both East and West. Hence, the *Quartet*'s opening description imbues the colonial space with a sense of the familiar, as opposed to the alien, and the text largely achieves this through its implication of temporal and spatial progression.

Returning to *A Passage to India*, as an extension of the surreal geography, the creatures that inhabit Forster's India are configured as animate projections of the "geometaphysical plane." The first notable instance of this phenomenon occurs when Mrs. Moore observes a wasp in the Club at the Civil Station:

Going to hang up her cloak, she found that the tip of the peg was occupied by a small wasp. She had known this wasp or his relatives by day; they were not as English wasps . . . no Indian animal has any sense of interior.

Bats, birds, insects will go nest inside a house as out; it is to them a normal growth of the eternal jungle. (30-1)

In Forster's India, the natural world is superficially reminiscent of England, but on close inspection, systems of signification break down, and laws of nature and logic either erode or become erratic. The Civil Station (and its social heart, the Club) is under constant threat of contamination from the outside world. Other examples of odd animals appear throughout the text: during a polo match, Adela observes a green bird that no one is able to identify, and the narrator remarks, "nothing in India is identifiable, the mere asking of a question causes it to disappear and merge in something else" (78); likewise, on the drive back from the match, Adela and Ronnie Heaslop's car runs off the road and hits an animal that no one is able to identify, and when Mrs. Moore is told about the ordeal, she exclaims, "A ghost!" (88). The automobile accident occurs on the Marabar road and forges a supernatural connection between the natural world and its axial point, the Marabar Caves.

Within the scope of Forster's text, the Marabar Caves lie at the center of Otherness and resist meaning altogether. The narrator illustrates this by explaining the Caves' effect on "the visitor":

the visitor returns to Chandrapore uncertain whether he has had an interesting experience or a dull one or any experience at all. He finds it difficult to discuss the caves, or to keep them apart in his mind, for the pattern never varies, and no carving, not even a bees' nest or a bat, distinguishes one from another. Nothing, nothing attaches to them, and

their reputation—for they have one—does not depend on human speech.

(116)

In reference to the Caves’ “nothingness,” Timothy Christensen suggests, “they designate a space of primordial absence that is quite beyond the inscription of meaning” (165-6).

When Mrs. Moore enters the caves, the reverberating echo in the chambers causes her extreme mental agitation; the sound has a psycho-spiritual effect that “undermine[s] her hold on life” (139). Of course, Adela’s experience in the Caves is also terribly disquieting, and the arresting experience causes her to believe that Dr. Aziz sexually assaulted her. Of Adela’s experience, Christensen further contends,

the Marabar Caves will invariably frustrate Adela’s wish to ‘see’ India, for it suggests the breakdown of mimetic representation; a Cave cannot reflect any prior and external reality, but can only attest to its nullity. The Caves, in other words, cannot be reduced to mimetic function. (166)

Following from Christensen’s argument, the figure of the Marabar Caves functions to reinforce the diametric opposition between East and West; in Forster’s India, the “ambiguity and mystery” of the sphere, to revisit Rushdie’s phrase, is the product of its fundamental absence. Likewise, this absence—this “unknowability”—is a product of Forster’s manner of viewing the cultural body extrahistorically, or outside of time. In contrast, the British characters (who are historically “knowable”) provide the “presence” within the text.

In his departure from the Forsterian mode, Scott eliminates the historical absence of Forster’s colonial vision and instills his representation of India’s landscape with a

viable historical presence. Allen Boyer explains Scott's use of the place name "Bibighar" recalls an event during the Mutiny of 1857 when 211 women and children were massacred on the order of Nana Sahib of Bithur, one of the Indian rebellion leaders, in a "Bibi-garh" house (68). This event was indirectly countered by British troops during the 1919 massacre at Amritsar, where troops fired into an unarmed crowd, killing at least 379 people and wounding at least 1,208; the location of the incident was Jallianwala Bagh², which Boyer notes, is echoed in the name of Hari's neighborhood, "Chillianwallah Bagh" (68). Additionally, the MacGregor House, Lady Chatterjee's residence, where Daphne also resides, also holds symbolic historical significance within the text. The house was built by an eighteenth-century Scotsman who "died at the hands of murderous sepoy's" (*Jewel* 72). MacGregor had deposed an Indian prince to acquire the property and build his house, and he destroyed the prince's harem, his Bibighar House, which he burned as an "abomination." However, the young prince's father had originally built the house as a gift for a beautiful singer whom he loved. After the destruction of the Bibighar House, and the erection of MacGregor House, the Bibighar Gardens were preserved and made into a public garden (*Jewel* 149, 150). Although the *Quartet* thematically emphasizes that history has set India and Britain in "violent opposition" (*Jewel* 5), Scott's historical vision consistently reinforces the metaphorical conception of the Indo-British relationship as an "imperial embrace" (*Jewel* 5). Moreover, this overarching metaphor is displayed in the novel's construction of place, location, and landscape; the *Quartet* not only endows India with a sense of historical presence, but the novel also dissolves a certain amount of

² Boyer attributes dates and numbers to P. E. Roberts, *History of British India Under the Company and the Crown* (1958), 3rd ed., p.592.

discursive distance between the two cultures by conveying the idea of imperial history as shared, interwoven, and inseparable.

Another feature of the Scott's post-Forsterian approach, apart from his alternate construction of place, involves a radical interrogation of the form and function of spirituality itself within the colonial domain. Unlike Forster, who figures spirituality as a thematic aspect of the "metaphysical journey" undertaken in *A Passage to India*, Scott explores the joint subjects of religion and spirituality as extensions of imperial discourse. Furthermore, through characters associated with spirituality, Scott exposes the inadequacy of religious idealism within the imperial paradigm. Perhaps the character in the *Quartet* that best illustrates the erosion of religious idealism is the retired missionary and narrator of *The Towers of Silence*, Barbie Bachelor. After finishing her life's work as a missionary and teacher, Barbie takes her pension and rents a room from Mabel Layton, an elderly upper-class woman of the Raj, at her home, Rose Cottage, in Pankot. Barbie is haunted by the death of her former colleague, Edwina Crane, who commits suicide by "suttee" (ritualized immolation) after rioters attacked her and another schoolteacher, Mr. Chaudhuri, who is murdered during the attack. Barbie is proud of her working class background but exists as a type of liminal figure; Mabel Layton, and her step-granddaughters, Susan Layton and Sarah Layton, are fond of Barbie, but Mildred Layton, Sarah and Susan's mother, holds Barbie in contempt as a matter of class consciousness. However, Barbie's liminality makes her unique within the context of the story; with the exception of Daphne, Barbie has personal contact with nearly all of the major characters in the series, and her lack of social clout allows her to interact with many of these

characters outside the sphere of social decorum and protocol. As a representative of the religious end of the “civilizing mission” of the imperial campaign in India, Barbie is different from the broad majority of the other English characters in the *Quartet*, who are almost all either directly or indirectly involved with the British civil and military administration of India. Additionally, her views of Raj society tend to be informed by Christian morality, as opposed to a sense of imperial duty, or the “Raj Code,” as Merrick calls it (*Scorpion* 901).

One of Barbie’s earliest assignments as a missionary teacher in India was to take Edwina’s place in the mission school at Muzzafirabad. She struggled there and remembers having to take blue crayons away from the children because one of the children had colored Christ’s face blue like Krishna’s (*Towers* 12). Barbie found strength in the idea of Edwina and believed that spiritually fulfilling missionary work in India came through great personal sacrifice—working through “suffering, sweating, stinking, violent humanity” (*Towers* 77). However, towards the end of her career, Barbie begins to feel her “faith loosening its grip,” and although she still believes in the existence of God, she no longer feels his presence or believes he listens to her (*Towers* 8). Barbie symbolically inherits Edwina’s spiritual strife when she hears news of her death. Barbie retreats to a locked room in Rose Cottage and weeps; however, she is not only distraught over Edwina’s suicide. She also contemplates her own spiritual disillusionment in the wake of Edwina’s death:

Barbie’s Devil was not a demon but a fallen angel and his Hell no place of fire and brimstone but an image of lost heaven. There was no soul lonelier

than he. His passion for souls was great as God's[,] but all he had to offer was his own despair. He offered it as boundlessly as God offered love. He *was* despair as surely as God was love She wept because the gesture that had seemed sublime revealed an Edwina who was dumb with despair not purified by love. (*Towers* 95)

Through Barbie and her struggle with disillusionment, Scott exposes the futility of the liberal humanist impulse toward ontological meaning and purpose. Barbie internalizes the dual fates of both Edwina and Daphne and forms the mental image of an “unknown Indian” as a symbolic failure of her time in India: “From this there emerged a figure, the figure of an unknown Indian: dead in one aspect, alive in another. And after a while it occurred to her that the unknown Indian was what her life in India had been about” (*Towers* 74). The image of an “unknown Indian,” which she revisits many times during *The Towers of Silence*, not only comes to symbolize Mr. Chaudhuri and Hari, it also represents all the other failed attempts by various characters to bridge the cultural gap between the England and India, which have inevitably resulted in suffering and bloodshed on both sides. Barbie brings thematic completion to the mirrored lives of Edwina and Daphne, and as Boyer notes, she “demonstrates that the frustration of human relationships is not limited to sexual love” (69). Barbie shows that both of these forms of compassion spring from the same humanistic urge; through this association, Scott relates humanism to spirituality and sexuality and likewise shows their inadequacy and inability to overcome colonial division despite the sincere compassionate desire to do so.

Symbolically, Barbie serves as a link to all of the major female characters in the novel, and her revelations about the functions of faith within the colonial system of the Raj forge a primary connection between the past, present, and future. Early in *The Towers of Silence*, Barbie is affected by a passage from Ralph Waldo Emerson: “Man is explicable by nothing less than all his history” (qtd. in *Towers* 73), and “If the whole of human history is one man,” she reads, “it is all to be explained from individual experience. There is a relationship between the hours of our life and the centuries of time” (qtd. in *Towers* 73-4). During Barbie’s reading, Scott offers this narrative interjection, which almost takes the tone of Jamesian epiphany:

She began to feel what she believed Emerson wanted her to feel: that in her own experience lay an explanation not only of history but of the lives of other living people, therefore an explanation of the things that had happened to Edwina and to Miss Manners of whom she had only the vaguest picture. (*Towers* 74)

Childs contends that Barbie’s print copy of a painting of Queen Victoria, “The Jewel in Her Crown,” which is identical to the picture owned by Edwina, becomes “a representation not of Victoria, but Edwina, Mabel, Daphne, or Barbie herself, because its subject is the Indo-British relationship in which Victoria, who never visited India, was only figurehead of a nation of exiles” (51). Barbie’s liminality within the text marks her as an expositional character; she forms a symbolic connection between the religious and civil mission of the Raj, as well as illustrating a generational shift in imperial ideological formations. Scott illustrates changing attitudes towards colonial rule through the contrast

between Mabel and Mildred, which is exposed through Barbie's interaction with the Layton family. Mabel exhibits humanist compassion towards the native Indians, and this is exhibited by the fact that she contributed money to a charity for the Indian orphans of those killed in the Amritsar massacre. She is also plagued by nightmares of the event, and calls out "Jallianwala" in her sleep; however, Barbie misunderstands this as a woman's name, "Gillian Waller" (*Towers* 92). Mildred heavily criticizes Mabel's giving to an Indian charity and her outright refusal to contribute financial support to General Dyer, the officer who ordered the attack. Aside from her approval of Dyer's actions, Mildred's personal life is morally questionable. She is an alcoholic, treats her children and subordinates with apparent disdain, rigidly imposes class distinction, and is involved in an adulterous relationship with Captain Cooley, an adjutant of the 1st Pankot Rifles. Furthermore, Mabel's death from a stroke, like the deaths of Edwina and Daphne, is another instance of the failure of humanist ideology, which contributes to Barbie's overall disillusionment. Mildred, and those like her, do not share the desire of earlier generations to advance a stable cultural relationship. Thus, Barbie not only exposes the thematic connections among Edwina, Daphne, and Mabel, she also shows that their efforts were ultimately futile, and that liberal humanism does not hold an adequate solution for the socio-political problems of colonialism under the Raj.

Through Barbie, Scott illustrates the inability of religion and spirituality to heal the deep cultural wounds inflicted by British colonialism in India; likewise, her genuine compassion for both cultures is fundamentally elided by the complex social division that the Raj has constructed over its long history of violence and injustice. Barbie's religious

failure can be contrasted with the metaphysical ascension of Forster's Mrs. Moore—arguably the most spiritual English character in *A Passage to India*—who, despite her death, displays an opposite trajectory of faith. Mrs. Moore's psychologically jarring experience in the Marabar Caves initially takes the shape of an existential crisis, and the cave's echoing "boum" causes her to question her perception of reality. While in the caves, the hollow echo either speaks to her or conjures an internal voice, which offers this proposition:

'Pathos, piety, courage—they exist, but are identical, and so is filth. Everything exists, nothing has value.' If one had spoken vileness in that place, or quoted lofty poetry, the comment would have been the same—'ou-boum'. (139)

Indeed, the spiritual crises that both Barbie and Mrs. Moore experience are comparatively similar: Barbie's "devil" is not Satan, but the possibility of no Heaven, and by extension, the possibility of no God; likewise, Mrs. Moore's experience in the Caves prompts her towards a moment of epiphany that equates with aspects of both existential and moral nihilism. However, unlike Barbie's experience, Mrs. Moore's marks the beginning of a spiritual transformation. Her altered spiritual state provides her with a particular mental clarity that allows her to contradict Adela's charge against Aziz, solemnly declaring at one point, "Of course he is innocent" (192). Mrs. Moore leaves India before she can be called to testify at Aziz's trial, in "the twilight of double vision," "where the state of the universe and its smallness are both visible at the same time" (195). For her, the "muddle" of India is "spiritual muddledom" (196), and she departs with a desire to become "one

with the universe” (196). In a similar manner, Barbie, too, contemplates disintegration and absorption in the universe:

The mind demands that there be something and therefore something before something. Is the Universe an unprincipled design? Does God weep beyond it crying to its prisoners to free themselves and come to Him? If it is all explained by chemistry, that chemistry is majestic. It can only lead to the most magnificent explosion, to which God will harken while we burn and disintegrate and scatter into pieces. (*Towers* 205-6)

The theme of combining with the universe is significant in both texts, but it is symbolically significant in different ways. Mrs. Moore dies during her voyage back to England, but even in her physical absence, she maintains a strong presence in the text. During Dr. Aziz’s trial, she is called as witness for the defense in hopes that her testimony will clear him of the charge of sexual assault against Adela. The crowd in the courtroom begins to chant her name, and the masses outside join in the recitation despite not understanding its complete meaning: “The tumult increased, the invocation of Mrs. Moore continued, and people who did not know what the syllables meant repeated them like a charm. *They became Indianized* [my italics] into Emiss Esmoor, they were taken up in the street outside” (211). In the waves of chanting, “Emiss Esmoor . . . Emiss Esmoor,” Adela stoically reverses her charge of assault against Dr. Aziz, and he is unconditionally released (212, 215). When her name is transmogrified and appropriated by the crowd of Indians chanting her name, Mrs. Moore symbolically becomes “one with the universe.” It is significant, then, that Forster only allows for a dissolution of colonial

binary opposition on the metaphysical plane; however, these binaries still hold in the physical world.

Mrs. Moore's spiritual manifestation returns in the novel's final section, "Temple." Professor Godbole, a friend of Dr. Aziz and a devout Hindu, is performing with a choir at a Hindu festival celebrating Krishna's birthday. During the singing and dancing, Godbole enters a trance-like state, and has a profound vision of Mrs. Moore:

He had, with increased vividness, again seen Mrs. Moore, and round her clinging forms of trouble. He was a Brahman, she was a Christian, but it made no difference whether she was trick or memory or telepathic or appeal. It was his duty, as his desire, to place himself in the position of the God to love her, and to place himself in her position and say to the God, 'Come, come, come, come.' (275-6)

Godbole also appropriates Mrs. Moore's statement "God is love" (46), and "Indianizes" it, as the crowd outside the courtroom did with her name, when he repeats "God si [sic] Love" as a spiritual incantation and indicates that he desires to provide Christianity with a sense of levity (274). In Godbole's vision, he and Mrs. Moore are both gods, and are united spiritually—combined and interchangeable spiritual entities. Accordingly, the inability of Dr. Aziz and Fielding to be friends at the novel's conclusion is the product of the conflict between the physical and the supernatural: "the earth didn't want it . . . the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds . . . they didn't want it, they said in their hundred voices, 'No not yet,' and the sky said, 'No, not there'" (306).

In contrast to Mr. Moore, Barbie's reference to the universe exposes her belief that during her own disintegration, she will be able to feel God's presence again and hear his voice. However, her references to chemistry and a "magnificent explosion" take on additional significance in the novel's concluding chapter. After Mabel dies, Mildred orders Barbie out of Rose Cottage. While removing her trunk from the cottage, Barbie is involved in an accident when her tonga runs off of the road in the rain. Barbie is traumatically injured, both mentally and physically, and is sent to a sanitarium in Ranpur. After the accident, she stops speaking, communicating instead solely through handwritten messages; additionally, during this period, she alternates between preferring to be addressed as "Edwina" and "Barbara" (*Towers* 396-7). Sarah visits her in the sanitarium, but Barbie is unable to recognize her; during their visits, Barbie remains transfixed on the Parsee Towers of Silence, which she can see from the window in her room. Barbie dies alone in that room while looking at the towers, and a brief textual appendix notes that her death takes place at the exact moment the atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima in August of 1945 (*Towers* 400). In contrast to Mrs. Moore's spiritual assimilation, which contributes to *A Passage to India's* concluding note of humanistic hope, Barbie's desire to once again hear the voice of God in a "magnificent explosion" is never realized; for Barbie, God ever remains silent, like the solemn Parsee towers that consume her final thoughts. By synchronizing Barbie's death with the instantaneous death of thousands in Hiroshima, Scott provides a catastrophic historical parallel to the failure of her spiritual idealism. If Barbie's meditations on Emerson are taken into critical consideration, she symbolically inherits the historical burden of humanistic compassion from other female

characters after their deaths. From Edwina and Daphne, she inherits the collective symbol of the “unknown Indian” that she is unable to save, and this links her not only to Hari and Mr. Chaudhuri but, in consideration of Boyer’s note on Scott’s symbolic naming, it also associates her death with the Sepoy Rebellion and the Bibi-ghar massacre of 1857. Additionally, Barbie takes on the historical burden of the massacre at Amritsar in 1919 from Mabel Layton because she also becomes haunted by the name “Gillian Waller”—before her death, she writes a letter to Sarah, although in her mentally unstable state, she addresses it to “Gillian Waller” (*Division 798*). Sarah does not recognize the significance of the name, but she is conscious of England’s moral responsibility towards India, and as Childs points out, she does not believe in British possession of India (53). Therefore, through Sarah, Scott symbolically passes the burden of imperial injustice to the younger generation, and he implies that spiritualism does not hold the answers to the complex social and cultural problems created by Raj rule. Accordingly, Barbie’s inability to overcome her spiritual disillusionment, signals the failure of religion and spirituality to bring about a stable imperial relationship between England and India.

The critical value of *The Raj Quartet* within the tradition of British novels about India, and what marks it as a post-Forsterian text, is its characterization of India as a fundamentally *real* place. Through the endowment of historical perspective, Scott is able to dissolve India’s absence and unravel the “mystification and obfuscation” that permeates Forster’s depiction. Additionally, Rushdie, through his praise of Forster’s “ambiguity and mystery,” neglects to recognize that this mode of representation indirectly upholds the rigid binarism of earlier colonial works because it inscribes India

in essential difference in relation to Britain; additionally, Forster fashions India's "ambiguity and mystery" as an antagonistic force. As Suleri contends,

"books about India" have been more accurately books about the representation of India, with each offering variants of the peculiar logic through which a failure of representation becomes transformed into a characteristically Indian failure. (qtd. in Childs 34).

Adding to Suleri's argument, Childs suggests, in contrast to earlier colonialist novels, the *Quartet* shows "the failure is an English one" (34). Following this argument, in Forster's novel, the spiritual "problem" lies with India, and the spiritual "solution" arrives with Britain, via Mrs. Moore. In the *Quartet*, Scott shows the utter inadequacy of spirituality to bridge the chasm created by imperial history—the rift is too wide, and the historical burden is too crushing. Although the significance of the rape motif in both Scott and Forster's texts cannot be understated, this shared aspect of the novels has directed much critical attention away from other aspects of Scott's departure from the colonialist narrative models. Additionally, more attention must be paid to Scott's dual development as a writer of historical fiction and as a writer transitioning into postcolonial fiction; the strength of the *Quartet's* imperial critique derives from its revisionist approach to colonial history, and Scott's interrogation not only endows India with the historical presence that it was long denied by earlier textual representations, but it also acknowledges that complex history belongs to both nations.

CHAPTER II

THE LONG GOODBYE: CONSTRUCTING TIME, SPACE, HISTORY, AND
THE SEQUENCE NOVEL AT MID-CENTURY

I

Paul Scott's radical approach to historical representation, which differentiates *The Raj Quartet* from traditional colonialist literary models, is expressed through a unique construction of colonial history in terms of both time and space. Moreover, the postcolonial implications of the text's spatio-temporal schema can be critically explored through contemporary critical studies that utilize Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the literary chronotope, which for Bakhtin, denotes "the intrinsic connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships that are artistically expressed in literature" ("Forms of Time" 84). Nele Bemong and Pieter Borghart suggest that the chronotope is "tantamount to the world construction that is at the base of every narrative text, comprising a combination of spatial and temporal indicators" (4). Although Bakhtin avoids a concise definition of the term in "Forms of Time and of the Chronotope in the Novel" (1937-38, 73), the closest specification of the concept appears in this notable introductory passage:

In the literary artistic chronotope, spatial and temporal indicators are fused into one carefully thought-out, concrete whole. Time, as it were, thickens, takes on flesh, becomes artistically visible; likewise, space becomes charged and responsive to the movements of time, plot and history. This intersection of axes and fusion of indicators characterizes the artistic chronotope. ("Forms of Time" 84)

In brief, Bakhtin places primacy on the convergence of time and space within a literary work as a means of literary narrative creation. With the essay's "Concluding Remarks" (added in 1973), Bemong and Borghart suggest that Bakhtin situates the significance of chronotopes on at least four levels: "(1) they have narrative, plot-generating significance; (2) they have representational significance; (3) they 'provide the basis for distinguishing generic types'; and (4) they have semantic significance" ("Forms of Time" 250-1; Bemong and Borghart 5-6). Bakhtin originally devised the concept of the chronotope as a contribution to genre theory, and his emphasis on genre is apparent in his emphatic delineation of the primary chronotopes that characterize the history of the western novel—including "the adventure novel of ordeal," "the adventure novel of everyday life," "the chivalric romance," the "idyll," and "the Greek romance" ("Forms of Time" 86, 125, 151, 224, 165; Bemong and Borghart 8). However, Bemong and Borghart explain that recent Bakhtin scholarship has tended to equate generic chronotopes with the "world view" of the text (8); they cite Pam Morris's *The Bakhtin Reader*¹ (1994) as evidence of the trend: "In the 'Glossary of Key Terms' . . . it is stated that 'Specific chronotopes correspond to particular genres, which themselves represent particular world-views. To this extent, chronotope is a cognitive concept as much as a narrative feature of text'" (qtd. in Bemong and Borghart 8). Additionally, Bakhtin suggests that the chronotopes found in a literary text are drawn from the real world: "Out of the actual chronotopes of our world (which serve as the source of representation) emerge the reflected and *created* chronotopes in the world represented in the work (in the text)" ("Forms of Time" 253).

¹ Morris, Pam (ed.). *The Bakhtin Reader: Selected Writings of Bakhtin, Medvedev, Voloshinov*. With a glossary compiled by Graham Roberts. New York: Edward Arnold, 1994. Print.

Concerning the chronotopic interrelationship between the text and the real world, Darko Suvin suggests, the chronotope “is constructed by the reader’s ideologically restrained imagination, it is a signified . . . to be clearly distinguished from the text surface, which is a signifier” (40). Therefore, the evolution of genre correlates with the progressive modification or transformation of external societal “world views” through historical periods and can be positively linked to the evolution of ideology, which is expressed through chronotopic development or transformation.

In regard to the chronotopic characteristics of colonialist and postcolonial fiction, Paul Smethurst proposes that the “island chronotope,” found in Daniel Defoe’s *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), serves as a predominant defining fixture in colonialist texts:

A critical factor [in the creation of colonialist ideology] . . . is the role of emergent modern concepts of space and time through which the New World is appropriated into the maps and histories of Europe. The concept of the island space seems to be fundamental to this process, or at least as far as literature’s involvement in this process is concerned. As well as constituting the New World, the Caribbean is also an island geography, and island space has a special significance in the European imagination and especially the British imagination. Britain has always thought of itself as an island detached from the European continent. In English literature, the island is often an abstraction of English society projected into fictional space—a little world beyond place and time, in which certain aspects of that society can be emphasised, idealised or satirised. (226)

Smethurst's argument for the influence of *Robinson Crusoe* on later colonialist texts is not unique, however; the importance of Defoe's novel within the colonialist literary paradigm has been noted by other critics such as Tara Collington and Brett C. McNelly, and it can be considered "the prototypical colonial novel of the eighteenth century, if not in all of English literature" (McNelly 1; qtd. in Collington 187). Smethurst argues that the island in Defoe's text functions as a genre-defining chronotope, which correlates with the emergence of colonialist ideology in Britain. He suggests, "[t]he portrayal of the Caribbean island in Daniel Defoe's *Robinson Crusoe* is typical of the colonialist discourse that articulates the empty place, the almost-nowhere place, the place without history and without culture, save the savage customs, borrowed from mythical reports of the East, of cannibalism and idolatry" (224). Following Smethurst, Collington suggests that the island chronotope in Defoe's text corresponds with idealized colonial success: "The European who braves the test of solitude proves equal to the task: he succeeds in his colonial project, exploiting the natural space and imposing on it his orderly routines and daily rhythms" (187). Moreover, the success of the British colonialism, as an ideological objective, depends on the adherence to a singular Eurocentric "world view." Furthermore, Smethurst contends that Crusoe's "conversion of [island] space to his ideology," allows the character to assert "incontestable sovereignty over a land of heathens" (236). Additionally, he suggests, Crusoe's conception of island space reinforces a singular European perspective: "There is only one view of the island in *Robinson Crusoe*, and only one map, because there is only one point of view" (236). Within the colonialist "world view," the "island" is figured as a space that continually refers back to the

imperial center. In terms of temporality, the “island” is absorbed into European history upon contact. Additionally, the pre-colonial history of the space is never granted legitimate presence by the European colonizer; indeed, the pre-colonial “island” is figured as pre-historical, existing outside of time. Geographically, the colonizing body assimilates the “island” space into the European *imago mundi*, with Europe (specifically Britain) situated in the center, and the “island” positioned at the margin. Similar to the colonialist appropriation of time and history, “island” space is granted presence only in relation to colonial center; therefore, the act of colonial “discovery” functions as space-creation within the colonialist chronotopic paradigm.

Although Smethurst primarily discusses the colonialist literary paradigm within the context of literature of the New World (specifically that of the Caribbean), versions of the “island chronotope” can also be observed in colonialist literature of British India. However, colonialist writing about India necessarily alters the geographical parameters of “island chronotope” to suit the landscape, but despite this development, the chronotope retains the ideological implications of Defoe’s island as discussed by Smethurst. Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*, for example, places emphasis on geography throughout; Kim is trained as a cartographer, and “The Great Game” itself is a military conflict over the control of land in Asia. The construction of space in *Kim* is consistent with Madina Tlostanova’s suggestion, “In the imperial/colonial chronotope the topos largely recreates the old model of utopia or dystopia The idea of nowhere-ness, lying at the base of this chronotope, is close to the meaning of the word ‘utopia’ itself” (407). In Kipling’s novel, India is simultaneously constructed as culturally primitive and as a virtual paradise for the

developing British Empire. Likewise, Kim's positive personal development over the course of the text, like that of Defoe's *Crusoe*, correlates with the success of the British colonialism in India. Functioning as counterpoint to *Kim*, E. M. Forster adopts a distinctly dystopian approach to the colonialist chronotope in *A Passage to India*. Unlike Kipling, Forster constructs the foreign space as threatening, mysterious, and untamable. However, like Kipling and Defoe, he maintains a singular European perspective throughout and fabricates an alien space void of history and civilization—for Forster, India is a “nowhere place,” both geographically and temporally. Furthermore, the physical borders of British military occupation—the bungalow, the cantonment, and the club—constitute the colonial “island” in Forster's text; beyond these borders, time and space are figured as irregular, uncharted, and threatening. Furthermore, the contrasting applications of the “island”-form chronotope in Forster and Kipling's texts emerge from the divergent “world views” expressed in the two novels. Kipling's optimistic utopian characterization of the colonial space correlates with an expanding form of the colonial “island,” which encompasses all British territories in India; alternatively, Forster's dystopian form emphasizes the alien East encroaching on and disrupting European temporal-spatial spheres, and, therefore, the colonial “island” in *A Passage to India* is figured as a contracting or receding space. However, the chronotopic construction in both *Kim* and *A Passage to India* serves to demarcate the known from the unknown, the orderly from the chaotic, the European from the non-European.

Postcolonial literature, alternatively, responds to colonialist texts by attempting to restore indigenous presence to the inherent temporal and spatial absences imposed by the

“island chronotope.” Smethurst suggests that the problem that postcolonial fictions address is “one of defeating, or appropriating and subverting, previous realist representations in which the colonised and her country are defined out of the colonial centre,” and he further contends that postcolonial literature “is concerned with reattachment to displaced and silenced histories and traditions, but this process of *recuperation* is complicated by its necessarily fictional basis and with its reinvention of mythologies” (221). Additionally, when postcolonial fictions construct multiple conflicting histories that challenge the linear time constructs of colonialist fiction, these texts enter the domain of the postmodern (Smethurst 223); Smethurst also suggests that postmodern postcolonial fictions often involve “new post-colonial constructions in which separate geographical places like Britain and the Caribbean are linked by multiple overlapping histories” (223). Moreover, this postcolonial chronotope is characterized by radical reclamation of pre-colonial history, and it brings about a dedifferentiation of colonial space, where “placeness” is restored to the indigenous sphere. Following the work of critics like Smethurst and Collington, Scott’s chronotopic construct in *The Raj Quartet* patently corresponds with postmodern postcoloniality. The text eschews the chronological linearity of earlier colonialist narratives by fashioning the fictional present as the product of multiple histories (colonial and pre-colonial). Furthermore, in place of temporal (historical) linearity, the text formulates a cyclical time configuration, which incorporates complimentary aspects of Hindu mythology and American Transcendentalism. When applied to location, Scott’s cyclical time construct brings about a decentralization of colonial spatiality; borders of British, or colonialist, “island”

spaces are reconstructed; as opposed to operating as signifiers of colonial success, these spaces function as signifiers of continual conflict and the successive recurring failures of the colonial project.

Concerning Scott's approach to temporal construction, Peter Childs suggests, "Both Scott's presentation of history and the form of the *Quartet* are indebted to [Ralph Waldo] Emerson's first series of essays of 1841" (50), and in particular, Emerson's essay "History." Scott's initial reference to Emerson appears in *The Towers of Silence*, when Barbie Bachelor unintentionally acquires a copy of his essays from the subscription library; she is deeply affected by the passage, "Man is explicable by nothing less than all of his history" (*Towers* 73). After a short period of time, she returns to the book and reads, "If the whole of history is one man," and she recites aloud, "it is all to be explained from individual experience. There is a relation between the hours of our life and the centuries of time" (*Towers* 73-4). Childs suggests that Scott's narrative design, "where lives parallel both other lives and the histories of countries" (Childs 50), follows directly from Emerson's ideas in "History." Scott, himself, confirms Emerson's influence on his writing in a 1967 lecture; after quoting the same passage that so deeply affects Barbie, Scott states:

I was struck by this [passage] because it explained so much of what I have come to feel as an individual. On the prosaic level of application [,] it also explains why the characters in my novels usually have—demonstrably—personal histories whose *weight* they feel along with the weight of their presents and their expectations of the future.

It also explains my passion for form—which is another word for wholeness, not just tidiness—and the difficulties I have matching form to content, because this sense of wholeness in life—that is to say wholeness in the subject matter of my books—is a difficult thing to sustain under the weight of so much apparent evidence that this is an age which, on the surface, seems devoted to the concept of built-in obsolescence, and to be suffering from the self-inflicted wound of the notion that the past, having been a conspicuous failure—if life is to be seen as the pursuit of reason and the pursuit of happiness—is better mocked than appraised, better forgotten than remembered. (*Muse* 47-8)

Following from Scott's statements, the narrative "wholeness" of *The Raj Quartet* incorporates an anthropological component; the past must be resurrected and examined in order to understand its influence on the present. However, for Scott, the British colonial record is problematic not because it is necessarily fallacious but because it is incomplete. Scott's rejection of linear time constructs (narrative approaches to historiography) exposes not simply a concern for the content of the past but for the inherent political implications of conventional linear approaches to historiography. Childs posits,

For Scott, the problems [with conventional historiography] are that, on one hand, written history elides some of the forces that shaped the past and so is a distorted reflection and, on the other, illiberal forces are left without a history, which means they appear rootless and spontaneous when they are actually new shoots of old prejudices. A liberal history of tolerance and

progress is as likely, by omission, to foster pride and nationalism as it is its own values. (66)

The cyclical approach to temporality that Scott incorporates in *The Raj Quartet* counters the inherent problems of linear historiography by fashioning the present as the product of multiple overlapping histories, drawn from both British and Indian sources.

Additionally, the influence of Emerson's "History" supports Scott's incorporation of indigenous mythology into the temporal framework of the text. Citing French writer and critic Raymond Schwab², Lucy Pearce suggests, "Emerson's notion of History is considered by some to be cyclical; indeed, he admits to his indebtedness to 'hindoo thought' (sic)" (Schwab 273; qtd. in Pearce 45). Pearce contends that typical Western views of historical time "assume the linear nature of time leading from past through present to future, each of which are seen as separate entities" (43). However, Emerson's conception of history, she suggests, is "grounded in quite a different world view": "Like the European Romantics and numerous mystics and Eastern religions before him, he subscribes to the belief that all is one, that all beings share the same underlying principles, and that all have access to the life force and the inherent intelligence they all share" (43). Scott's appropriation of Emerson, however, does not distinguish him as a neo-Transcendentalist or a neo-Romanticist; instead, Emerson's work provides Scott with a theoretical basis for *The Raj Quartet*'s postcolonial chronotope. Predominantly, Scott's application of Emerson serves to articulate his distrust of scientific rationalism in the field of contemporary historiography. Furthermore, skepticism of rationalism, according

² Schwab, Raymond. *The Oriental Renaissance: Europe's Rediscovery of India and the East 1680-1880*. Guilford: Columbia UP, 1984. Print.

to Simon Swift, serves as a point of theoretical continuity among Romanticism, postcolonialism, and postmodernism (247-8). The text's temporal cyclicality performs the dual function of repudiating linear rationalist historiographic constructs, and recuperating indigenous mythological conceptions of time, such as Hindu cycles of destruction and renewal.

In addition to critics like Childs, Nanette Hale also emphasizes the importance of Emersonian temporal cyclicality in her chronotopic analysis of Scott's text. She contends that Sister Ludmila's response to *The Jewel in the Crown*'s unnamed narrator concerning the "truth" of the Bibighar affair provides the "key to the nature of Scott's chronotopic vision" (68). Ludmila's statement, "given the material evidence there is also in you an understanding that a specific historical event has no definite beginning, no satisfactory end It is as if time were telescoped and space dovetailed" (*Jewel* 132), Hale suggests, is "saturated with chronotopicity" (68). She contends that Ludmila's comment directs attention to the narrator's perception of historical events, and through their chronotopic significance, Ludmila's words "also reveals [Scott's] ontology" (68). Additionally, she identifies the MacGregor House as the text's "master chronotope"; she suggests this chronotope, which "fuses events of past, present, and future, inhabited, as it is, by people of the present, ghosts of the past and a promise for the future (embodied in Daphne's daughter Parvati)," is "replicated in more or less all other chronotopes" throughout the novel sequence (69). Problematically, Hale argues that *The Raj Quartet*'s temporal construction reveals Scott's "homogenising impulse" toward historical

representation and “affords a monologic, essentialising vision” of history (69, 71). She explains,

Scott’s text does indeed reflect a concern for the difficulty of history, but this difficulty is not the object of his narrative. As a true modernist, Scott is still in search of lost centres, of meaning, form and wholeness, acknowledging, with a nineteenth century historicist such as R. W. Emerson, the central position of the individual in harbouring a sense of continuity in history, which, in *The Raj Quartet*, is translated into the individual’s ability to dovetail and telescope, ultimately arriving at transhistorical vision. (70)

Although Hale analyzes Scott’s “world view” in the context of the socio-political climate of the 1960s and 1970s, and discusses his rejection of Powellism, she does not explore the postcolonial implications of the text’s spatio-temporal construction. Within the wider context of colonialist literary representations of India, Hale’s characterization of Scott’s historical vision as “monologic” and “essentialising” is inaccurate. Scott’s cyclical temporal construct unsettles the linear conceptions of history that characterize colonialist texts, and it is this Eurocentric linearity that political forces, embodied in individuals like Enoch Powell, sought to reconstitute in the British cultural consciousness in the 1960s and 1970s. Moreover, Scott’s engagement with these issues in *The Raj Quartet* underscores the text’s fundamentally dialogic approach to historical representation. Although he endeavors to explore the continuity of the past and present, he presents history as multifaceted, multi-vocal, and perhaps most importantly, as multicultural.

In addition to the problematic conclusions of Hale's chronotopic reading of the text, her designation of the MacGregor House as the text's "master chronotope" may be inaccurate. Bakhtin suggests that chronotopes function as "the organizing centers for the fundamental narrative events of the novel" ("Forms of Time" 250), and throughout *The Raj Quartet*, Scott's garden spaces, which frequently stage critical points of action, often function as locations where the text manifests its postcolonial chronotope. Moreover, the narrative significance of the garden is prefigured in the initial image in *The Jewel in the Crown*: "Imagine then, a flat landscape, dark for the moment, but even so conveying to a girl running in the still deeper shadow cast by the wall of the Bibighar Gardens an idea of immensity, of distance . . ." (5). Indeed, all of the subsequent action in the novel sequence can be traced to the opening image of that girl running along the garden wall; throughout the text, the narrative fundamentally attempts to explain that image and articulate it within a larger system of symbolic representation, which explores the underlying desires that motivated England's colonial pursuits in India and the overwhelming influence of history on the fictional present (*Appointment* 61-64). Additionally, the Bibighar Gardens serve as the location for a key event that catalyzes the majority of the following localized conflict in the novel sequence: the rape of Daphne Manners. In conjunction with other gardens in the text, like those at McGregor House and Rose Cottage, the Bibghar Gardens function as a space of simultaneous liminality and demarcation. Moreover, Scott's gardens function as ambiguous and indefinite areas, where the lines of authority are unclear, and these spaces stage discursive battles, where formations of power and desire are delineated, reinforced, or subverted. Additionally,

gardens constitute a space where Scott's cyclical time construct is translated in physical terms; in these locations, history collides with and emerges in the present through cyclical repetitions of action and situation. Accordingly, the gardens in *The Raj Quartet* emerge as locations where Scott's counter-discursive historical impulse is most evident.

The significance of garden spaces in *The Raj Quartet* has been noted by other critics, such as Janice Haswell, who suggests that the text's gardens function as spaces where Scott explores themes of cultural duality and hybridity. Additionally, Haswell acknowledges the function of cyclical temporality in these spaces; concerning the Bibighar and MacGregor house gardens, she suggests,

The people in the garden are the "inheritors," the narrator realizes, true on many levels. Politically, they are living in an Independent India [in the fictional present]. Culturally, they inhabit a world of many influences, speaking English . . . but listening to the morning raga. Historically, they possess stories from the past, add to them, sustain, enlarge, amend them.

(Philosophy of Place 152)

According to Haswell, the characters in *The Raj Quartet* "inherit" the intrinsic weight of the manifold history that has created the spaces that they now occupy. Following from her work, Scott's approach to historical representation resists monumental linearity; for him, history is fluid, and historical meaning is always unfixed because it is the product of individual perception. Haswell contends,

If one looks to history for causes of division and conflict, there will be ample precedents. However, Scott also reminds his readers that the kind

of historical evidence one finds depends upon where one looks. One century ago, MacGregor and Bibighar signified opposite racial, religious, and cultural standards. Two centuries ago, they were both native structures, the only two houses that side of the river and therefore obvious marks on the landscape. Caught up in the events of memory, the identity and meaning of the sites is never static. (*Philosophy* 151-2)

For Scott, the comprehension of colonial division is only possible if colonial history is analyzed as the product of multiple temporal strains. If Haswell's examination of time and space is incorporated into a chronotopic reading of the text, then Scott's chronotope is characterized by hybridization; the barrier between English and Indian conceptions of time and space breaks down, and history, in relation to the text's chronotope, can only be perceived in terms of its multiplicity.

Moreover, the Bibighar Gardens serve as the initial and arguably central garden space in *The Raj Quartet*, and the space is fundamentally defined by the materialization of the text's temporal construct. Through the collected history of the space, Scott transfers his narrative preoccupation with "unrecorded men" to locations that are similarly unrecorded; the story of the Gardens is primarily the product of oral history, stories that *The Jewel in the Crown's* unnamed narrator elicits from both British and Indian sources. A composite summary of the Gardens' history (prior to the events in the novel) concerns a late eighteenth-century prince who "conceived a passion for a singer of classical music" (*Jewel* 72) and built a grand house for her on the site that would later be occupied by the MacGregor House. The singer dies, with their love never consummated;

the prince dies soon after, and the house falls into ruin. The prince's son, a hedonist, despised his father's relationship with the singer and builds another house, the Bibighar, to house his courtesans. He soon empties the kingdom's treasury, and his people starve. The younger prince is eventually deposed because an Englishman in his court is poisoned, and his kingdom is state annexed (*Jewel 72*). The second part of the story takes place in the nineteenth century and is relayed by Ludmila. Her account contains several versions of the second half of the story and references both European and Indian sources:

You see how the facts about MacGregor do not fit the story that [MacGregor] burned the Bibighar [house] because it was an abomination? But then this was the European version of the tale. Perhaps, also, it is the story he told his wife, whom he married and brought to Mayapore only after he had established his fortune and rebuilt the singer's house and called by his own name. By that time he had already burned the Bibighar, not, according to the Indian version, because it was an abomination in his eye and the eye of the Lord . . . but because he fell in love with an Indian girl and lost her to a boy whose skin was the same colour as her own. There are two versions of the Indian account of the burning of Bibighar. The first is that he discovered the girl and her lover met in the Bibighar, and that then he destroyed it in a fit of jealous rage. The second is that he told the girl she would have to leave the MacGregor House and live in the Bibighar. He took her there and showed her the repairs he had made to its furnishings and clothes he had bought for her comfort and enjoyment.

When she asked him why she must leave the MacGregor House he said: Because I am going to Calcutta to bring back an English wife. So that night she stole away with her true lover. When he found that she had gone[,] he ordered the Bibighar to be burned to the ground, and then utterly obliterated. (*Jewel* 149)

Ludmila also notes that MacGregor himself was killed by “mutinous sepoys” during the 1857 uprising, and she includes that rumors circulated that the sepoys believed he had killed his Indian wife and her Indian lover in the fire and therefore, MacGregor’s murder was an act of revenge (*Jewel* 150).

Through the intertwined histories of the MacGregor House and the Bibighar Gardens, Scott fashions a symbolic microcosm of imperial history, which traces the relationship between England and India from the pre-colonial Mughal Empire, through the rule of the British East India Company from 1757 to 1858, to the establishment of British rule in 1858, following the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny. However, through the various narrative accounts of the location’s history, Scott illustrates the overwhelming complexity of historical progression and the fundamentally dialogic nature of historical record. Additionally, within the scope of the text, the history of the MacGregor House and the Bibighar Gardens is primarily the domain of oral history and not subject to the linearity of written or textual history; therefore, Scott’s garden construct is posed in direct opposition to the discourse of “official” historical records because it elides direct cause and effect in favor of causal multiplicity—history is experienced by individuals, and that

experience is dependent on perception, and each individual's perception of historical events is unique.

When Daphne Manners and Hari Kumar are introduced into this garden space, their personal histories are incorporated into the collective cyclical history that characterizes the location; in Haswell's words, the two become historical "inheritors." The failed love of Daphne and Hari mirrors both that of the Prince and the singer and MacGregor and the Indian girl. Indeed, the romantic interaction between Daphne and Hari originates in the garden at the MacGregor House. Daphne recalls their first meeting in her private journal, where Hari is present at a social event hosted by Lady Chatterjee. After their initial introduction, Daphne approaches Hari, curiously drawn in by his spotless British accent, and says, "Let me show you the [MacGregor House] garden"; she then recounts, "I asked him whether he'd had a nice garden when he lived in England [,] and he said he supposed it had been all right but that he'd never taken much notice of it. Then I said, 'Do you miss it, though?' and he said at once, 'Not any more'" (*Jewel* 387-8). After this initial encounter, Daphne recalls, "how forcibly it struck me that except for the colour of his skin he wasn't Indian at all—in the sense I understood it" (*Jewel* 387). In this brief passage, Scott fashions the MacGregor House garden as a marked point of contrast between the social worlds of India and England and figures Hari's hybrid cultural status as an extension of that contrast. In England, gardens are common geographical fixtures, and only when English gardens are recreated in the foreign sphere of India do they become symbolic of the English presence there and they establish an area of demarcation. Also, Hari implies through his answer, "Not any more," that once in

India, he missed the English gardens that he hardly noticed when he lived in England; perhaps, because in India, as opposed to England, he is denied entrance into such spaces on account of his race. Additionally, Daphne's epiphanic moment, where she comes to believe that Hari "wasn't Indian at all," constitutes a point of discursive upheaval, and so begins her romantic attraction to him, which reverses the culturally accepted racial homogeneity dictated by colonial division. After their initial meeting in the MacGregor House garden, the romantic relationship between Daphne and Hari revolves around the Bibighar Gardens; it becomes a regular meeting place for them because, unlike the garden at MacGregor House, it offers seclusion, isolation, and an atmosphere of natural beauty. During their final nighttime meeting in the garden, they make love for the first time on the central platform in the garden and are observed by a group of Indian men. The men attack them; they rape Daphne and beat Hari. After the attack, Ronald Merrick has Hari arrested under suspicion of committing the crime; however, Daphne does not implicate Hari and remains resolute in proclaiming his innocence. Hari is imprisoned, and Daphne and he never see one another again. Near the conclusion of *The Jewel in the Crown*, it is revealed that Daphne becomes pregnant as a result of the incident in the Bibighar Gardens, but the child's parentage is uncertain. She dies during childbirth, and her aunt, Lady Ethel Manners, names the child Parvati (Manners) and "intends to bring her up as an Indian" (*Jewel* 478).

Parvati is introduced early in *The Jewel in the Crown*, but the specifics of her identity are withheld until near the end of the novel. Her first appearance is in the garden of the MacGregor House, where she is heard singing the morning raga and playing the

tamboura (*Jewel* 77). In relation to Scott's spatio-temporal construct, Parvati provides a symbolic link to Hindu mythological cycles of destruction and rejuvenation. She is named for the Hindu god Parvati, the female consort of Siva. David R. Kinsley explains,

Throughout Hindu mythology it is well known that one of Siva's principle functions is the destruction of the cosmos Parvati, in contrast, is portrayed as a patient builder, one who follows Siva about, trying to soften the violent effects of her husband. She is a great force for preservation and reconstruction in the world and such offsets the violence of Siva. (47)

Through the symbolic implications of the child's name, Scott fashions Parvati as an embodiment of his idea of narrative "wholeness." Like the Prince's beloved classical singer, Parvati possesses a beautiful singing voice; her likeness to the classical singer links her to the history of the space, and through her, Scott provides the possibility of cultural rejuvenation in the wake of colonial cultural destruction. Additionally, she is the child of two distinct cultures (Indian and British), and her existence is the product of colonial conflict. Uniquely, Parvati is also the only character in *The Raj Quartet* who is a creation of Scott's space-time construct; the child's social and cultural hybridity directly correlates with the text's postcolonial chronotope—her past and present are the result of cyclical temporality, and her hybridity underscores and perpetuates the dedifferentiation of colonial and indigenous space.

In addition to restoring active "presence" to indigenous history and mythology, the cyclical temporal construct that characterizes Scott's chronotope also subverts the established colonialist belief in the permanence of British rule in India. This theme is

explored in *The Raj Quartet*'s other prominent garden space, the one at Rose Cottage in Ranpur. The home of Mabel Layton, Rose Cottage serves a central location for the Layton family and Barbie Bachelor, a retired mission missionary, who rents a room from Mabel. Scott does not provide an extensive background story for Rose Cottage like the one he fashions for the MacGregor House, but the cottage is noted as being a "very old bungalow . . . one of the oldest in Pankot," and this initial description also includes, "[the cottage's] main attraction is its garden" (*Towers* 9). In the text, Mabel is the character who is most closely associated with the garden at Rose Cottage. She is the owner of the cottage and the stepmother of Lieutenant Colonel John Layton, the patriarch of the Layton family and the commanding officer of the first Pankot Rifles, which is headquartered in Pankot, near Ranpur. When the Laytons enter the story in *The Day of the Scorpion*, John Layton is being held prisoner by the Germans after being captured in North Africa. He is the husband of Mildred Layton, and the father of two grown daughters, Sarah and Susan, who affectionately refer to Mabel as "Aunty Mabel." John Layton is also a graduate of Chillingborough, the same school that Hari attended when he lived in England. Although Mabel is present in *The Day of the Scorpion*, the clearest view of her character is presented through the narration of Barbie in *The Towers of Silence*, for which she is primary narrator.

In *Towers*, Mabel's first appearance is in the garden at Rose Cottage, when she and Barbie meet to discuss the possibility of Barbie renting a room at the cottage. When Barbie arrives at Rose Cottage, Mabel is working in the garden, "grubbing out weeds from one of the rose beds," and Mabel tells her that she is "in the garden every day of the

year” (16). Scott figures Barbie and Mabel as representative exponents of the history of the ruling class in imperial India. Barbie notes that Mabel is “what Anglo-Indian society called Army: Army by her first husband, Civil by her second and Army again by her second husband’s son” (*Towers* 18). Moreover, Mabel’s marital history has endowed her with high social status in both the military and non-military spheres; Mabel is, or at least has the capacity to be, a person of great importance and influence within the social world of the Raj. She is representative of the apex of the British social hierarchy of imperial India; however, her primary preoccupation within the scope of the novel is the tending of her garden. Whereas Mabel is dually associated with the historical evolution of military and civil society, Barbie is associated with the other prominent organized British presence in India during the period: Christian missionaries³. Together, Mabel and Barbie symbolize the primary pillars of the imperial “civilizing mission” in India, and they both cling to originary discursive forces that function to moralize imperial practices.

Through the cottage’s rose garden, and the characters associated with it, Scott dismantles colonialist conceptions of time and space, and he correlates this conceptual shift with the collapse of British colonial rule. The garden is initially fashioned as an “island” space, and Mabel’s beloved English roses function to recreate the space in the image of her British homeland. Her appropriation of Indian landscape is significant in relation to historical and socio-cultural aspects of British life under the Raj. Francis Hutchins provides this explanation of the importance of symbolic homeland re-creation that characterized Raj society:

³ See Chapter II, Section II.

The most obvious fact of social life in nineteenth century India was the distance between the two races, distance in every sense of the word. The English created for themselves in India a social world intended to be as much like life in England as possible. Of course it was not the same, if only because it was the result of a conscious attempt at re-creation It was a society dedicated to keep alive the memory of English life, hence inclined to foster feelings of self-pity and dissatisfaction with the imperfect replica—which was all that was possible under Indian conditions. (101)

Moreover, Mabel's rose garden serves as a link to the "golden age" of the British Empire, and the apparent tranquility of the cottage and garden is due to the nature of its geographical location. Perched high on a hill, overlooking the city of Pankot, the cottage exemplifies the cultural isolation associated with British "hill stations." Hutchins explains that the introduction of the hill station assuaged British cultural anxieties concerning the unfavorable idea of permanent residence in India (104). By the 1830s, he notes, the practice of retreating to the hills during hot weather was already a common practice for English colonists, and the custom "grew steadily with the progress of the century" (104). Additionally, the advent of the hill station served to deepen the racial divide between the English and the Indians: "Hill stations removed much of the irritation of Indian life, reconciling Englishmen to a life of permanent exile, but only by isolating them entirely from Indian society (Hutchins 106). Similar to the hill station, Mabel's small estate provides insulation from the realities of life in India through the reinforcement of cultural

division. With Rose Cottage, Scott fashions a space that typifies British domestic life during Raj; however, over the course of the novel sequence, the space provides a platform for Scott to critique utopian visions of British colonial life.

Although the cottage and its garden serve as a sanctuary for Mabel and Barbie, and for the other members of the Layton family, the transmission of Scott's temporal construct within the space undermines the social and cultural distance that the space provides. Both Mabel and Barbie are haunted by memories of the past, and these memories threaten the vision of colonial success that the garden embodies. Mabel is plagued by nightmares of the Amritsar massacre at Jallianwala Bagh in 1919 and frequently calls out "Jallianwallah [sic]" in her sleep, which Barbie misunderstands as the mysterious name "Gillian Waller." After the massacre took place, a group of society ladies in Pankot collected a substantial sum of money for General Dyer, but Mabel refused to contribute any money to the cause. Instead, she sent funds to the Indian orphans and widows of those killed in the massacre. Her connection to the Jallianwala Bagh also extends a link to Hari Kumar through the nominative similarity to his neighborhood, Chillianwallah Bagh (Boyer 68), and Childs notes, "bagh means 'garden'" in Urdu (39). In a manner similar to Mabel, Barbie is plagued by memories of Edwina Crane's suicide, and struggles to maintain her belief in God in the face of her own perceived ineffectiveness as a missionary. Even within the safe space of Rose Cottage, neither Mabel nor Barbie is free from the cycles of conflict and division that characterize colonial history. In relation to the text's chronotope, the internal turmoil that Mabel and Barbie experience manifests as cognitive dissonance; the dialogic conceptions of time

and space displayed in the text, which incorporate indigenous history, threaten the ideological stability of monologic colonialist approaches to temporal and spatial construction. Moreover, while the garden at Rose Cottage is associated with Mabel and Barbie's desires for cultural integration, the space also reinforces the cultural divide that prevents the actualization of their desires. Like those characters associated with the gardens at the MacGregor House and Bibighar, Mabel and Barbie are "inheritors" of multiple conflicted histories, and like the other garden spaces, the garden at Rose Cottage is figured as a spatial representation of colonial conflict.

Unlike the gardens at MacGregor House and Bibighar, Scott does not provide an agent of rejuvenation after the rose garden's destruction. After Mabel's death from a stroke, Mildred, who intends to close up the cottage and move to a larger residence closer to central Pankot, swiftly ousts Barbie from Rose Cottage. Some time later, when Barbie returns to the deserted cottage to collect a trunk of her things, she encounters Ronald Merrick at the cottage. Additionally, she discovers that Mildred has had the rose garden destroyed and built a tennis court in its place:

All the central beds of rose trees had been dug up and turfed over. Lines of string and limewash mapped the place where a tennis court was being prepared. The roses in the beds that were left had been pruned down to bleak little skeletal bushes.

'Tennish,' mali said. There were tears in her eyes.

She turned and found the sight of desecration and found Captain Merrick smiling at the mali's boy because the boy's eyes were fixed on his black-gloved hand. He looked up at her.

[Merrick asks her] 'Have there been changes?'

[Barbie responds] 'It's unrecognizable.' (*Towers* 380)

After seeing the destruction of the garden, Barbie leaves the cottage for the final time, and during her descent from the hill, she is involved in the accident that leads to her hospitalization, which eventually results in her death. While she is hospitalized, despite her deteriorating mental stability, she dwells on the ill fate of Mabel's garden:

Barbie's dreams were waking ones, lived behind barred windows in Ranpur. I have nothing to give you in exchange, she had written, not even a rose: written on a pad because she longer spoke—which made it more difficult to tell what she remembered, if anything. But 'not even a rose' has shown some grasp of the past, some stubbornly held recollection of the time when she had been happy, with Mabel, in Rose Cottage. (*Division* 536)

Barbie's response to the rose garden's absence symbolically underscores Scott's narrative emphasis on the fundamental impermanence of colonial rule in India. However, the garden's destruction does not bring an end to the cycles of conflict that characterize his interpretation of colonial history; the space's ruination merely signals the dissolution of Barbie and Mabel's flawed altruistic desires for cultural stability under Raj rule. Mildred's appropriation of the garden, which coincides with Merrick's presence in the

space (and his entrance into the Layton family through his marriage to Susan), signals a cyclical continuation of colonial division.

In addition to the connection to Emerson that Barbie brings to the space, Scott applies his Emersonian temporal construct to the garden at Rose Cottage through the creation of a fictional eighteenth-century Urdu poet, Gaffur, whose verse is quoted many times throughout the text. Childs suggests, “Gaffur stands as Emerson’s Indian equivalent in the novels,” and he further contends that evidence of Scott’s modeling of the poet on Emerson is exposed by their convergent views on history (58-9). Of the verse that is supplied in *The Raj Quartet*, the majority of Gaffur’s poems are meditations on nature, ruminations on cycles of life and the eventuality of death and decay; thematically, the poet’s work iterates Scott’s temporal construct and provides an additional facet to the text’s conceptual explication of impermanence. In relation to the garden at Rose Cottage, one of the primary symbols that emerges from Gaffur’s verse is the figure of the rose. His first use of this symbol occurs in *The Day of the Scorpion*:

So you must accept, Gaffur,
That your words are no more than the petals of a rose.
They must fade, lose scent, and fall into obscurity.
Only for a while can they perfume the garden
Of the object of your praise. (626)

Additionally, a similar metaphorical use of the rose occurs in *The Towers of Silence*.

Sarah shares a copy of Gaffur’s poems with Barbie and Mabel, and although Barbie is familiar with Gaffur’s work, she is unable to recall one of her favorite poems. However,

Scott provides two translations of the poem in a textual apparatus—one by Major Edwin Tippit (also spelled “Tippitt” and “Tippet”), the commanding officer at Premanager Fort in Ranpur, where political prisoners are held; and another by Dmitri Bronowsky, a Russian who serves as the chief minister, or “wazir,” to the Nawab of Mirat, an Indian prince who maintains limited state powers under British rule:

It is not for you to say, Gaffur
That the rose is one of God’s creations,
Although its scent is doubtless that of heaven.
In time rose and poet will both die.

Who then shall come to this decision?

(Trans. Edwin Tippitt [sic], Major. I. A. Retd)

You oughtn’t to say, Gaffur,
That God created roses,
No matter how heavenly they smell.

You have to think of the time when you’re both
dead and smell nasty

And people are only interested in your successors.

(Trans. Dmitri Bronowsky) (*Towers* 172)

Bronowsky’s translation, which is stripped of the sonorous phrasing of the first one, perhaps provides the most accurate version in terms of Scott’s symbolic use of the rose. The poem not only foreshadows the fate of the garden at Rose Cottage and the characters associated with the space, it also illustrates the dual symbolism of the flower within the

text. Scott fashions the rose as a symbol of both England and India, and through the prominence of roses in both Gaffur's poetry and the garden at Rose Cottage, he forges a thematic connection between the two cultures. Within the text, Scott fashions the rose as a metaphorical extension of the text's construction of time and space; consequently, the rose operates as a chronotopic signifier. The natural cycle of the rose's existence is employed as a metaphor for the text's temporal model, and as a component of the natural world, the flower also denotes a dedifferentiation of space as a result of its symbolic duality.

In addition to the convergent symbolism that characterizes the text's garden spaces, the pivotal role that they play in the exposition of the text's generic chronotope is largely the product of the chronotopic motif that they establish. In his "Concluding Remarks" in "Forms of Time," Bakhtin identifies five minor chronotopes (the encounter on the road, the Gothic castle, the parlor or salon, the provincial town, and the threshold), which exist within major genre-defining chronotopes. Bemong and Borghart observe that while discussing minor chronotopes, Bakhtin occasionally uses the terms *chronotope* and *motif* interchangeably (for example, the phrase "chronotope of meeting" is used interchangeably with "motif of meeting") ("Forms of Time" 97; qtd. in Bemong and Borghart 6). Bart Keunen suggests, "These chronotopes show a subject that is closely involved with the world and is affected by its (social and physical) environment and the impressions left by it. They show a subject that is 'caught' by (or 'up in') things" (43). Keunen further explains,

[Bakhtin] undeniably emphasizes that in these [minor chronotopes] mainly historical experiences are represented [I]t is in the nature of these chronotopes that they do more than merely render history palpable; they also express the experience that goes along with this palpability. (41)

Within Scott's gardens, history achieves a distinct level of palpability; these spaces constitute a spatial point where, in Ludmila's words, time "dovetails," as historical events are reenacted. Moreover, the chronotopic motif that these spaces establish most closely corresponds with the minor chronotope of the "threshold." Bakhtin indicates that the threshold corresponds with a "*crisis and break* in life" ("Forms of Time" 248); within the threshold, "time is essentially instantaneous; it is as if it has no duration and falls out of the normal course of biographical time" ("Forms of Time" 248). In consideration of Emerson's influence on Scott's conception of time, it is important to note that Bakhtin and Emerson use the term "biography" differently. In "History," Emerson suggests, "All history becomes subjective; in other words, there is properly no history, only biography" (4). Pearce contends that Emerson's use of the term "biography" emphasizes an "active, not passive reading of history, [and demands] that the reader 'esteem his own life to the text'" (qtd. in Pearce 43). Additionally, she proposes that Emerson's line of reasoning has led to critical misunderstandings of his use of the term "biography":

[Emerson's argument] is not a rejection of history *per se* he is not dismissing history, but rather the dry shell that it has become. In his attempts to redefine it, he reimbues it with vitality . . . it is through the

experience of history that we might connect with the truths of all men and all times. (44)

Adjacently, Keunen suggests, all five of the minor chronotopes that Bakhtin discusses oppose the generic chronotope of biography; he proposes that for Bakhtin, the chronotope of biography “is connected with the mathematical, specialized representation of time: a reconstruction of private life without historical dimension, an overview that does not take into account the forces from the historical environment that act on the consciousness and that orient the consciousness toward the future” (43). In Bakhtin’s posthumously published essay “The *Bildungsroman* and Its Significance in the History of Realism (Toward a Historical Typology of the Novel)” (1986), he explains that the biographical form of the novel “is constructed not on deviations from the normal and typical course of life but precisely on the basic aspects of any life course; birth, childhood, school years, marriage, the fate that life brings, works and deeds, death and so forth (17). Additionally, he notes that in the biographical novel, “the hero himself remains essentially unchanged,” and “[the hero’s] image . . . lacks any true process of becoming or change” (“*Bildungsroman*” 17). Furthermore, the fixed nature of the biographical hero is reflected in the forms of time that emerge in biography; he explains that biographical time articulates a temporal progression that is “limited, unrepeatable, and irreversible” (“*Bildungsroman*” 17-8). Katrina Clark and Michael Holquist suggest that a distinctive feature of biographical time “is the presentation of the protagonist and point of view as entirely exterior, and the course of life in question is entirely determined by events” (285). Moreover, for Bakhtin, biography is characterized by a construction of time that is

virtually ahistorical. In the biographical novel, history is only conceived in relation to the individual or generational family, and only in external terms, and for these reasons, he posits that biography “does not yet know true historical time” (“*Bildungsroman*” 18). Contrastingly, in Emerson’s usage, a “biographical” approach to history denotes an active viewing of the past, one that seeks to recognize the individual and society as a product of historical progression. Accordingly, when Scott’s characters approach history from an Emersonian “biographical” perspective—which can be observed in Barbie’s narrative in *Towers*—historical awareness functions as a catalyst for internal transformation. Moreover, through the “break” or “crisis” that instances of Emersonian historical (biographical) awareness occasion, Scott figures historical awareness as a means of constructing instantaneous time and, therefore, manifesting the minor chronotope of “the threshold.”

In an elaboration on Smethurst’s work, Collington connects the threshold chronotope to postcolonial texts that challenge the colonialist “island” chronotope. She contends that island spaces in certain postmodern postcolonial texts (such as Michel Tournier’s *Friday, or, The Other Island* [1967], a retelling of Defoe’s text from the perspective of Crusoe’s native companion) manifest the threshold chronotope and foster a “re-evaluation of the colonial project” (189). She suggests that within the postcolonial literary paradigm, “the threshold presents a tightly circumscribed space, literally or metaphorically a transitional space between two worlds” (189). In Scott’s text, the gardens at MacGregor House, Bibighar, and Rose Cottage consistently constitute the threshold chronotope during critical points of narrative action. Moreover, when these

spaces stage “crisis” or “break” moments, the “transitional” qualities of that these spaces assume are apparent on multiple intersecting levels. Events such as Daphne and Hari’s introduction in the garden at MacGregor House, their sexual encounter in the Bibighar Gardens, Daphne’s rape, Barbie’s acknowledgment of the destruction of Rose Cottage’s garden, and the narrator’s recognition of Parvati’s identity in the garden at MacGregor House mark the gardens as transitional points in time-space in terms of history (alternate temporal construction) and culture (spatial demarcation). In terms of temporality, critical moments of action that occur in garden spaces function to coalesce history through the exposition of a revolution in the temporal cycle, at which point certain characters’ status as historical “inheritors” is revealed.

Accordingly, Hari and Daphne’s experiences in the Bibighar Gardens rupture the normal flow of Bakhtinian biographical time (ahistorical time), and are characterized by an instantaneous crystallization of the text’s cyclical temporal construct; in this way, gardens function as a threshold between the past, present, and future. Spatially, “crisis” moments in gardens occasion a dedifferentiation of colonial and indigenous space; functionally, they introduce a transitional space between English and Indian “worlds.” Parvati’s presence and action in the MacGregor house garden underscores the “transitional” or hybrid quality of the location; as a child of two “worlds,” the space that she inhabits also exists as a boundary between English culture and Indian culture. Likewise, Scott’s dual symbolic use of the rose emphasizes the multitude of cultural forces that come into conflict within the garden at Rose Cottage. Mabel and Barbie’s shared desire for deeper cultural connection correlates with the development of the

threshold chronotope in the garden; both characters experience crises of faith and conscience, but neither is able to breach the cultural rift separating Indian and England. Hence, the outrage and sorrow that Barbie displays upon discovering the garden's destruction stems not only from her love for Mabel but correlates with the dissolution of the possibility for cultural reconciliation that the space has come to represent.

At the moment Barbie discovers the demolished garden, the temporal cycle of conflict violence becomes apparent, and in its revolution, the historical progression crystallizes, and the forces of time become palpable; in this moment, she takes on the full "weight" of history in an instant. Although her psychological "break" is a partially the result of the trauma she endures during a tonga accident, her mental decline can be construed as the result of the "crisis" she experiences at Rose Cottage (the accident immediately follows her discovery). Moreover, garden spaces stage moments in the narrative when cultural reconciliation and cultural conflict are rendered simultaneously. During moments of "crisis," the threshold chronotope manifests in terms of historical (temporal) coalescence and cultural (spatial) dedifferentiation that, in Collington's words, brings about a "re-evaluation of the colonial project" (189). Furthermore, this "re-evaluation" is metaphorically reflected in the external and internal experiences of the character(s) caught within the threshold, and by the symbolic content that is exposed through the chronotope (e.g., Parvati's nominal connection to Hindu mythology and the dual symbolic function of the rose).

The minor Bakhtinian chronotope of the threshold, as it appears in *The Raj Quartet*, reinforces the time-space construct that constitutes the text's generic

postcolonial chronotope. Moreover, Scott's superimposition of cyclical time on convergent space functions as the "organizing center" ("Forms of Time" 250) of the text, and connotes the text's generic migration away from the temporal linearity and spatial circumscription of the colonialist "island" chronotope. Additionally, the chronotopic motif of the threshold underscores the major chronotope by occasioning the "fundamental narrative events of the novel" ("Forms of Time" 250). In an extension of Allen Boyer's observations, the "interpretation of history" that the text executes is the product of its chronotopic construction. However, Scott's "interpretation of history" does not offer definitive historical truth or attempt to render monologic meaning through its approach to historical discourse; alternatively, the text's generic chronotope resists this impulse through its emphasis on multifarious and dynamic aspects of historical progression. Moreover, approaching Scott's text from this chronotopic perspective responds to certain critical concerns relating to apparent "ambiguities" displayed in the text. In particular, Benita Parry suggests that Scott's use of symbolism in the text manifests as a "disengagement"; she posits, "there are areas where such apparent disengagement can be unsatisfactory and disturbing, for when political conflict and moral choices are opened to too many possibilities, the definition of an author's own controlling intelligence is obscured" (359-60; qtd. in Morey 151-2). In response to Parry's criticism, Peter Morey calls attention to the imposition of a limited critical vision of Scott's text, suggesting, "British fictions have been read in a complicit way which allows *too few* possible constructions Far from revealing the dangers of fetishizing plurality of meaning in British fictions in India, the proliferation of perspectives . . . is part of the unraveling and

withdrawal of the imperial narrative seen particularly clearly in Scott” (152).

Additionally, it is notable that Parry characterizes the ambiguities in the text as “disturbing,” so that her response to Scott’s text may be indicative of the general narrowness of contemporary postcolonial studies that Neil Lazarus acknowledges: “To read across postcolonial literary studies is to find, to an extraordinary degree, the same questions being asked, the same methods, techniques, and conventions being used, the same concepts mobilised, the same conclusions drawn” (22). Following Lazarus’s contention, Parry’s claim of Scott’s “disengagement” may be the product of a limited field of postcolonial critical vision. However, if the elements of “plurality” displayed in the text, which Parry views as problematic, are analyzed under a Bakhtinian lens, then the various dualities that arise from the narrative can be viewed as integral aspects of the text’s chronotope. Additionally, as this project attempts to show, the characteristics of *The Raj Quartet*’s generic chronotope differentiate the text from traditional colonialist narratives through a pluralization of time-space. Scott’s chronotope simultaneously restores indigenous presence and critiques the parameters of colonial control, and when these aspects are considered, the text’s generic chronotope correlates with a postcolonial “world view.”

II

As noted in the Introduction and elsewhere throughout this study, Paul Scott's rigorous attention to historical detail throughout *The Raj Quartet* is one of the salient and defining features of the text. Indeed, one of the most cited critical appraisals of the text, Allen Boyer's "Love, Sex, and History in *The Raj Quartet*" (1985) directly addresses the text's historical components. His article is a veritable touchstone of Scott criticism, and it has been referenced in numerous critical pieces on Scott. However, Peter Childs contends that the novels are "socially and ideologically directed towards their own era of the sixties and seventies" (12). He suggests that Scott's text enters into contemporary political dialogue with individuals such as the outspoken Conservative Party House member, Enoch Powell, who sought to sever historical ties with India through racially driven immigration policies—most notably explicated in his 1968 "Rivers of Blood" speech against Commonwealth immigration. Childs notes, "Powell saw England's connection with India as the spur to all its other imperial efforts. Take away India, and the Empire, the idea which Powell saw as the greatest impediment to England's self-regeneration, goes with it" (12). Scott was an outspoken critic of Powell's political policies and views on history (Childs 12), and the *Quartet's* approach to history can be read as a response to this conflict; as Boyer contends, "[the *Quartet*] is a historical essay, an exploration and interpretation of history, in novel form" (64).

Theodore Steinberg offers a notable point concerning Scott's representation of history in the *Quartet* when he compares the text to Leo Tolstoy's *War and Peace* (1869).

His comparison is not unique, and he cites a number of writers and critics who have drawn similar parallels between Scott and Tolstoy: K. Bhaskara Rao has called the *Quartet* “an Anglo-Indian *War and Peace*,” M. M. Mahood writes, “[the *Quartet*] aspires to be an imaginative creation of Tolstoyan breadth and depth,” and Francine Weinbaum contends that the *Quartet* is “like Tolstoy’s *War and Peace*, a world unto itself, a totality” (qtd. in Steinberg 125-6). Citing Isaiah Berlin’s *The Hedgehog and the Fox: An Essay on Tolstoy’s View of History* (1993), Steinberg suggests that Scott shares Tolstoy’s view of the paradoxical relationship between history and the production of the historical novel. According to Berlin, the greatest historical novels display a “violently unhistorical and indeed antihistorical rejection of all efforts to explain or justify human action or character in terms of social or individual growth” (qtd. in Steinberg 121). Therefore, Tolstoy and (by Steinberg’s extension) Scott recognize that historians’ attempts to explain history are condemned to discursive bias and erroneous explication because, as Berlin observes, “History does not reveal causes; it presents only a blank succession of unexplained events” (qtd. in Steinberg 121). By acknowledging the limitations of historical vision, Steinberg contends, Tolstoy is able to envision the “whole” of history (125). However, this mode of vision is inherently paradoxical; the perspective is only possible through the acknowledgement that human beings cannot see the “whole” (Steinberg 125). Like Tolstoy, Scott refuses to examine the “whole” of history from the viewpoint of a detached historian; contrarily, he examines the resonance of successive historical events by observing how history influences the lives of individuals—many of whom, in his estimation, are in danger of falling outside the historian’s field of vision. Steinberg

contends that one of Tolstoy's objectives with *War and Peace* is to expose the irrationality of human motivation and to show the multitude of irrational aspects of history that resist essentialist or reductionist modes of causal interpretation (122-3).

Likewise, in connection to Scott, Peter Childs advances this point:

Scott acknowledges that the past is too massive for all its aspects to be documented in history and that any commentator will inevitably produce a partial history in which the selection of events will be conditioned by an attitude, whether it be Marxist, liberal, feminist, Tory, Catholic, or other.

(67)

Following Childs' assertion, Scott's concern for historical omission, which is reinforced by the text's preoccupation with "unrecorded men" like Ronald Merrick and Hari Kumar, illustrates the text's sensitivity to the political discourse of 1960s and 1970s England and demonstrates his reaction against the predominant historiographic paradigms of the period.

Although *The Raj Quartet's* narrative treatment of Indo-British imperial collapse revitalizes and modifies the Tolstoyan historical novel form, Scott's desire to reexamine the content of the recent past was also shared by a host of other British writers in the decades subsequent to the close of the Second World War. Steven Connor explains, in the immediate post-war years, the landscape of British fiction saw an influx of historical narratives (133). Furthermore, Margaret Scanlan suggests, historical fictions of the period tend to decenter history and construct historical sensibility as either incomplete or

ambiguous, and in these texts, historical events are often experienced and represented indirectly or peripherally:

History as presented in the contemporary British novel is neither glamorous nor consoling. It is too diffuse to offer lessons, too unfinished to constitute a space into which we can escape; and we ourselves, implicated in the failures of the past, cannot even enjoy its ironies comfortably What actuates these fictions is not, then a confidence that the past will teach us how to behave, but a quieter conviction that it is better to know than to remain ignorant, even though what we learn is the enormous difficulty of understanding our lives historically. (*Traces* 16)

Following from Scanlan's study, Scott's emphasis on the importance of history is comparable to works like Doris Lessing's *Children of Violence* series (1952-69) and J. G. Farrell's *Troubles* (1970), both of which explore issues of war and cultural conceptions of the past. Additionally, Lessing and Farrell's texts, along with Scott's *Quartet*, follow another trend associated with British post-war historical fiction: the long-form novel sequence. Connor argues that British post-war historical fiction reflects a general alienation from over-arching authoritative histories and universal accounts, and he suggests, "[o]ne of the ways in which the novel has attempted both to accommodate to and protect against a world of expanding historicism has been by trying to assimilate the processes of historical duration in its own form" (134-5, 6). The revival¹ of the novel

¹ Connor suggests that these novel sequences recall nineteenth-century long-form novels by authors such as Trollope, Zola, and Balzac. Additionally, he explains that the years following the War saw a marked increase in the popularity of Trollope, and in his estimation, the revival of the long-form in the twentieth century "expresses a desire for the stability and continuity that are attributed to the Victorian period" (138).

sequence in the post-war years often concentrated on a privatized version of public history, and the large scale of these works often included large casts of characters, multiple perspectives, and tremendous narrative detail, and many proved to be what Connors refers to as an “exercise in world-making” (136). In addition to Lessing’s *Children of Violence Series* and Farrell’s *Empire Trilogy* (1970-8), which includes *Troubles*, other notable examples from the period include John Braine’s *Room at the Top* (1957) and *Life at the Top* (1962), Anthony Powell’s *A Dance to the Music of Time* (1951-75), Henry Williamson’s *A Chronicle of Ancient Sunlight* (1951-69), Evelyn Waugh’s *Sword of Honour Trilogy* (1952-61), C. P. Snow’s *Strangers and Brothers* series (1940-70), Anthony Burgess’s *The Malayan Trilogy* (1956-9), Lawrence Durrell’s *Alexandria Quartet* (1957-60), and Olivia Manning’s *Balkan Trilogy* (1966-75).

Of the many novel sequences produced in the wake of the Second World War, Burgess’s *The Malayan Trilogy*² (*Time for a Tiger* [1956], *The Enemy in the Blanket* [1958], *Beds in the East* [1959]) and Durrell’s *Alexandria Quartet* (*Justine* [1957], *Balthazar* [1958], *Mountolive* [1958], *Clea* [1960]) perhaps display the most direct parallels to Scott’s text due to their comparable depictions of East/West contact amid the backdrop of imperial dissolution in the East at mid-century. In addition to the similarities of format and setting exhibited in their novels, it may be relevant to note the three writers also had somewhat similar personal experiences in the locations depicted in their fiction. Much of Burgess’s *Malayan Trilogy* was written during a short period he spent in Malaya from 1954-56, where he worked as teacher and education officer for the British Colonial

² The title of the American publication is *The Long Day Wanes: A Malayan Trilogy*.

Service (Aggeler 1). Like Burgess, Durrell spent only a short time in the location that serves as the setting for his novel sequence; he lived in Alexandria, Egypt from 1942-45 as an attaché for Britain's Foreign Press Department out of Cairo (Derbyshire 27).

Likewise, Scott served a relatively short time abroad in India; he came to Kashmir in 1943 as Foreign Service Officer, moved to Lahore in 1944, but was pulled out to tour Malaya and Burma, and then returned to India for a short time in 1946 before returning to England permanently the same year (Spurling 118-54).

Although the three novel sequences display a striking number of similarities, Scott's adoption of a modified form of social realism in *The Raj Quartet* differentiates it from *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet*. As opposed to Scott, Burgess and Durrell provide narrative treatments of declining imperial power in the East that maintain many of the aesthetic characteristics associated with earlier twentieth century British modernist writers. Moreover, Reed Dasenbrock suggests that the themes and structure of *The Alexandria Quartet* exhibit the influence of modernist writers like Marcel Proust, James, Joyce, and D. H Lawrence:

The principal narrator of three of the four volumes . . . the Irish schoolmaster and aspiring writer, Darley . . . though . . . older than Stephan Dedalus in Joyce's *A Portrait of an Artist as a Young Man* or Paul Morel in Lawrence's *Sons and Lovers*, [plays a role] similar to theirs and that of Marcel in *A la recherche du temps perdu*. (516).

Likewise, David Baluch describes Burgess's Victor Crabbe, a linguist and a schoolteacher living in Malaya in the years following the Malayan Emergency, as a

“Prufrockean hero . . . emblematic of the failure of Britain’s imperial project to establish its Enlightenment notion of reason as a universal standard of justice” (105).

Additionally, Crabbe’s second wife, Fenella, is described as an “Eliotian” poet (*Beds* 427), and even Burgess’s use of the name *Crabbe* conjures a dim reference to the “ragged claws”³ of Eliot’s poem. Comparatively, the markers of Burgess and Durrell’s late modernist aesthetics—ironic, satiric, uniquely juxtaposed, and intertextual narratives—convey a stylistic progressiveness and experimentalism that is largely absent in the *Quartet*, and this, too, can be attributed to Scott’s more “realistic” narrative style. However, *The Raj Quartet*’s divergence from overtly modernist aesthetics occasions a significant thematic and perceptual shift away from many of the Orientalist representations that *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet* retain from earlier colonialist fictions. The modified form of social realism that Scott implements in the *Quartet* provides the possibility for an alternate representational approach to imperial history in a way that Burgess and Durrell’s modernist sensibility fundamentally precludes. Moreover, the narrative forms adopted by Burgess and Durrell tend to retrospectively reconstitute Orientalized vision, and in contrast, Scott’s form allows him to critique this vision and provide a revised historical perspective.

Like E. M. Forster’s *A Passage to India* and Rudyard Kipling’s *Kim*, *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet* are fundamentally stories of travel, and following in this tradition, they construct representations of the non-western sphere that echo those of earlier colonialist writers. As both travelers and outsiders, Crabbe and Darley’s similar

³ Lines referenced are 70-1 in T.S. Eliot’s “The Love Song of J. Alfred Prufrock” (1915): “I should have been a pair of ragged claws / Scuttling across the floors of silent seas.”

professions and artistic sensibilities (teacher/writer/musician) set them in the mold of their presumed modernist character models (Dedalus, Morel); however, within the domain of the Orient, their superior intellect, knowledge, and rationality are discursively associated with Western education. Hence, their reactions, impressions, and thoughts concerning colonial cultural are instilled with express ideological weight. However, Darley and Crabbe are not incapable of being deceived—after all, these are far from romances or adventure novels. For example, in *Balthazar*, the eponymous narrator who replaces Darley, judiciously corrects all the mistakes and misunderstandings from Darley's narrative in *Justine*; the palimpsest that Balthazar creates while writing over Darley's story (presumably the text of *Justine*) exposes Darley's flawed perception of numerous events and characters. Additionally, neither text vests narrative authority in the inherent morality or ethics of the respective protagonist; Crabbe has multiple extra-marital affairs throughout the sequence, and Darley has affairs with married women as well. However, as educated westerners, they are granted unique narrative agency, and their view of native culture is presented as unbiased; personal agency issues from their definitive characteristic in the alien sphere: their non-alienness, their westernness.

Additionally, both Burgess and Durrell's narratives almost self-consciously depend on earlier accounts of the Orient for their constructions of space. Roger Bowen observes a scene of self-conscious parody in *Balthazar* when Percy Pursewarden, also a writer like Darley, provides a description of entering Alexandria's harbor that is almost a word for word reproduction of the Orientalist painter Robert Talbot Kelly's account of arriving in Egypt in 1883:

[Kelly:] We were still two or three hours steaming distance before land could possibly be in sight, when suddenly we saw, inverted in the sky, a perfect mirage reproduction of Alexandria The illusion continued for a considerable time, and eventually as suddenly disappeared, when, an hour or two later, the *real* city slowly appeared above the horizon. (qtd. in Bowen 11)

Comparatively, Bowen notes Purswarden's description of the scene:

We were still tow or three clear hours' steaming distance before land could possibly be in sight when suddenly We saw inverted in the sky, a full-scale mirage of the city, luminous and trembling, as if painted on dusty silk An hour later, the *real* city appeared, swelling from the smudge to the size of its mirage. (qtd. in Bowen 11)

Bowen also indicates that Durrell acknowledges this instance of borrowing in *Mountolive*, when Kelly, himself, appears and provides the actual recitation at the beginning of the novel (11). In contrast, *The Malayan Trilogy* does not open with an invocation or reproduction of an earlier narrative account but with a conversation between two police officers which satirically reflects inconsistent western notions of "the East." In the scene, Lieutenant Flaherty debates the concept of "the East" with Nabby Adams, and Flaherty explains why Malaya is not properly "East:"

"East? They wouldn't know the bloody East if they saw it. Not if you was to hand it to them on a plate would they know it was the East. That's where East is, there." "Out there, west. You wasn't there, so you

wouldn't know. Now I was. Palestine Police from the end of the war till we packed up. That was East. You was in India, and that's not the East any more than this is." (*Tiger* 11)

Although writing from outside the "illusion of permanence" that characterizes earlier colonialist writings, Burgess and Durrell's narrative sensibilities still largely limit them to this discursive position. Considering both writers are looking back on imperial dissolution from the mid-century, a certain amount of the modernist disquietude that emerges from their texts can be attributed to their recognition of the "illusion" and to their partial desire to re-manifest it. Additionally, Bowen maintains, *The Alexandria Quartet* provides a glimpse of a "vanished world" that is presented both "elegiacally and ironically" (9). This critique can be applied to Burgess's novel, which recalls, in Robert Morris's estimation, a "sense of the past which in the timelessness of the East doesn't exist anyway" (70).

In contrast to *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet*, Scott's *Quartet* avoids reproducing the motif of foreign travel found Forster's *A Passage to India*⁴, and the "vanished world" of the British Raj that emerges from the novel is presented sympathetically, albeit not in terms that are elegiac. Burgess and Durrell's self-conscious references to earlier Orientalist constructs, such as those articulated by the characters Flaherty and Pursewarden, serve as ironic attempts to reestablish the illusion of imperial permanence through the recitation of its mythos; however, these narratives seldom question the validity of the discourse that created that illusion. Conversely, *The Raj*

⁴ See Chapter I, Section II.

Quartet scrutinizes images and artifacts that constitute imperial “timelessness.” The allegorical picture of Queen Victoria, “The Jewel in Her Crown,” which functions as a recurrent metaphorical motif throughout Scott’s text, superimposes fiction on top of fiction—Victoria, who in reality never came to India, placed amidst a fantastic, possibly Kelly-esque, Orientalized scene. The picture embodies the concept of “Man-bap,” which figures Victoria and Britain as both father and mother to India. Although the image functions to underscore the spiritual and ideological disillusionment experienced by characters like Edwina Crane and Barbie Bachelor, characters like Teddie Bingham unquestionably internalize the picture’s fictional mythology. However, through Teddie, Scott symbolically illustrates the tragic consequences of subscribing to the ideological content of these images. During a skirmish against the Japanese, Teddie learns about Indian troops that have defected to the Axis powers and formed the Indian National Army (INA), with the intention of joining the Japanese against the British in India. For Teddie, the act is “unspeakable” (*Scorpion* 878); Peter Morey suggests that the moment “marks the beginning of his erasure, and his ideology, which *is* his identity, is eroded by the existence of the INA”(148). Teddie is killed while pursuing a group of INA soldiers in hopes of turning them back to the Allied side—the British side—by offering them full forgiveness, which he sees as an act of selflessness in accordance with the “Man-bap” mythology. Merrick, who is seriously injured during the attack, exhibits uneven admiration for Teddie’s beliefs and actions when he recounts the events to Sarah from his hospital bed:

He went down there for the *regiment*. I told you there was a touch of old-fashioned gallantry in it. All that paternalist business really meant something to him. *Man-bap*. I am your father and your mother trusting in the code, the old code. That's what he wanted. I don't mean there was anything vain or self-seeking about it. He wasn't doing for himself or for them. He did it for the regiment. (*Scorpion* 897)

Morey additionally notes, “[Teddie] is thus deprived of a success which would have confirmed the imagined consonance of the British-Indian relationship” (148). Through Teddie, Scott critiques idealized representations of the past by illustrating the contorted perceptions of the present that they yield.

Scott's ability to examine western constructions of the East, and perhaps more importantly, to critique western constructions of the West *in relation to* the East, is the partial product of *Quartet's* integration of multiple contrasting narrative perspectives as representative of an expanded discursive community. In contrast, both *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet* apply narrative focus to the developing perception of the individual within the foreign sphere. Furthermore, Burgess and Durrell apply the theme of Joycean metropolitan alienation to the expatriate experience. As Edward Said's work illustrates, characters like Crabbe and Darley typify earlier modernist forays in the non-western domain:

Conrad, Forster, Malraux, T. E. Lawrence take narrative from the triumphalist experience of imperialism into the extremes of self-consciousness, discontinuity, self-referentiality, and corrosive irony,

whose formal patterns we have come to recognize as the hallmarks of modernist culture, a culture that also embraces the major work of Joyce, T. S. Eliot, Proust, Mann, and Yeats. (*Culture and Imperialism* 188)

Although Durrell paints the city of 1930s-40s Alexandria as a veritable hub of multiculturalism where a multitude of cultures coexist, and although his complex narrative structure incorporates many different narrative voices, as Anna Lillios suggests, his characters “do not meld together in any kind of community” (45). In Durrell’s text, the city of Alexandria itself creates the associations among characters, and it occasions only brief periods of convergence in the lives of Darley, Balthazar, Nessim, Justine, Pursewarden, Mountolive, and Clea. Burgess’s construction of community in 1950s Malaya is similarly characterized by its fragmentation; however, the melting pot of cultures and languages that his characters represent are often exaggerated to the point of parody (Murray 243). This is exemplified in another early conversation between Flaherty and Adams, in which Flaherty chides Adams for spending too much time with the locals:

“Why don’t you mix a bit more with your own race, man? Some damn good nights in the Club and they’re the salt of the earth in the Sergeant’s mess” “Oh, God, man get wise to yourself. And make up your mind about what bloody race you belong to. One minute it’s all about being a farmer’s boy in Northamptonshire and the next you’re on about the old days in Calcutta and what the British have done in Mother India and the snake-charmers and the bloody temple-bells. Ah, wake up for God’s sake. You’re English right enough but you’re forgetting how to speak the

bloody language, what with traipsing about with Punjabis and Sikhs and God knows what. You talk Hindustani in your sleep.” (*Tiger* 12-13)

Although Burgess examines the hybrid nature of the Malayan cultural landscape, this exploration primarily underscores Crabbe’s alienation in the space. Morris notes that in *The Malayan Trilogy*, “‘Absorbed’ is a motif that begins metaphorically and ends in earnest literalness” (73). Towards the conclusion of the first novel, one of Crabbe’s colleagues, Mr. Raj, tellingly remarks, “The country will absorb you and you will cease to be Victor Crabbe You will lose function and identity You will be swallowed up” (*Tiger* 160; qtd. in Morris 73). In *Beds in the East*, Crabbe is literally “absorbed” by the country when he drowns after slipping on a boat launch and falling into a river. Likewise, Lillios notes, “Even though . . . diversity gave birth to Alexandria’s vitality—Durrell chooses to portray Alexandria’s multiculturalism as divisive and threatening” (44). Moreover, for both Burgess and Durrell, community is figured as conceptually peripheral to the individualized expatriate experience that their narratives approximate. Accordingly, neither writer addresses the work of empire in its official capacity, and the majority of the plot-driving action in both sequences occurs outside of official spaces. In contrast to Durrell and Burgess, as Michael Gorra notes, Scott takes a “Balzacian delight” in describing the social world of the Anglo-Indian community and the imperial workings of the Raj; he contends,

Scott believed that Forster had paid too little attention to the *work* of running an empire; his own characters are, in contrast, fascinated by it The *Quartet* expands to include schools and hospitals as well as nearly

all aspects of military life—from recruitment to intelligence to charity work of officer’s wives—along with the administration of a district, a judicial inquiry, newspaper publishing, and above all the minutiae of political strategy. (33)

Scott’s attention to detail in this capacity articulates the epic scale of the British colonial enterprise, and his characters are incorporated as representative functionaries within the vast and complex framework of Raj society. Although *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet* arguably display more ethnically diverse casts of characters than *The Raj Quartet*, the sheer comprehensiveness of Scott’s text provides a more complex critique of the discursive forces that created and sustained British imperial control.

Scott’s attempt to provide a comprehensive examination of the Anglo-Indian Raj community involves a detailed exploration of the domestic or “civil” sphere. Consequently, *The Raj Quartet* emphasizes female voices; with the exception of the final installment in the sequence, which finds its narrative focus in the historian Guy Perron, Scott’s primary narrators overwhelmingly tend to be women. However, Scott has been criticized for his general lack of female Indian characters. Jenny Sharpe has noted that Scott provides “no interpretive text for the sexed subaltern” (159), and her argument can be read as an extension of Rushdie’s harsh response to Scott’s text, in which he contends that the *Quartet*’s form insists that the stories of British characters are the only ones that matter (“Outside the Whale” 90). Indeed, Sharpe’s claim and its implications are not without merit; Scott’s text exhibits a marked lack of female Indian characters; Lady Lili Chatterjee and Hari’s Aunt Shalini essentially serve as the sole representatives of Indian

females in the text, and Lady Chatterjee, who has an extended narrative sequence, is upper class and unique compared to the general population of Indian women. Despite these shortcomings, Scott's text may still fare better than those of Durrell and Burgess with respect to female representation when held up to critical scrutiny. Unlike *The Raj Quartet*, Burgess and Durrell's texts are primarily male-centered, and as a consequence, their representations of women—most notably those of non-western women—tend to be either flat or Orientalized.

In *The Alexandria Quartet*, women are generally constructed in terms of their sexuality; Reed Dasenbrock notes that Durrell's adopts an attitude of "taking sex seriously as a mode of transcending bourgeois norms," which marks the text as a thematic outgrowth of modernist approaches to sex, similar to those taken by Joyce, Gustave Flaubert, and D. H. Lawrence (519-20). Durrell's narrative seriousness in matters of sex is also supported by his incorporation of numerous citations from Sigmund Freud, which along with his invocation of Albert Einstein's theory of relativity, works to combine sex and consciousness with a distinctly modernist signature. However, despite Durrell's frank approach to carnal matters and themes, the characters who achieve cognitive transcendence through sex are predominately male; hence, he often fashions female sexuality as a vehicle for the development and maturation of the male psyche. As a consequence, he presents the female colonial body in an exoticized and objectified fashion, and although he associates female sexuality with power, his female characters do not achieve levels of agency that male characters garner through sex. The most prominent example of his approach to female representation can be observed in Darley's

three sexual liaisons—Melissa, Justine, and Clea. Melissa and Justine are both primarily characterized by their sexuality; Melissa is a Greek cabaret dancer and occasional prostitute, and Justine is the fiercely promiscuous wife of Nessim Hosnani. Melissa is Darley's first love interest in the sequence, but she also becomes involved with Nessim and gives birth to his child, which Darley adopts at the conclusion of *Justine* in the wake of Melissa's death from tuberculosis. Early in the first novel, Darley leaves Melissa after succumbing to the sexual magnetism of Justine. Although she is Jewish, and converted to Coptic Christianity after marrying Nessim, Darley describes her as an exotic amalgam of cultures: "[I] knew her for a true child of Alexandria; which is neither Greek, Syrian, nor Egyptian, but a hybrid: a joint" (*Justine* 12). Additionally, when Darley recounts his sexual encounters with Justine, he invokes primal imagery, which he contrasts with European sexual sensibility and restraint:

Our room bulging with darkness and pestilence, and we Europeans in such disharmony with the fearful animal health of the blacks around us. The copulations of boabs shaking the house like a palm-tree. Black tigers with gleaming teeth. And everywhere the veils, the screaming, the mad giggle under the pepper-trees, the insanity and the lepers. (*Justine* 39-40)

The creative power that Darley receives from his relationship with Justine results in the restoration of his ability to write. When the narrative returns to Darley in the final novel, he has taken up with the least foreign of the three women, the blonde haired artist, Clea. She is granted more agency than either of the previous two, but Durrell maintains a pattern of exoticized female objectification via Clea's apparent open sexuality: she was

involved in a lesbian relationship with Justine previous to Darley's arrival in Alexandria. Additionally, for Clea, disfigurement serves as the means to artistic maturation, as opposed to sex. In one of the climactic scenes in *Clea*, while swimming in Greece, Balthazar misfires a harpoon into Clea's hand, pinning her to the submerged wreck of a ship; Darley is only able to save her by severely cutting her hand. As a result, it is amputated at the wrist, and she must be fitted for a prosthesis (*Clea* 833-40). However, Clea miraculously finds that she is able to paint beautifully with the prosthetic hand, and with it she is able to become "a real human being, an artist at last" (*Clea* 861).

Unlike Durrell's novels, Burgess's text does not construct the female colonial body as an erotic objectified muse; however, his male-centered narrative falls victim to similar modes of gendered representation that effectively sacrifice female agency in favor of stereotype and objectification. Throughout the text, Burgess's depiction of non-western women angles towards caricature, with the three principal examples being Rahimah, the lone "dance-hostess" at the Paradise Cabaret and prostitute, with whom Crabbe has a passing affair in *Time for a Tiger*; 'Che Normah, a wealthy Malayan woman who marries lawyer Richard Hardman and forces him to convert to Islam in *The Enemy in the Blanket*; and Rosemary Michaels, a young beautiful Tamil woman in *Beds in the East*, who only sleeps with white men in grand hopes of one day marrying a European man. Although these women play drastically different roles in the text, in essence, Burgess produces a singular image of the non-western woman, albeit with three different faces. All three characters are interested in European men as avenues to wealth and status. Rahimah may be the lone exception—the text is somewhat ambiguous about

whether Crabbe is actually a client or not; although he does pay her, he likes to think of it as a gift or contribution to help with her small child (*Tiger* 41). By the time Normah marries Hardman, she is already twice a widow, and both of her former husbands were Europeans (a Dutchman and an Englishman). Her relationship to these men, especially Hardman, grants her greater social currency in Western circles: “It was a promotion, this new marriage: Hardman was a professional man, not a glorified foreman. There would be invitations to the Residency on the Queen’s Birthday, dances at the club, the prestige of going about on the arm of a man with untannable skin could not be mistaken for that of Eurasian” (*Enemy* 208). Rosemary differs from the previous incarnations somewhat on account that she “didn’t want marriage without love” (341), but Burgess also includes that Rosemary is a Christian, which places her in the lowest social caste. Therefore, her desire for European men also appears to imply the desire for upward social mobility.

In addition to the distinct material desires of these three women, they also share another commonality: all three are strongly associated with sex. In particular, Normah and Rosemary are depicted as having particularly high sexual appetites. Normah’s previous two husbands “had wilted under her blasts of unpredictable passion and her robust sexual demands” (*Enemy* 207), and Rosemary’s list of lovers is “formidable” (*Beds* 341). Additionally, the physical descriptions of the two characters reflect Orientalized conceptions of exotic eastern females:

’Che Normah was forty-two, but her hair was lustrous under its perm, her coffee skin smooth, eyes large, chin firm. She was lavish in build, with great thighs but slim waist, bathycolic as any Homeric heroine. Her walk

evoked images from such Malay poets as had felt the influence of the Persians: melons in melons-season, twin moons that never waned It was not possible to say what type of beauty [Rosemary] exemplified: the eyes, black, were all East—houris, harems, beds scented with Biblical spices; nose and lips were pan-Mediterranean. (*Enemy* 209, *Beds* 341)

Although, the figures of these two women upend some of the preexisting colonialist narrative motifs concerning the representation of non-western women; the relationship between Normah and Hardman, for instance, plays out as a comic role reversal of a western harem-girl fantasy because Hardman is forced into marital submission by the tyrannical Normah, and he eventually escapes back to England. Burgess's construction of gender results in females who are little more than exoticized types and whose thoughts, actions, and desires, albeit in an exaggerated manner, conform to Orientalized constructions of eastern women as libidinous.

By structuring his narrative around primarily female voices, Scott effectively precludes the type of non-western female eroticization that takes place in the Burgess and Durrell texts. However, Sharpe and Salman Rushdie's arguments imply Scott's representation of non-western women is insufficient from current postcolonial and feminist perspectives ("Outside" 89-90; Sharpe 137-42). However, Scott's movement away from those motifs adopted by writers like Durrell and Burgess marks his text as an important evolution in thematic perspective; therefore, his abstention from certain modes of gender representation is notable in its own right when measured against works of contemporary writers. Scott's format allows for thematic inversions that Durrell and

Burgess's cannot comfortably accommodate, namely, the relationship between a white woman and a non-white man. Additionally, Scott's women are granted identities apart from their sexuality, and neither Burgess nor Durrell ever constructs a female character who possesses the ability to compartmentalize sexuality. Even Burgess's English women are characterized primarily associated with sex; Crabbe's wife Fenella has a large sexual appetite and extra-marital affairs, and Ann Talbot, the wife of the State Education Officer, with whom Crabbe has an affair in *The Enemy in the Blanket*, is primarily characterized through her near-uncontrollable sexual urges toward Crabbe. Alternatively, characters like Daphne Manners and Sarah Layton are sexual beings, but they are not defined by their sexuality. Moreover, these two characters provide some of the most astute observations on the moral evils of the Raj. Daphne's sexual attraction to Hari underscores her departure from the ideological strictures of imperial discourse. Through her sexual relationship with Hari, she acquires agency through a symbolical act of defiance. Likewise, Sarah Layton's seduction by Jimmy Clark in *The Day of the Scorpion* reinforces her skepticism concerning the ethical and moral position of the ruling classes in India (919-37). To that end, Peter Morey contends that Sarah is "perhaps the only character vouchsafed the ability to recognize and deconstruct herself and others as epic types in the imperial pageant" (146). The female characters in Scott's text stand in marked contrast to those in *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet*; they contribute to the comprehensive social vision of the text by providing a domestic counterpoint to the militarized masculine atmosphere of the period, and while many of his female characters display sexuality, none is presented in primarily sexual terms.

In consideration of *The Raj Quartet*'s departure from many of the narrative conventions exhibited in *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet*, the most significant implication of Scott's divergence from the modernist sensibilities adopted by Burgess and Durrell is his production of revised historical vision. More specifically, neither Durrell nor Burgess uses his fiction as a means to rearticulate the content of the past; instead, their characters explore the causal connections between the present and the past in a way that integrates individual experience into a larger web of public history. Although Burgess supplies an abundant number of literary allusions⁵ throughout *The Malayan Trilogy*, his use of intertextuality primarily advances an interest in aesthetic or literary history, as opposed to public history. Although many of the Burgess's textual references can be incorporated into a larger discussion about the evolution of Orientalist discourse in relation to British literary history, his use of allusion and intertextuality is generally ironic and often illustrates a comic discontinuity between idealized literary conceptions of "the East" and the characters' experiences in Malaya. For example, Hardman's ill-fated marriage to tyrannical 'Che Normah is fashioned as a comic inversion of the idealized exotic romance in *Anthony and Cleopatra* (*Enemy* 219). Additionally, Burgess's ironic use of allusion and intertextuality simultaneously reinforces and maintains an ideological separation between East and West, which refuses to acknowledge the intertwined histories of the two spheres. Even though Crabbe teaches history, he reinforces this sentiment in the final novel:

⁵ The allusions in *The Malayan Trilogy* include *Finnegans Wake* (*Enemy* 212); *Alice in Wonderland* (*Enemy* 313); references to Keats, Shelley (*Enemy* 295), and Somerset Maugham (*Enemy* 198); and the title of the final novel is taken from a line in *Anthony and Cleopatra*, which is quoted earlier in the second novel, "the beds i' the East are soft" (*Enemy* 219). Additionally, Crabbe's fatal boat trip bears more than a passing resemblance to Marlow's journey in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

“History,” said Crabbe . . . ‘The best thing to do is put all that in books and forget about it. A book is a kind of lavatory. We’ve got to throw up the past, otherwise we can’t live in the present. The past has got to be killed.’ (*Beds* 474)

Although he is specifically responding to a Chinese boy whose father was killed by the Japanese, the implications of his remarks reflect a naïve approach to the indelible force of history within a given culture; the cultural stigma of the war, as well as that of colonialism, will leave lasting marks on both Europe and Asia. Significance also lies in the direction of Crabbe’s remarks; he does not say these words to an Englishman but to an Asian, which recalls Rushdie’s accusation that Scott’s “form [in the *Quartet*] insists that [the British] *are the ones whose stories matter*” (“Whale” 90). The uneasy question that remains with Burgess’s text is whose past, exactly, must be killed—everyone’s, or only the history of those who are not English?

Durrell’s approach to history primarily revolves around the figure of Alexandria itself, and city is figured as an organism charged with the force of antiquity. In relation to the historical aspects of the text, Carol Pierce notes:

The *Quartet* is carefully designed to include many elements of the Alexandrian, and Western, past. It is imbued with the spirit of the city founded by Alexander, ruled by Cleopatra, idealized by Plotinus. It holds deep memories of an even older Egyptian civilization, and it includes the city as philosophic center of Neo-Platonism, Gnosticism, Hermeticism, and the conflicting orders of early Christianity. (485-6)

Although the conceptual framework of Durrell's milieu seeks to align the actions of his characters with the classical history of Alexandria (Pierce, for instance, suggests that he fashions Justine as an analog for Cleopatra [486-7].), his method of historical representation chiefly serves the aesthetic qualities of the novel, and despite the various political details of the plot, the text does not attend to larger historiographic or political concerns. More pointedly, Durrell's Alexandria is similar to Joyce's Dublin; past and present combine in a moment of sustained perpetual present, where history expresses itself and, at times, is parodied in the thoughts and actions of the characters; however, this process is largely unacknowledged by the characters themselves. Characters in Durrell's text are aware of history more as a visceral impulse than as an active concern. He conceives the city of Alexandria as an elaborate set piece, and the classical history of the location, with its hybrid blend of eastern and western elements, contributes to the unique and exotic character of the space. However, following from prominent modernist novels of the city, such as Joyce's *Ulysses*, much of Durrell's invocation of history, which is incorporated into its complex narrative structure, is directed towards the individual; more specifically, Durrell uses history as a means of delivering a young artist out of fragmentation and into maturity (Dasenbrock 518). In keeping with the theme of artistic development, Durrell's representation of history is often tied to memory and imagination. Darley states, "Alexandria, the capital of memory!" (*Clea* 641) in the final novel's opening, and Dasenbrock notes that all three of the "Darley novels" (*Justine*, *Balthazar*, and *Clea*) begin with similar invocations of memory (518). Likewise, these novels tie their initial meditations on memory to location, and Durrell reinforces the modernist

character of the space through Darley's introductions, referring to it simply as "the city." However, Durrell's modernist approach to historical representation involves a romanticized invocation of classical history, which, like Burgess's approach, emphasizes aesthetic interests over external social and political matters. Durrell's text does not broach the question of British imperialism's function within the scope of Alexandria's regal history, nor does he consider how the end of empire will affect the hybrid cultural balance of the city's social landscape; he only eulogizes its passing. For Durrell, that past is monumental but static, and the period of the present is perpetual, evidenced by the simultaneous timeframe of the first three novels.

Scott expresses far more concern for the past than either Burgess or Durrell, and his movement away from chiefly aesthetic considerations allows him to examine the end of empire with an emphatic sense of public responsibility. Additionally, Scott displays an understanding of the effects of imperialism on cultures of both the colonizer and the colonized by articulating how the two histories are codependent and inseparable. This theme, expressed in the opening of *The Jewel in the Crown*, recurs throughout the sequence:

the affair that began on the evening of August 9th, 1942, in Mayapore, ended with the spectacle of two nations in violent opposition, not for the first time nor yet for the last because they were still locked in an imperial embrace of such long standing and subtlety it was no longer possible for them to know whether they loved or hated one another, or what it was that

held them together and seemed to have confused the image of their destinies. (5)

The *Quartet* explores the historical causes for and lasting effects of the “imperial embrace” that England and India are engaged in at the twilight of the Raj. By questioning the ideological framework of colonial discourse, Scott anticipates postcolonial narrative forms to a greater degree than Durrell and Burgess. Additionally, Scott’s revisionary representation of public history in the lives of his characters illustrates an overarching critical concern for the use and function of history within a society that extends outside the text. The *Quartet*, then, explores imperial history in an attempt to understand its present in terms of its past and to articulate how history fundamentally controls the direction of the future.

CHAPTER III

REVISING THE PAST AND ANTICIPATING THE FUTURE:

PAUL SCOTT AND POSTMODERNISM

I

From the critical vantage point of the late 1970s and early 1980s, primarily in the wake of Edward Said's landmark work of postcolonial criticism *Orientalism* (1978), various critics have scrutinized *The Raj Quartet's* status as a postcolonial text. Perhaps one of the most common criticisms of Paul Scott's novel sequence is that it conveys an attitude of nostalgia for the days of Britain's imperial dominance. So ingrained is this particular point of criticism that it is now often advanced under the guise of didactic objectivism; as noted in the Introduction, the most recent edition of *The Norton Anthology of English Literature* singularly characterizes the Scott's text as shrouded in "nostalgia for old imperial days" (Stallworthy and Ramazani 1841). Following the rise and dissemination of postcolonial fiction from former British colonies and the British Commonwealth after the Second World War, aspects of Scott's text may appear technically old-fashioned and thematically conservative, but the common critical complaint about his imperial "nostalgia," which is echoed in such popular academic collections as *The Norton Anthology* is more than slight misrepresentation.

M. Keith Booker exemplifies a "nostalgia" reading of the *Quartet* when he suggests that Scott's work shows "a certain longing for bygone days" (120). Additionally, Booker contends, "there is an exoticism and a submerged nostalgia in Scott's account of the fall of the Raj that deprives his *Quartet* of a genuine participation in the forward

movement of history, and links him more to nineteenth-century writers like [Gustave] Flaubert” (167). Booker’s critique is greatly influenced by arguments advanced by Edward Said in *Orientalism*, in which he acknowledges Flaubert as one of the principle representatives of nineteenth-century European Orientalism. Said notes, his Orientalist perspective produces a “visionary alternative” to the French provincial landscape, and his representations of the East produce an “exciting spectacle instead of humdrum routine” (185). Moreover, Said characterizes him as a “revivalist,” contending, “*he* must bring the Orient to life, he must deliver it to himself and to his readers His novels of the Orient accordingly were labored historical and learned reconstructions” (185). In essence, Said’s impression of Flaubert’s Orientalism arises from Flaubert’s sensationalized travel writing, which contrasts with his actual contact with the East, where his lofty expectations for exotic exposure were not met (185). Furthermore, Said argues, Flaubert reconstructs and sustains an exotic vision of the Orient by sensationally associating it with “the escapism of sexual fantasy”; he suggests that the desires of Emma Bovary and Frédéric Moreau are rife with Oriental clichés—“harems, princesses, princes, slaves, veils, dancing girls and boys, sherbets, ointments, and so on”—which correlate the Orient with “licentious sex” (190). In light of Said’s thoughts on Flaubert’s writings, Booker’s argument for an inherent thematic “link” between Scott and Flaubert is difficult to ascertain. Scott’s work does not contain sensationalized accounts of the Orient, and his rare references to European Orientalized clichés, such as those listed by Said, are constructed within the context of local legends and collective myths—as is the case with the local history of the Bibighar Gardens and the MacGregor House. Even more

problematic is Booker's accusation that the text is unable to participate in the "forward movement of history" due to its "submerged nostalgia" and Scott's tendency toward Flaubertian exoticism. Booker contrasts the apparent failings of Scott's work with the more successful writing of another English author, J. G. Farrell, which he sees as largely free of the nostalgia, exoticism, and limited historical vision that plague not only Scott's work but also the work of writers like Rudyard Kipling and E. M. Forster (166-7).

Booker's appraisal of the *Quartet*, which, as previously noted, borrows much of its sentiment from Salman Rushdie's earlier assessment in "Outside the Whale," reinforces the view that although Scott sits at the dividing line between colonialist and postcolonial literature, his work exists as a final holdout of colonialist/imperialist ideology, and *The Raj Quartet* effectively collapses the literary forms of Kipling and Forster. For Booker, writers like Farrell, who adopt a postmodern sensibility, signal the true turning point in the collective conception of imperial history, and they mark a genuine ideological shift through the construction of historical representation. Simply put, where Scott is an end, Farrell is a new beginning. However, this critical assessment of the work of both Scott and Farrell emerges from the postcolonial critical swell of the 1980s and 1990s, and much of the backlash against Scott may be due to the overwhelmingly negative postcolonial view of the "Raj Revival" that swept through England during the Margaret Thatcher years.¹ At present, the advantage of increased

¹ Rushdie is generally credited as the first critic to have addressed the cultural fascination with imperial India that materialized in the first half of the 1980s. In addition to his essay "Outside the Whale," he also discusses Raj nostalgia in an earlier essay, "The New Empire within Britain," where he comments on "the huge, undiminished appetite of white Britons for television series, films, plays and books all filled with nostalgia for the Great Pink Age" (*Imaginary Homelands* 130). For an extended discussion of Paul Scott's relationship to the "Raj Revival" phenomenon, see Chapter IV.

temporal distance may provide a clearer picture of the two authors and their contributions, without the hindrance of personal politics; likewise, critical views of postmodern literary developments have evolved with time, and postmodern experimentations can now be examined in a manner that is not influenced by the revolutionary newness of the form. Moreover, this study adopts this more removed vantage point in order to reexamine the works of Scott and Farrell in an attempt to rearticulate the role that Scott's text plays in the evolution of writing and thinking about England's imperial history in the second half of the twentieth century.

Perhaps the best place to begin a critical discussion of the two authors is not with Scott's relationship to imperial "nostalgia," but with an examination of how Farrell's writing is able to avoid similar critical accusations. The whole of Farrell's writing career consists of six completed novels, and one incomplete, *The Hill Station*, which was left unfinished due to his untimely death in 1979 at the age of 44. His final three novels, *Troubles* (1970), *The Siege of Krishnapur* (1973), and *The Singapore Grip* (1978), form what has come to be collectively referred to as his *Empire Trilogy*; all three are historical novels that address different aspects of the rise and collapse of the British Empire in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Accordingly, D. R. C. A. Goonetilleke provides this brief but sufficient introduction to Farrell's *Trilogy* in relation to Scott's work:

[I]t is necessary to observe that, whereas Scott portrayed one country during a single short period in his major work, Farrell's view was global and spanned virtually a century, lighting upon three important countries

during three different periods: *Troubles* (1970), set in the context of Irish disturbances of 1919-21; *The Siege of Krishnapur* (1973), located during the ‘Mutiny’ in India; *The Singapore Grip* (1978), focusing on the period leading up to the surrender of Singapore to the Japanese during the Second World War, the first signal defeat of the might of the British Empire to an Asian power. (407)

Of the three novels that compose Farrell’s *Trilogy*, *The Siege of Krishnapur*, a satirical account of a besieged British fort in India during the Sepoy Uprising of 1857, is most often critically compared to Scott’s work due to its Indian setting, and its thematic address of the ideology of British imperialism. Notably, not only is Farrell’s novel staged nearly a century before Scott’s, but its action also takes place before the events in the Indian fictions of Kipling and Forster. However, the Sepoy Uprising, or the Indian Mutiny, as it is often called, provided tremendous inspiration for novelists in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century; Ralph J. Crane cites an unsigned essay in the February, 1897, issue of *Blackwood’s Edinburgh Magazine*, which states, “Of all the great events of this century, as they are reflected in fiction, the Indian Mutiny has taken the firmest hold on the popular imagination” (qtd. in *Inventing India* 11). Furthermore, the Mutiny was a generally popular topic for fiction writers in the twentieth century; in *Novels on the Indian Mutiny* (1973), Shailendra Dhari Singh² lists twenty-six Mutiny novels (qtd. in *Inventing India* 11), and Crane notes that by the time of Indian Independence, the Mutiny had been the subject of forty-seven novels (*Inventing India*

² Singh, Shailendra Dhari. *Novels on the Indian Mutiny*. New Delhi: Arnold Heinemann, 1973. Print.

11). Clearly, Farrell's *Siege of Krishnapur* may be temporally removed from some of the most prominent examples of British imperialist fiction, but he was by no means venturing into uncharted territory. However, his approach to the subject of the Mutiny is unique; unlike most writers who dealt with the subject, who Crane notes, "had all spent time in India as civil servants, soldiers or the wives of such men, [and] their views were far from objective, and the majority of their works suffered from a sense of outrage or sentimentality" (*Inventing India* 12), Farrell's text effectively parodies the pervasive "hero myth" motif that earlier texts proffer. Additionally, the swashbuckling heroics and sentimentality of early Mutiny fictions are not exclusive to late nineteenth and early twentieth century representations of the event; after Indian Independence, British novelists continued to produce similar fictions, and two of the most prominent examples are John Masters's *Nightrunners of Bengal* (1951) and M. M. Kaye's *Shadow of the Moon* (1957), both of which support the role of the British in the uprising, and as Crane contends, "are essentially celebrations of the Raj" (*Inventing India* 12).

The Siege of Krishnapur not only takes to task the visions of British heroism and superfluous sentimentality contained in earlier accounts of the Mutiny, but it also critiques the "celebratory" aspects of these texts in a manner that is not exclusively limited to the subject of the British Raj. Farrell extends his critique to encompass what he sees as the historical impetus for Britain's bid for imperial dominance in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century: the collective belief in Victorian innovation and progress that formed the foundation for British imperial ideology. The events of Farrell's novel are loosely based on Lucknow, the site of an important siege in the actual 1857

uprising, where a small group of administrators of the East India Company, British soldiers, pensioners, a Eurasian retinue, women, and children held off a mass of advancing Sepoys for four months despite being dreadfully outnumbered, sustaining heavy losses, enduring starvation and cholera, and severely lacking water and gunpowder throughout the ordeal (Rovit 636). Vital to Farrell's re-imagining of this event is the historical premise of presumed cultural superiority that pervades the minds of his European characters. Their views of England's dominance in the areas of science, innovation, civilization, religion, and social structure are all ideologically framed by one of the most visible popular representations of England's technological strides during the first half of the nineteenth century: The Great Exhibition of 1851. From Farrell's perspective, the ideological weight of The Great Exhibition and erection of the Crystal Palace in 1851 cannot be underestimated, and the event virtually dominates the characters' conversation during the first third of the novel, prior to the outbreak of the siege on the cantonment. One character in particular, Mr. Hopkins, or "The Collector," is most strongly associated with The Great Exhibition, and by extension, Farrell figures him as a prototypical Victorian imperialist. The Collector is the resident head administrator at Krishnapur, and he has invested a large amount of his personal fortune to import a vast collection of objects from the Exhibition back to India, which include busts, statues, books, and machinery—all of which symbolize to him the superiority of British civilization and culture and provide a rationale for colonialism. Crane and Jennifer Livett suggest,

his official title of “Collector” [adds] an ironic point in *The Siege of Krishnapur*—his ‘collecting’ represents the whole British philosophy which urges the accumulation not only of objects but of colonisable (usable) countries, a philosophy of dominion, possession, materialism, all in the name of ‘the spread of civilization.’ (*Troubled Pleasures* 94)

By constructing the Great Exhibition as a thematic frame and figuring its greatest proponent in the novel, the Collector, as the event’s personification, Farrell uses the siege as an occasion to undermine the grand narrative of Victorian progress and culture, the so-called “age of invention,” at its height. Duly, by the end of the siege, the items that are of the most value to the surviving British are those that can either be used to fortify the walls or those that can be loaded into guns and fired on the advancing sepoys. In one notable scene, the Collector’s prized metal busts of famous writers (Shakespeare, Keats, Voltaire) are hoisted into the cannon and fired on the enemy. Humorously, Shakespeare’s smooth head proves the most lethal, Keats’s curly locks make for an erratic and ineffective trajectory, and Voltaire’s bust, “the French cynic,” jams the gun (333-4). Frances Singh³ notes, “[i]n the last defense of the compound, the very implements of civilization, progress and science become missiles of pain, horror, and death” (qtd. in *Inventing India* 32). Through darkly comic episodes of this nature, Farrell constructs an ironic inversion of circumstance and exposes the symbolic cultural status of the Crystal Palace as merely an ornate façade. Likewise, he uses these episodes to

³ Singh, Frances B. “Progress and History in J. G. Farrell’s *The Siege of Krishnapur*.” *Colonial Consciousness in Commonwealth Literature*. Ed. G. S. Amur and S. K. Desai. New Delhi: Somaiya, 1984. 198-214. Print.

underscore the nineteenth century advancements that actually secured Britain's imperial dominance—specifically, a superior military force with advanced firearms and ample stores of munitions.

Moreover, Farrell is able to avoid the charge of nostalgia in *The Siege of Krishnapur* through the production of carefully crafted parody. Peter Morey argues that Farrell subverts the realist mode of traditional “historical novels” through the use of parodic intertextuality; he characterizes the novel as a “mock-heroic” and suggests that Farrell creates an “atmosphere of ‘larger-than-life’ surrealism,” which he terms “mock-realism” (112-15). Following Morey's assessment, which is supported by Crane and Livett (*Troubled Pleasures* 94-5), Farrell not only deconstructs the “celebratory” aspects of earlier Mutiny fictions by writers like Masters and Kaye, but he also problematizes the mythos of the Victorian zeitgeist by implicitly questioning traditional approaches to historiography that appear in “realist” historical fiction. In simpler terms, the satirical aspects of Farrell's text always reside at the forefront, and while the text is rigorously backed by historical research, which Farrell discusses in the novel's “Afterward,” the darkly comic irony at the novel's center is not subtle.

In relation to Farrell's text, which eschews a sense of imperial nostalgia through its distinctly postmodern narrative features (Booker, Morey, Crane & Livett), Scott's approach to the representation of imperial history is more austere and realistic than Farrell's. Indeed, Scott's overt, and at times almost reverent, seriousness about his subject perhaps bears more in common with the works of writers like Forster than it does with the comic irreverence of later postmodern and postcolonial writers. Additionally, Scott's

use of particular motifs found in earlier colonialist narratives⁴ suggest almost immediate associations with texts written during the imperial period. However, with regard to nostalgia, the fundamental question that must be explored is whether or not Scott acknowledges a “Golden Age” of the Raj, and if so, does he look back on it favorably. The five-year time span of the *Quartet*’s action (1942 to 1947) chronicles the fall of the Raj, and certainly it does not depict British rule at its height. References to the past found in the *Quartet* often dwell on instances of violence and cultural discontent, such as allusions to the actual historical events of the Mutiny of 1857 and the Massacre at Amritsar in 1919; additionally, historical accounts of fictional locations, such as the MacGregor House and the Bibighar Gardens, are likewise characterized by cycles of human suffering and bloodshed. Scott also implies that racially driven conflict arising out of the Raj’s colonial power structure is not unique to the time period of the novel sequence, but something that has been a continual source of hostility between the Indians and the English. This idea is all but made plain in *A Division of the Spoils* when Guy Perron comments on the ill-fated meeting of Hari Kumar and Ronald Merrick:

Place Merrick at home in England, and Harry Coomer [Hari Kumar] abroad, in England, and it is Coomer on whom the Historian’s eye lovingly falls; he is a symbol of our virtue. In England it is Merrick who is invisible. Place them there, in India, and the historian cannot see either of them. They have wandered off the guideline, into the jungle. But throw a spotlight on them and it is Merrick on whom it falls. There he is, the

⁴ See Chapter I, Sections I and II, for discussions about Scott’s relationship the writings of Kipling and Forster.

unrecorded man, one of the men we really are (as Sarah would say). *Yes, their meeting was logical. And they have had met before, countless times.* You can say they are meeting still, that their meeting reveals the animus, the one that historians won't recognize, or which we relegate to the margins. (715) [Italics are mine.]

Scott figures the conflict between Merrick and Kumar as a single and symbolic iteration of an established cycle of conflict between the colonizer and the colonized, where the ever-present desire for dominance by the colonizer is met with resistance from the colonized, which results in violence. The conflict between Merrick and Kumar, “the situation” as Merrick often terms it, embodies the oppositional “imperial embrace” shared by India and England that Scott attempts to articulate throughout the *Quartet*. Additionally, his text does not fondly recall earlier periods in India's colonial history. Contrarily, a common theme in the *Quartet* is disillusionment and disenchantment with conventional beliefs about the past. Rather than constructing a vision of the Victorian era as a “Golden Age” of the British Raj, he presents a view of the Victorian age that is fundamentally critical. The most salient example of his attitude toward the Victorian mythos can be observed in the allegorical painting “The Jewel in Her Crown,” which makes an appearance in all four of the novels. The missionary Edwina Crane owns a copy of the picture, as does Barbie Bachelor, who later passes it on to Merrick. The painting serves as the most enduring image of Victoria throughout the text; however, Edwina's thoughts about the picture early in *The Jewel in the Crown* most accurately describe its problematic symbolism:

When she paused in the work she was doing at her desk, as she felt entitled to do at her age, which was one for contemplation as well as action, she would sometimes glance at the picture and find her attention fixed on it. After all these years it had acquired a faint power to move her with the sense of time past, of glory departed, even although she knew there had never been glory there to begin with. The India of the picture had never existed outside its gilt frame, and the emotions the picture was meant to conjure up were not much more than smugly pious. And yet now, as always, there was a feeling somewhere in it of shadowy dignity. (26)

Even her mixed and somewhat contradictory response to the picture is telling; she recognizes it as complete fabrication and misrepresentation of history but comprehends the immense ideological power of the image's fictional content. Her nostalgia, as it is with other characters who look at the painting (Barbie, for example), is not for a real time in the past but for a fictional construction of British imperial history. Through this type of self-referential narrative construction, Scott acknowledges the vital ideological function of nostalgia within the British imperial schema. Moreover, Scott's acknowledgement of the illusory nature of artifacts of imperial nostalgia is evidence of his desire to deconstruct imperial ideology through historiographic critique. However, Scott's narrative approach to nostalgia is complex and subtle, and perhaps critics like Booker have confused Scott's critique of the power and function of imperial nostalgia for genuine nostalgia for empire.

Additionally, an analysis of *The Raj Quartet*'s formal narrative characteristics provides another means of addressing "nostalgia" readings of the text. As previously noted, the narrative form of the *Quartet* is often critically compared to works of nineteenth century literary realism; similar to critics like Steinberg⁵, Danny Colwell contends that Scott's text is "habitual[ly]" included in the "'Realist', or Tolstoyan tradition of the novel" (229). In relation to later twentieth century texts, like Farrell's *Siege*, Scott's routine placement in the "realist" camp has limited the text's critical appeal. Although Booker does not directly classify Scott as a "realist," we can easily infer this from his comparison between Scott and Flaubert. Moreover, Booker argues, "there are no great realistic novels of colonialism . . . For one thing, the colonial world is simply too complex to encompassed by the neat worldview of European realism" (167).

Likewise, Morey explains how literary realism is implicitly linked to imperial ideology:

One can see the realist novel, with its post-Newtonian ideology of linear time and its dutiful observation of Aristotelian conventions of beginning, middle, end—ideally suited to express doctrines of homogeneity—as having characteristics reflective of the modes of perception of the imperial age. (111)

Critical comparisons between Scott and nineteenth century "realists" are not without merit—for example, Steinberg's argument provides valid insight into Scott's approach to historical appropriation. However, comparisons of this nature are necessarily limiting because they rarely provide adequate attention to Scott's aesthetic experimentations with

⁵ Also, see Steinberg's *Twentieth-Century Epic Novels* (2005), for an extended comparison between Scott and Tolstoy's approach to historical representation (121-56).

narrative form. As a result, his writing has often been subject to generic classificatory confusion, and the transitional aesthetic qualities of Scott's text have often been overlooked or downplayed in order to accommodate proscriptive views of genre. Hence, the critical impulse to place Scott's text in the context of an older tradition of historical realism has impeded the development of alternate critical readings that deviate from this schema. Therefore, an examination of the formal aspects of the *Quartet*'s narrative structure exposes the experimental aesthetic qualities of the text that link Scott to later post-imperial writers, such as Farrell.

Concerning the text's formal arrangement, Colwell notes, "*The Raj Quartet* is pluralistic in form, recounted through a polyphony of memoirs, letters, diaries, newspaper articles, political cartoons. Competing Indian 'voices', Hindu and Muslim, formulate a considerable amount of the narrative" (229). Additionally, the story is relayed in a non-linear format, and *The Jewel in the Crown* is constructed as a frame story, where an unnamed historian has traveled to Mayapore in the 1960s (the present time relative to the story) to research the incident of Daphne Manners's rape in the Bibighar Gardens. The historian serves as narrator for the first novel, and his interviews and research, which involves reading and cataloging various textual artifacts, form its text. Concerning this narrative structure, Morey asserts, "immediately . . . one finds an example of Scott's frustration with generic expectations and the beginning of his unraveling of the imperial narrative, since the medium is poised between the dynamic, story-led impulses of the novel and the meticulous collation of the history book" (136-7). To extend this conjecture, Morey's point concerning Scott's "frustration with generic expectations" is

also the product of his probing the representational limits of the “realist” form: through the narrative construct, Scott not only explores history, but he simultaneously creates history through the self-conscious creation of text within the frame narrative, which follows Morey’s suggestion that “This is a book about writing histories” (137). The multi-layered narrative of the *Quartet*, which is most clearly displayed in *Jewel in the Crown*, effectively deconstructs the underlying unity found in nineteenth century “realist” historical fictions and questions the fundamental ability of historical texts to convey complete meaning. Appropriately, Margaret Scanlan cites Avrom Fleishman’s contention that conventionally conceived historical novels are informed by a romantic, synthetic view of history, in which, “the past is seen as a peculiarly national affair, as having direct connection with the present fortunes of the nation, and as an organically intertwined and self-validated system of institutions and values” (qtd. in *Traces* 7). Scanlan advances the point that “such a notion of history can lead to sentimental idealization” and claims that “central to the tradition [of] idealization is a sense of the past as whole, finished, and knowable” (7). Conversely, the representation of the past that Scott constructs in the *Quartet* is essentially unknowable and incomplete. Overwhelmingly, the narrative form of the *Quartet* conveys a fundamental distrust of the textual artifact, which in turn implies a distrust of conventional methods of historiography that seek to reconstruct the past from textual evidence. For Scott, the past cannot be neatly contained by the “realist” form. Furthermore, Sister Ludmila’s remarks to the historian near the beginning of the *Jewel in the Crown* can be read as an explanation of Scott’s narrative strategy:

given the material evidence there is also in you an understanding that a specific historical event has no definite beginning, no satisfactory end? . . . It is as if time were telescoped and space dovetailed? As if Bibighar almost has not happened yet, and yet has happened, so that at once past, present and future are contained in your cupped palm. (132)

Her remarks illustrate the futility of the historian's collative approach to historiography.

Additionally, many of the competing voices in the *Quartet* provide contradictory accounts, where the validity of the text is called into question. Morey notes an instance of this nature in *Jewel in the Crown*, where we are supplied with "*Edited extracts from the unpublished memoirs of Brigadier A. V. Reid, DSO, MC: 'A Simple Life'*" (287-336). In the memoir, which Morey calls "a brilliant parody of Anglo-Indian forms of memorializing" (138), Reid recounts his version of the Bibighar affair, which is virtually overflowing with nationalistic overtones and colonialist stereotypes. However, his story is contrasted with the account of Robin White, the Deputy Commissioner and civil authority in Mayapore at the time of the events. In his verbal transcript, "*An edited transcript of written and spoken comments by Robin White, CIE (EX-ICS)*" (*Jewel* 337-63), he notes factual inaccuracies in Reid's account of the events, but he suggests that Reid "had somehow managed to make everything that happened look logical in his own terms," and he follows with, "I remembered more and more clearly the feeling I myself had in those days of not being able to rehearse the sequence of events that had led to a situation that seemed to be logical in itself but jolly well wasn't" (*Jewel* 341). White's rationalization of the inaccuracies in Reid's account is the product of his understanding of

the importance of logical and unified narratives in “official” accounts; simply put, White acknowledges that in “official” matters, the facts must always add up, regardless of the circumstances. Similarly, the type of internal conflict that White experiences is also displayed by Sarah Layton in *The Day of the Scorpion*, when she remembers a school essay she once wrote entitled, “The Effect of Climate and Topography upon the Human Character,” in which she summarizes commonly held beliefs about England’s climate:

Such [climate] conditions react upon inhabitants to make them strong, active, energetic and self-sufficient. It is these qualities which they take abroad with them into their tropical and subtropical colonies, lands whose native populations are inclined because of things like heat and humidity to be less strong, less active, less energetic and more willing to be led, a fact which has enabled European races in general but the English in particular to gain and keep control in such territories. (609-10)

Sarah recalls the essay while out riding horses with Ahmed Kasim; when she observes his “sturdiness” in the extreme heat, she contrasts it with the temperament of fair-complexioned Englishmen like Teddie Bingham, who are sensitive to India’s hot climate. Like White, Sarah recognizes the fortifying unity of the “official” story but is conflicted when her direct observations disrupt the logic and unity of that story. The accounts of Reid and White, as well as Sarah’s revised thoughts on her essay, advance a further question about all of the competing voices and accounts present in the *Quartet*: are any of them reliable sources of truth, or are they all inherently fallible and fragmented? For example, the most direct view of the relationship between Daphne and Hari Kumar

contained in her private diary. Although there is no supplementary text that exposes major inaccuracies in her account, direct access to the events she details is never provided; the things that she experiences are only ever presented through recollection. Likewise, the primary depiction of Hari's violent interrogation at the hands of Merrick, too, is recalled after the fact. Again, Scott inserts a distancing from the event; the particulars are supplied long after they have occurred, when Nigel Rowan interviews Hari in *The Day of the Scorpion*. The accounts of characters like Daphne and Hari may appear more credible than those of Brigadier Reid, but they, too, are textual constructions of past events and must be viewed with similar skepticism. Like Reid's recollections, theirs are fallible, incomplete, and fragmented; they cannot supply the whole story.

Although Scott largely moves away from interwoven narrative patterns after *The Jewel in the Crown*, Morey suggests that he maintains a consistent narrative voice throughout the *Quartet*, and that although the subsequent installments are more conventional and "overtly novelistic" in their integration of character voices and omniscient narration, he views Scott's stylistic shift as a "refinement" of form, rather than a "retreat" from his earlier style (139). The second and third installments of the *Quartet* primarily focus on single characters; *The Day of the Scorpion* follows the experiences of Sarah Layton, and *The Towers of Silence* presents the story of Barbie Bachelor. Morey's term "refinement" is apt in the case of the second and third novels; compared to the first, the latter two provide competing historical accounts in extended form, covering the same time period, involving many of the same people, and recounting many of the same events, albeit from two different perspectives. Although the two

subsequent novels present more narrowly focused and linear narratives than the first, they still exhibit Scott's ongoing fascination with the creation of text; both make extensive use of letters, journals, transcripts of interviews, and other pieces of textual material throughout, in addition to conventional dialogue and omniscient narration. In the fourth installment of the sequence, *A Division of the Spoils*, Scott somewhat returns to the multi-layered narrative format of the first novel, and with the entrance of Perron, a historian, he constructs a partial analog for *The Jewel in the Crown*'s unnamed historian/narrator. Perron assumes the task of attempting to piece together the historical significance of the Bibighar affair, and like the unnamed narrator, he too finds the material evidence insufficient. An example of this occurs when Perron inquires about Merrick's death: after he is found hacked to death in his bungalow, presumably by one of the young Indian men with whom he was sexually involved, his murder is promptly covered up; a newspaper reports it as having been caused by a riding accident (*Division* 901). Nigel Rowan and Count Bronowsky express a desire to repress the actual circumstances of Merrick's death, both for fear of inciting civil unrest and in order to conceal implications of Merrick's homosexuality. When Perron later asks Sarah for details about the incident, she says, "Don't ask me, Guy. Ask Nigel. Or Dmitri. Or better still, nobody" (*Division* 951). Concerning this exchange, Jason Howard Mezey argues, "even as the details of Merrick's death are gradually revealed . . . Scott has already made it clear that the 'official' record has repressed these details to the point of wordlessness" (336). Although Perron labels Hari an "unrecorded" man, this designation also extends to Merrick; his "official" record is false, and the truth of both his death and life are necessarily obscured. Like the

unnamed historian in *The Jewel in the Crown*, Perron is unable to construct a logical and unified narrative because the textual evidence continually resists cohesive meaning.

If the aforementioned meta-textual aspects of *The Raj Quartet* are taken into account, then critical readings of the text that rely on comparisons with nineteenth century French and Russian “realists,” such as Tolstoy, Honoré de Balzac, and Flaubert, for generic classification are problematic because they place preconceived critical attitudes on to the text and necessarily limit future critical readings of Scott’s work. When he is viewed as a writer in the “realist” tradition, Booker’s point that the *Quartet* does not offer a “genuine participation in the forward movement of history” (167) is easily defensible. However, when Scott’s text is approached as a reaction to this tradition, rather than an extension, Booker’s argument becomes problematic, as does his rationale for showing preference for Farrell over Scott. An examination of Scott’s narrative form that addresses the experimental aspects of his aesthetics and their historiographic and ideological implications exposes a strikingly progressive approach to historical appropriation, one that shares more similarities with Farrell’s perspective than it does with nineteenth century “realist” historical fictions, or earlier imperialist and colonialist fictions, because, as Morey suggests about conventional imperialist (i.e. colonialist) narratives, “[t]he form these fictions take is always linear, their tendency towards unity” (135). The formal advantage that *The Siege of Krishnapur* possesses over *The Raj Quartet* in terms of various critical readings comes through Farrell’s rejection of literary realism in favor of parody, where as Scott’s text actively questions and wrestles with the form itself, as opposed to rejecting it outright. Moreover, Scott’s form exposes the

inherent problems with realism, and the text never arrives at a satisfactory conclusion to the story; the narrative is fragmentary, occasionally contradictory, and elusive.

If *The Raj Quartet* and *The Siege of Krishnapur* are both viewed as critiques of British imperialism that arise from a similar originary premise—the desire to question conventional methods of historiography—and the “nostalgia” view of Scott’s work is discarded, then new critical approaches can be taken. If Scott, like Farrell, is viewed as reacting against earlier forms of colonialist literary representation, then the postcolonial implications of the two writers’ works can be addressed in a more cogent fashion. Although the idea that white British writers are incapable of producing works of postcolonial literature is a continual point of critical contention, recent critical voices, such as those of Neil Lazarus and Jacqueline Banerjee, have argued for a more open and inclusive approach to postcolonial studies, which includes revised generic classification. Following the work of these critics, British texts that manifest counterrepresentational themes and oppose dominant modes of imperial discourse, like those of Scott and Farrell, are fully open to postcolonial critical consideration. Furthermore, critics such as Michael Gorra, Peter Childs, Steinberg, Morey, Booker, Colwell, and others have termed these novels “postcolonial” texts. However, the postcolonial implications of the *Quartet* and *The Siege of Krishnapur* are surprisingly dissimilar considering the interest in historiographic revisionism shared by the two authors.

Booker follows his adverse claim that the *Quartet* does not display a “genuine participation in the forward movement of history” with the contention, “[n]ot so with Farrell” (167). He argues that Scott’s “exoticism and . . . submerged nostalgia” are to

blame for his inability to enact “forward movement”; however, if a comparative examination of postcolonial aspects in both texts is undertaken, then his claims become problematic. Moreover, the capacity for “forward movement” in both texts fundamentally depends on the text’s approach to dominant ideology and discourse; from a postcolonial critical perspective, this involves the text’s ability to deconstruct conventional, Orientalized, western conceptions of the East. Moreover, Scott’s view of India appears more progressive than Farrell’s; he constructs a vision of two cultures with a single history, as opposed to Farrell, who in many ways upholds older discursive models, which rely on the formal separation of East and West in terms of history and culture, not unlike the respective representational approaches that Anthony Burgess and Lawrence Durrell adopt in their fictions of the East.⁶ The initial image of landscape that Farrell provides in the opening of the novel, which bears more than a passing resemblance to the establishing images of *A Passage to India* and *The Raj Quartet*, describes an ancient, weathered landscape composed of vast plains, groves of sugar, and bamboo, where a solitary water well is “worked from dusk till dawn by the same two men and two bullocks every single day in their lives” (3); the composite image is “nothing a European might recognize as civilization” (4). The “traveler” that the narrator addresses is returning to Krishnapur many years after the siege, but the landscape bears no marks of Britain’s occupation other than a few boarded-up bungalows—it exists almost exactly as it did in 1857, the year of the great siege. The closing lines of the novel return to the image of the two men “drawing water from the well every day of their lives”

⁶ See Chapter II, Section II.

(343), as the Collector reflects on the small effect the British presence, and the entire ordeal of the siege, has made on the landscape and the people there.

The opening and closing sentiments of Farrell's text approximate a Kiplingesque image of India that is eternal, unchanging, and fundamentally separate from the composite history of England. In Crane's words, postmodern historical novelists, such as Farrell do not "portray the past as past, but . . . include the present in the portrayal of the past" (*Inventing India* 8). However, Farrell's view of the past requires a necessary cultural separation—quite distinct from Scott's pervasive "imperial embrace" metaphor—which proposes a view of English history that is distinct from Indian history. Additionally, this trend of representational separation extends to Farrell's characterization of Indians. Although the entirety of the novel is set in India, Farrell provides relatively few Indian characters apart from the masses of advancing sepoys; accordingly, Goonetilleke suggests, "there is no *contact* between native and Englishman—not even when they meet" (420). The only Indian character that is individualized in contrast to the sepoys is Hari, the son of the Maharajah of the Krishnapur province. However, as Michel L. Ross suggests, Hari is only individualized "within limits," and, "while his personality emerges with some distinctness, he remains at bottom a comic 'babu' [referencing Kipling's *Kim*] stereotype" (70). Hari is introduced late in the first chapter when the Collector and George Fleury—a young romantic who plans to write a book about how the British can bring civilization to India—travel to the Maharajah's palace to tour his opium factory. While there, Hari escorts them to the factory while the Maharajah sleeps on a bed of pillows. During the visit, the Collector and Fleury notice the relaxed and almost

lazy demeanor of the guards at their posts, and they discuss the languid manner and ostentatious style of the wealthy Indians, which they describe as “effeminate” (*Siege* 70-5). Farrell’s use of the term in this context is consistent with Orientalist depictions of Indian males from the period but questionable considering his supposed revisionist project. In a recent article that traces the popularity of picture postcards during the Raj, Steven Patterson provides some insight into “effeminate” depictions of Indian males during the period. He suggests postcards functioned as important pieces of ephemeral propaganda for Britain’s imperial campaign in India, and he argues that comic depictions of Indian males on postcards served as an important justification for the Raj because they constructed an ‘imagined community’ in England’s collective cultural psyche—they manifested the vision of a backwards, weak, and immoral culture in desperate need of Britain’s civilizing influence (143-58). Farrell constructs Hari an individual who elicits a comic effect that is similar to the wry postcards that Patterson supplies. Hari is an effeminate mimic of western civilization, and much of his comedic value arises from his misappropriation of western culture and customs. When the westerners first happen upon Hari, his mimicry is immediately evident:

the Maharajah’s son sat on a chair constructed entirely of antlers, eating a boiled egg and reading *Blackwood’s Magazine*. Beside the chair a large cushion on the floor still bore the impression of where he had been sitting a moment earlier; he preferred squatting on the floor to the discomfort of chairs but feared that his English visitors might regard this as backward.

(72)

Hari later remarks, “a boiled egg and *Blackwood’s* is the best way to start the day” (72) as a means of impressing his guests with his apparent Englishness. However, his speech signals his Otherness in relation to the British characters; he is given to comic verbal slips, such as when he tells the visitors, “Father is asleeping” (78). During the actual siege, the Collector eventually has Hari imprisoned in a lower stall that was formerly used for housing tigers. Although this scene can be read as an indictment of the British mistreatment of Indians, Farrell’s character treatment of Hari never transcends the “babu” stereotype.

In contrast to Farrell, Scott constructs many Indian characters who do not rely on Orientalized stereotypes. Of the multiple narrative voices that compose *The Jewel in the Crown*, it is significant that three are Indian: Lady Lili Chatterjee, Mr. S. V. Vidyasagar, a newspaper editor and political revolutionary, and Mr. Srinivasan, a lawyer and friend of Lady Chatterjee. All three of these characters provide insight into the Bibighar incident, and Scott grants their voices a level of agency that is equal to those of the British characters. Additionally, none of these characters conform to Orientalist patterns of western mimicry; they all speak English well and are not involved in occupations where they are directly subservient to British colonizers. Through the narratives of Chatterjee and Srinivasan, Scott provides perhaps the most detailed account of race relations within the social structure of the Raj. During Srinivasan’s narrative, which is contained in “An Evening at the Club,” the historian/narrator of *The Jewel in the Crown* meets Srinivasan and Chatterjee at the Gymkhana Club, a British-only social club in Mayapore. While they discuss the events leading up to the Bibighar incident, they are continually subjected

to slights from the club's white members, which prompts Srinivasan to explain the complex social interplay between the British and upper class Indians to the narrator. Although Srinivasan and Chatterjee are wealthy and of high social status, their social mobility is still severely limited because of their race; they are still barred from many establishments, and even as invited guests, their privileges are not equal to whites. For this reason, Lady Chatterjee's late husband, Sir Nello Chatterjee, founded the Mayapore Club as an alternative for members of established Indian society (*Jewel* 169-92).

Vidyasagar's narrative relates the events that take place after the rape, and significantly, his account is placed after those of Reid and White, and further calls into question the "official" account of the incident. Vidyasagar's deposition reveals details of Hari's arrest, along with other Indian men who are implicated and describes how Hari is stripped naked and caned until bloody by Merrick in order to gain a confession (*Jewel* 363-78). Hari also recounts this episode in extended form during his interview with Nigel Rowan in *The Day of the Scorpion* (798-805). Moreover, Scott instills these Indian characters with the same depth, complexity, and agency that he extends to British ones. Their narrative entries do not rely on manufactured exoticism in order to add "realistic" texture to their accounts, nor do they convey a sense of comic contrast between British and India. Contrarily, the sense of ever-present racial separation that arises out of their narratives remains secondary to the stated purpose of their accounts; however, Scott weaves the racial divide of the Raj into the atmosphere of their existence.

The juxtaposition of the two Haris⁷ clearly reveals the different representational approaches to race and hybridity taken by Scott and Farrell. Of Farrell's character, Goonetilleke asserts, "Hari lacks dignity because he is a kind of hybrid of the East and the West," and he suggests that the Maharajah's son is portrayed as childlike and "petulant in the face of British power" (412, 416). In contrast, Scott's Hari effectively defies conventional depictions of Indian men as childlike and "effeminate"; although it causes a substantial amount of personal torment within the text, Scott also figures his hybridity as a source of power. As noted in Chapter I, Section I, Kumar is not a "babu"-type mimic—his spoken and written English are impeccable, and his words carry the same weight of agency and intellect as any educated Englishman's. Additionally, his physical form does not project "effeminate" weakness; on the contrary, he is athletic, having been a star cricket player at school in England, and Daphne takes note of his commanding physical attractiveness upon their first meeting: "it was this time of speaking to him that I really noticed how good-looking he was. And tall" (*Jewel* 387). Furthermore, Gorra proposes, "Daphne's desire for Hari is . . . a kind of attempt to restore India's masculinity, a symbolic undoing of colonialism's damage" (49). In her journal, she explains colonialism's oppression of Indian masculinity from the perspective of British women; she writes, for a woman in India, "ninety-nine percent of the men she sees are not men at all, but creatures of an inferior species whose colour is their main distinguishing mark" (*Jewel* 433), and she believes the sexual oppression of the Indians by the British has resulted in a "nation of eunuchs" (*Jewel* 433). Where Farrell's

⁷ There is no critical or textual evidence that suggests that Farrell's use of the name "Hari" has any relationship to Scott's character in the *Quartet*. Therefore, it is fair to assume that Farrell's usage is coincidental.

depiction of hybridity relies on stereotypical colonialist representations that reinforce racial binarism, Scott's construction of hybridity breaks down the binary divide and offers a cultural perspective that approaches a post-racial sensibility.

Farrell's parody of mutiny fictions is undoubtedly an indictment of the metanarrative of Victorian progress and innovation; as well, his revisionist response to contemporary historiography is typically postmodern in form, tone, and approach. However, his reappropriation of England's imperial past is decidedly one-sided. For all his thematic innovations, he appears incapable of extending his historical revision to the country in which his novel is set. The Collector's closing ruminations, twenty-three years after the events of the siege, it is clear that he now believes "a people, a nation, does not create itself according to its own best ideas, but it is shaped by other forces, of which it has little knowledge" (343), and this sentiment denotes a marked shift in his earlier steadfast belief in the forthright power of Victorian civilization. However the nation and people to which he refers are the British, and not the Indians. Although the Collector's remarks are made in 1880, and India would not gain independence from the British for another sixty-seven years, Farrell's vision of the past does not, in Crane's words, "include the present in the portrayal of the past" (*Inventing India* 8) with respect to India. Furthermore, his vision of India and Indians has more in common with the mutiny narratives that he seeks to parody; the landscape is eternally provincial, and the native gentry are effeminate, feckless, and indulgent. Farrell's Hari, the lone individual among the dark masses, is a hopeless and comical mimic of western culture who bows to Kiplingesque stereotypes. Additionally, Farrell portrays the hoards of advancing sepoy

as red-faced grotesques, who serve as little more than cannon fodder—the faces of their mangled corpses eventually chewed off by the starving lap dogs of British women.

In contrast to Farrell's text, *The Raj Quartet* provides a revisionist reading of history that not only incorporates both English and Indian history, but also recognizes those histories as shared and inseparable. Likewise, Scott does not privilege British voices over Indian voices within the narrative; they are granted equal status and agency within the overall structure of the text. For these reasons, Scott's text can be read as an early or transitional example of postcolonial fiction in a way that Farrell's text cannot. The high praise that Booker accords to *The Siege of Krishnapur* can likely be attributed to the novel's prominent anti-imperial themes. Farrell's harsh character treatment of the British and satirical approach to historical revisionism roughly conform to the "anti-colonial agenda" that Lazarus and Banerjee⁸ acknowledge. Following their perspectives, designation of *The Siege of Krishnapur* as a postcolonial text is likely the product of a critical approach that imposes a generic narrowing of focus, one that is able to absolve the text of its representational "problems" due to the strength of its primary critique. Likewise, perhaps Scott's more traditional formal aesthetic has obscured his progressive postcolonial sensibility. In retrospect, Farrell's depictions of India and Indians are those that appear dated, Orientalized, and stereotypically colonialist. In comparison, Scott's vision of India does not adhere to exotic or stereotypical constructions; his Indian narrators manifest the ambiguity of historical experience by attempting to connect it with the present, and they exhibit the same strengths, flaws, complexities, and narrative

⁸ See Banerjee's "Women of Affairs: Images of Empire in Paul Scott's *The Raj Quartet*," pg. 83.

inconsistencies as their British counterparts. Moreover, one of Rushdie's primary complaints about *Quartet*—that British characters provide the stories that “matter,” and the Indians remain “bit-players” (*Whale* 90)—is perhaps more applicable to Farrell's text.

II

As previously noted in Chapter II, Section II, British novel sequences saw a “remarkable revival” in popularity in the years following the Second World War (Connor 136). Helen Gardner notes this trend as well, and adds that the writers of the most notable novel sequences—C. P. Snow, Evelyn Waugh, Anthony Powell, Olivia Manning, Lawrence Durrell, and Paul Scott—were directly influenced by the *roman fleuve*, or “river novel,” which was popular in France during the inter-war period, with Marcel Proust being the greatest exponent of the form (17). Furthermore, Gardner makes this incisive observation regarding outliers within the general trend:

With the exception of Durrell's Alexandrian novels and Paul Scott's Indian sequence, these [novel sequences] are all in differing degrees a combination of fictionalized autobiography and contemporary or recent history. Their subject handled on a large scale, is a man and his times, or man in society. (17)

Although Gardner's point specifies “man,” Doris Lessing's *Children of Violence* series, which focuses on a female character, easily fits her rubric; Lessing's series follows the character Martha Quest from her birth in Africa at the end of the First World War to her

death in Scotland in fictionalized 1997, during World War Three. In a fashion akin to Lessing's, the majority of these fictions deal either directly or indirectly (stigmatically) with the topic of the war, and most specifically address the Second World War. The sheer trauma and enormity of war experience, coupled with the general trend toward documentary-style realism associated with fiction of the post-war period, resulted in novel sequences that pondered primarily epistemological concerns: the ambiguous nature of good and evil, questions about identity (novels with spy elements were common; Elizabeth Bowen's *The Heat of the Day* [1948], although not part of a sequence, is an early example), and problematic notions of abstract concepts like duty, honor, and nationalism.

Gardner's observation is significant because the formal differences that separate the works of Scott and Durrell from those of other writers of novel sequences may indicate additional underlying deviations. With respect to *The Alexandria Quartet*, Gardner's point is technically correct but questionable. Although Durrell's story moves through many narrative voices, Darley remains the narrative center throughout; *Justine* opens the sequence with Darley's story from his perspective, and *Clea*, the final novel, concludes the story by returning to him once again. Additionally, the various narrative revisions, iterations, and reiterations that take place throughout the sequence share similar epistemological concerns with other novel sequences of the period. As noted in Chapter II, Section II, Dasenbrock views Darley as an incarnation of James Joyce's Stephen Dedalus, and the form of the sequence reflects Darley's developing artistic psyche; by the time we reach *Clea*, the whole of the story has come to light, and Darley, like Dedalus at

Portrait of the Artist's end, completes his “coming of age” (517). To further Gardner’s observation, Durrell’s deviation from other novel sequence writers may be attributed, in part, to both his modernist aesthetic, which veers away from documentary realism, and his relegation of the war aspects of the sequence to the level of sub-plot.

In relation to Scott, as opposed to Durrell, Gardner’s observation is less problematic; unlike *The Alexandria Quartet*, *The Raj Quartet* does not present a central narrative voice to which other narrative voices are more or less subjugated; instead, Scott’s *Quartet* constructs a mosaic of narrative voices that revolve around significant events and locations, as opposed to specific characters. The point Gardner hits upon, although she does not pursue it, is that the formal differences between the works of Scott and Durrell and other sequence novels written in the post-war period do not simply mark their works as anomalies; conversely, these differences indicate that they are writing different types of novels altogether, albeit in the form of a novel sequence. In contrast to Durrell’s late modernist aesthetic, Scott’s style moves away from modernism and adopts what Margaret Scanlan describes as a “realistic texture” (“Disappearances of History” 153); furthermore, V. R. Badiger labels Scott an “anti-modernist” due to his avoidance of “extremities of experimentation with the internal order of language” (106), which are hallmarks of Joyce’s fiction, and subsequently Durrell’s. On the surface, Scott’s text seemingly has more in common with other mid-century novel sequences than Durrell’s—the “realistic texture” of his fiction is more in line with the documentary realism of the day, and the emphatic political approach that *The Raj Quartet* takes towards its subject is not radically different from the form of many of the other sequences that deal with the

end of the war. However, Scott's non-centralized narrative form, as acknowledged by Gardner, is indicative of the radically different representational approach that the *Quartet* assumes, and likewise, the different thematic questions that Scott poses throughout the text.

Although Scott does not completely divorce himself from epistemological concerns in the *Quartet*, his revisionist approach toward historiography results in a text that explores ontological issues. In *Constructing Postmodernism*, Brian McHale summarizes the modernist approach to epistemology, suggesting, “[t]he short answer is, a modernist novel looks like a detective story Its plot is organized as a quest for a missing or hidden item of knowledge” (ch. 6). In the modernist fictions that McHale discusses, the past is either fully known or fully accessible and therefore able to be reconstructed (ch. 6). In his estimation, what separates the postmodern from the modern novel is that postmodern texts often take the form of an “anti-detective story” that incorporates an ontological questioning of the modern novel’s epistemological basis; the quest aspect may still exist in postmodern fictions, but a unified view of reality is destabilized and, therefore, concepts such as meaning and truth become fundamentally uncertain (McHale, ch. 6). Furthermore, Ansgar Nünning refers to the characteristics of postmodernist literature that Edmund Smyth provides in *Postmodernism and Contemporary Fiction* (1991) and suggests that innovative forms of post-1960s British historical fiction exhibit textual features that are typical of postmodernist literature: “Fragmentation, discontinuity, indeterminacy, plurality, metafictionality, heterogeneity, intertextuality, decentering, dislocation, ludism . . . [and] element[s] of self-consciousness

and reflexivity” (qtd. in Nünning 218). In relation to Scott, *The Jewel in the Crown* initially takes the form of a “detective story” via the unnamed historian/narrator who has traveled to Mayapore in the fictional present of the 1960s to piece together the story of the rape of Daphne Manners in the Bibighar Gardens. However, as the story progresses, and the narrator uncovers various pieces of evidence in the form of interviews, reports, letters, and journal entries—many of which provide contradictory information—and as the body of historical evidence grows in volume and complexity, the “epistemological quest,” as McHale terms it (ch. 6), is fundamentally undermined. Furthermore, Sister Ludmila’s question to the narrator, “given the material evidence there is also in you an understanding that a specific historical event has no definite beginning, no satisfactory end?” (*Jewel* 132) signals the novel’s shift in focus from the epistemological concern of uncovering historical truth to the ontological concern over the possibility (or impossibility) of recovering complete meaning from historical texts.

As previously noted, *The Jewel in the Crown*, and the subsequent novels of the *Quartet*, incorporate a vast array of fictionalized collected source material; the reports, letters, interviews, and journals that make up the majority of the text often place significant events at various levels of narrative removal, and key moments and plot sequences are almost always articulated indirectly. For example, the most detailed description of the romance between Daphne and Hari Kumar, including the attack in the Bibighar Gardens, comes from Daphne’s private journal (*Jewel* 379-477); likewise, the brutal interrogation of Hari at the hands of Ronald Merrick is not fully presented until *The Day of the Scorpion* when it comes in an interview between Hari and Nigel Rowan

while Hari is still incarcerated. When the narrative form is examined from this critical perspective, it is apparent that Scott's method of historical revisionism is vitally connected to the creation of text. Moreover, Scott's tendency to construct textual intermediaries as a means of conveying historical information places primacy on the textual object, but this focus also exposes the epistemological limits of those texts on which the novel depends.

Scott's method of indirect narrative framing results in what McHale refers to as a "destabilization of the projected world," which involves "'weakening' the fictional world by placing it at several narrative removes," and McHale also notes, "this narrative distancing has a certain effect of robbing the fictional world of its solidity, dissolving it into mere textuality, hearsay, dubious scholarship" (ch. 6.1). The application of McHale's concept to Scott's text is indirectly supported by Scanlan, who discusses Scott's pattern of deconstructing historical narratives in the *Quartet*:

The novel's first response to public history, then, is to distill it into its own stories, to which it attributes a core of stable meaning. Yet, perhaps more crucially, the novel also demonstrates a distrust of stories and the kind of history they yield. The inaccuracies in stories and their seductiveness once they become myths can compel disaster. (*Traces* 138)

By demonstrating a "distrust" of the various stories contained in the sequence, the novel implicitly extends this skepticism to the area of public history as well. By acknowledging inaccuracies in official historical records, such as Merrick's murder being covered up and attributed to a "riding accident" (*Division 901*) or the unintentional errors

in Brigadier Reid's account of the Bibighar incident (*Jewel* 287-336), Scott suggests that all forms of "official" history are also fundamentally stories—constructed narratives replete with errors, omissions, and fabrications. Indeed, to incorporate McHale's terminology, Scott dissolves history into textuality; for example, Scanlan notes how Barbie Bachelor "explores the possibility of escaping history by escaping language" (*Traces* 149). After the death of Mabel Layton, Barbie—normally an enthusiastic talker—begins to experience "imaginary silences" in which she can no longer hear herself. During these episodes, she experiences a "vivid sense of herself as new and unused . . . no longer in arrears . . . because the account had not yet been opened," and she "enjoy[s] the sensation of her history and other people's history blowing away like dead leaves" (*Towers* 184). After her tonga accident on the road to Rose Cottage, stricken with pneumonia, she tells Sarah that "one has no history. Just each hour of the day" (*Towers* 338). Eventually, Barbie takes a "vow of silence" (*Towers* 396) and begins communicating through short written notes. She rips up a calendar that was given to her on D-Day, now unable to comprehend the significance of temporal progression: "The calendar was a mathematical progression with arbitrary surprises" (*Towers* 400). Scott figures Barbie's abstention from language as her only means of escaping history (Scanlan 149). Through Barbie's silence, the novel illustrates how history is a construct of language and how language itself is a volatile and unstable system of signification, one that can be endlessly modified, amended, and deconstructed to the point of meaninglessness. In the absence of language, text becomes meaningless for Barbie, and history is exposed as a conceptual construct of the text.

The narrative construction of *The Raj Quartet*, which interweaves actual historical material with multiple instances of false documents, simultaneously produces a destabilization of the fictional world and deconstructs conventional approaches to historiography. Returning briefly to Gardner's observation, the *Quartet's* marked deviation from other sequences of the period, including Durrell's, is an instance of form following function. In seeking to categorize the *Quartet* with other post-war novel sequences, Gardner and Steven Connor have noted its aberrant qualities but have not pursued alternate critical readings of the text based on this observation. If the narrative form of the *Quartet* is taken into account, then the novel sequence can be critically viewed as a distinct departure from earlier forms of British historical fiction. Likewise, the sequence can be critically read as an early example of postmodern historical fiction. However, this position is not critically revolutionary. Peter Childs suggests that the *Quartet* exhibits characteristics of both modernism and postmodernism: Scott's "characters . . . reflect a modernist sense of alienation (due to exile) and a nascent postmodernist experience of schizophrenia (due to the pervasive theme of division)" (17); and Nünning makes mention of Scott's postmodern sensibility when she categorizes the *Quartet* as a "revisionist historical novel" (terminology she borrows from McHale), alongside J. G. Farrell's *The Siege of Krishnapur* and *Troubles*, and texts by William Boyd and Isabel Colegate (222). Although these critics have acknowledged the possibility for postmodern examinations of Scott's work, a thorough critical treatment from this critical vantage point has never been undertaken.

Nünning's article, "Crossing Borders and Blurring Genres: Towards a Typology and Poetics of Postmodernist Historical Fiction in England since the 1960s" (1997) provides a convenient point of entry for examining the postmodern aspects of *The Raj Quartet*. By incorporating work of notable critics of postmodern historical fiction, such as Linda Hutcheon and McHale, Nünning argues for a broader spectrum of classification for post-war British historical novels, and expands both Hutcheon's concept of "historiographic metafiction" and McHale's "constructivist" approach to generic classification of postmodern historical fiction. In *A Poetics of Postmodernism: History, Theory, Fiction* (1988), Hutcheon defines historiographic metafiction as, "those well-known and popular novels which are both intensely self-reflective yet paradoxically also lay claim to historical events and personages" (5), and she cites John Fowles's *The French Lieutenant's Woman* (1969), Salman Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, E. L. Doctorow's *Ragtime* (1975), William Kennedy's *Legs* (1975), John Berger's *G.* (1972), and Timothy Findley's *Famous Last Words* (1981) as prominent examples. Additionally, Nünning is skeptical of the totalizing aspects of Hutcheon's generic outline and suggests that the construct inevitably leads to "unwarranted assumptions of homogeneity" that do not do justice to the breadth and diversity of forms in contemporary British historical fiction (219-20). She proposes the development of an improved generic model that proceeds from McHale's approach, which incorporates finer critical nuance and greater categorical delineation; additionally, she contends that the categorical boundaries she articulates are not rigidly fixed; rather they are "blurred" indicators of generic demarcation, with many texts falling into multiple categories. Moreover, she addresses an

ongoing problem in contemporary British historical fiction scholarship. Del Ivan Janik also explores the inherent problems with categorizing contemporary British historical fiction in his article, “No End of History: Evidence from the Contemporary English Novel” (1995), which appeared two years before Nünning’s *Working with texts* by A. S. Byatt, Peter Ackroyd, Graham Swift, Julian Barnes, and Kazuo Ishiguro, Janik suggests, “these novels transcend the categories into which we have lately come to divide contemporary fiction . . . [w]hat these novels have in common . . . are not particular approaches to the treatment of history, but an affirmation of the importance of history to the understanding of contemporary existence” (161-2). His seemingly contradictory notion that contemporary British historical fiction transcends generic classification while exhibiting a consistent thematic paradigm is indicative of the need for new approaches to typology within the area of contemporary historical fiction. Accordingly, the critical approach that Nünning proposes—one that advances notions of inclusivity and openness—is advantageous when discussing a writer like Scott, whose work exhibits many transitional qualities in terms of aesthetics, ideological representation, and temporality.

Nünning delineates three primary generic categories of contemporary British historical novels: revisionist, metahistorical, and historiographic metafictional (221, 224, 226). As previously noted, she includes Scott in her discussion of revisionist historical texts, which she suggests “are inspired by the wish to rewrite history, particularly from the point of view of those all too long ignored by traditional historiography By focusing on ‘the marginalized, the peripheral figures of fictional history’, revisionist

historical novels present ‘a decentered view of fictional history’” (Hutcheon 114, Scanlan 10; qtd. in Nünning 222). Following from this description, categorizing *The Raj Quartet* as a revisionist historical novel is a relatively easy claim to make. Scott focuses on marginalized individuals throughout the text; he examines the end of empire through the experiences of wives, missionaries, hybridized individuals, lower ranking army officers, and minor civil servants. Additionally, the event of Daphne’s rape in the Bibighar Gardens is not a national affair; the event is a localized tragedy and primarily significant in relation to a small community. However, Scott infuses the event and those involved with metaphorical significance, and the novel constructs an alternate history of the end of empire from this symbolic framework. Guy Perron articulates Scott’s revisionist aims for the novel when he comments on the conflict between Hari and Merrick: “their meeting reveals the animus, the one that historians won’t recognize, or which we relegate to the margins” (*Division* 715).

Although the revisionist aspects of the text are a vital component of its postmodern characteristics, the novel also displays characteristics similar to contemporary texts that Nünning categorizes as both metahistorical and historiographic metafictional. Concerning metahistorical novels, she contends that these texts “represent significant innovations in the treatment of history as a literary theme because what they highlight is the process of historical reconstruction and the protagonists’ consciousness of the past rather than a represented historical world as such” (224). She further suggests that metahistorical novels do not construct a version of the past as a “self-contained and complete world, but as liable to the distortions that subjective distortions and

recollections entail” (224). She aligns the works of A. S. Byatt and Peter Ackroyd with the category of metahistorical fiction because their novels are often characterized by a “semantization of space,” where setting is located in somewhere other than physical space (place names, art, architecture as a historical touchstone), and within “dense intertextual networks” (224). These two writers commonly produce historical fictions that operate on the “premise of parallel lives,” where the lives of characters in the fictional present (usually researchers or academics) become intertwined with characters in the past, and the narrative is presented in the form of a dual storyline (Underwood 2, 1-4). Although Scott’s novel sequence does not develop a “premise of parallel lives” to the degree that novels like Byatt’s *Possession*¹ (1990) or Ackroyd’s *Hawksmoor*² (1985) and *Chatterton*³ (1987), his text does display metahistorical aspects that anticipate the developments of these writers. Scott’s formal construction of narrative precipitates a skepticism about conventional historiography through its implicit distrust of both historical recollection and the textual artifact (constructed in the novel as false documents). Additionally, his emphasis on the process of historical reconstruction is not limited to *The Jewel in the Crown*; in the following novels, Scott links the personal development of protagonists to the evolution of their historical knowledge. Perhaps the most notable example appears in *The Day of the Scorpion* and involves the scene from which the novel takes its title. When Sarah Layton is twelve years old, she and Susan watch a few of the Layton family’s Indian servants kill a scorpion; they place the

¹ Byatt, A. S. *Possession*. 1990. New York: Vintage International, 1991. Print.

² Ackroyd, Peter. *Hawksmoor*. 1985. London: Penguin, 2010. Print.

³ Ackroyd, Peter. *Chatterton*. 1987. New York: Grove, 1996. Print.

scorpion in a circle of fire and show how it will die before being burned by the flames. Unaware of the scorpion's sensitivity to heat, the servants tell the girls that the scorpion commits suicide by stinging itself. Sarah rejects this story and seeks out the truth from Mabel (574), but Susan clings to the fiction. Years later, in the wake of her husband, Teddie Bingham's, death, Susan places their infant son, Edward, on the grass outside the Laytons' house, and builds a ring of fire around him. However, an on-looking servant saves the child before he is burned, and afterward Susan is swiftly transported to a mental hospital (990). Susan's inability to reconcile the inconsistencies in her own understanding of the past advance her toward a destructive state of cognitive dissonance; in contrast, Sarah's ability to interrogate the content of her own historical knowledge⁴ allows her to rupture the discursive fabric of imperial culture and attempt alternate conceptual strategies. Although these aspects of *The Raj Quartet* appear almost latent in comparison to the historical skepticism displayed in later contemporary novels, like those of Byatt and Ackroyd, Scott's text exhibits a similar distrust of conventional modes of historiography, and the novel's historiographic approach aligns with the postmodern view of the past as always-already fragmented and incomplete—itsself a product of the text.

Concerning Ted Underwood's "premise of parallel lives" concept, which provides the narrative impetus and characteristic "metafictional layering" in the novels of Byatt and Ackroyd (Underwood 1, 1-7), although Scott's text does not develop this premise into temporally separate dual narrative lines, he structures time as a cycle and thus constructs history's influence on the present in the form of symbolic repetition. As noted

⁴ See Chapter III, Section I for a discussion of Sarah's perceptual shift in relation to her recollection of a school essay she wrote that indirectly supports racial essentialism, which she no longer believes to be true.

in Chapter II, Section I, this dimension of the text is displayed most prominently in the novel's major (i.e. generic) and minor chronotopes. By way of example, within the threshold chronotope that the Bibighar/McGregor House Garden constitute, historical scenarios play out in cyclical repetition: the Indian prince and the classical singer die without consummating their love; the East India Company officer, McGregor, murders his Indian wife whom he suspects of adultery, and he is then himself murdered by rebelling sepoys as an act of revenge; years later, Daphne is raped and Hari beaten by a group of Indians after they have consummated their romance on the site; and finally, Hari is falsely imprisoned for the rape, and Daphne dies giving birth to a daughter, Parvati, who grows to develop a beautiful singing voice, which links her to the collective past of the site as well. Scott reinforces the concept of historical repetition in *The Towers of Silence* through Barbie's connection to Emerson, and her emotional response to passages from "History" (*Towers* 73-4). In relation to the text's invocation of Ralph Waldo Emerson, Childs contends, "[t]his is one method of design that Scott has used in the *Quartet*, where lives parallel both other lives and the histories of countries" (50). He suggests, through Barbie's exposure to Emerson that she becomes aware of the cyclical pattern of time: "She began to feel what she believed Emerson wanted her to feel: that in her own experience lay an explanation not only of history but of the lives of other living people, therefore an explanation of things that had happened to Edwina and to Miss Manners of whom she had only the vaguest picture . . ." (Childs 50-1, *Towers* 74). Finally, Childs argues, "the painting of "The Jewel in Her Crown" becomes for Barbie, a representation not of Victoria, but Edwina, Mabel, Daphne, or Barbie herself, because its

subject is the Indo-British relationship in which Victoria, who never visited India, was only ever the figurehead of a nation of exiles” (51). Hence, the novel’s motif of temporal repetition involves interhistorical components as reference points for instances of cyclical mirroring: the women in the novel are figured as representations of Victoria; names of locations take on metaphorical significance due to their semantic similarity to actual places of historical significance (Chillianwallah Bagh and Jallianwala Bagh in Amritsar; the Bibighar Gardens and the Bibighar House at Cawnpore)⁵; and dates and events in history are mirrored in the personal history of the characters—Mabel Layton dies on D-Day (*Towers* 211), and Barbie dies on the day the atomic bomb is dropped on Hiroshima (*Towers* 400). When Barbie’s corpse is discovered by the staff of the hospital, the state of her remains mimics the victims of the bombing: “The found her thus, eternally alert, in sudden sunshine, her shadow burnt into the wall behind her as if by some distant but terrible fire” (*Towers* 400).

Although Scott’s cyclical temporal model does not result in the type of parallel temporal narrative structure adopted by later contemporary writers of postmodern historical fiction, such as Ackroyd and Byatt, the novel’s time construct operates on the premise that history is not contained in the past but subsists in the present and exerts tremendous influence over the course of future events. Ackroyd’s construction of temporal interplay in *Hawksmoor* arises from a conception of history that is directly comparable to Scott’s. Ackroyd’s novel tells the parallel stories of Nicholas Hawksmoor, a detective in the 1980s, and Nicholas Dyer, an eighteenth century architect in London

⁵ See Boyer, 68.

who is designing churches under Sir Christopher Wren. Dyer is secretly involved in a satanic cult that participates in human sacrifices, while in the 1980s, Hawksmoor is assigned to investigate a series of murders that have taken place at churches built by Dyer. Ana Sentov observes that although the three centuries separate the two narratives, they are connected by repeated phrases, images, and motifs: they share a common location in London; both Dyer and Hawksmoor work in offices in Scotland Yard; both live close to Seven Dials; the murders in both time periods are committed on the sites of the same churches; and each chapter begins with the same phrase or image that concludes the previous (125-6). The primary metaphor for time in the novel comes from Dyer: “Time is a vast Denful of Horror, round about which a Serpent winds and in the winding bites itself by the tail” (75). Dyer’s description of time, the circular dragon eating its own tail, is strikingly similar to the description of time that comes from Sister Ludmila: “a specific historical event has no definite beginning, no satisfactory end It is as if time were telescoped and space dovetailed” (*Jewel* 132). Likewise, Mark Hennelly Jr. draws on the same image of the circular serpent when he describes the plot of Byatt’s *Possession* as “tail-eating” (443). According to Hennelly, the cyclical time construct that Byatt creates involves a motif of “repeating patterns,” which echo across the temporal plane and imply an ongoing continuum: “Repeating patterns, in fact, provide an endless series of textual metonymies: *patterns* themselves suggest previous repetitions even before the *repeating* repeats them again” (443). Therefore, the patterned pairing of *Possession*’s scholar-detectives, Roland Mitchell and Maude Bailey, with the fictional Victorian poets that they are researching, Randolph Henry Ash and Christabel LaMotte,

along with all of the “repeated patterns” that are involved Byatt’s narrative doubling, imply a larger historical time construct that functions according to the same premise. Hennelly’s observation about the implication of previous and future repetitions can also be applied to Scott’s text; Perron says of Merrick and Hari, “their meeting was logical. And they have had met before, countless times. You can say they are meeting still . . .” (*Division* 715). The opening of the *Jewel in the Crown* also implies the repetitive nature of the conflict between England and India; the passage reads, “the affair [of the Bibighar Gardens] . . . ended with the spectacle of two nations in violent opposition, not for the first time nor for the last because they were locked in an imperial embrace . . .” (*Jewel* 6). Although more overtly political and less aesthetically experimental, *The Raj Quartet*’s cyclical time motif establishes the same historical perspective that allows for the temporal exchanges, or “repeating patterns,” present in the metahistorical fictions of Byatt and Ackroyd.

In addition to Nünning’s metahistorical generic subset, *The Raj Quartet* also displays characteristics consistent with the final category of contemporary British historical fiction that she discusses: historiographic metafiction. According to Linda Hutcheon, historiographic metafiction “effects two simultaneous moves. It reinstalls historical contexts as significant and even determining, but in doing so, it problematizes the entire notion of historical knowledge” (89). Furthermore, Alison Lee contends that the representation of history in historiographic metafiction “differs substantially from the use of history in the traditional historical novel where history, as a group of facts which exists extra-textually and which can be represented as it ‘really was,’ is never in

question” (qtd. in Nünning 226). Nünning suggests an additional categorical grouping within this subset, the “explicit” and “implicit form”:

[historiographic metafiction] may either be explicit, that is it may use the devices of metafiction to self-referentially explore and overtly thematize the epistemological, methodological, and linguistic problems connected with any attempt to construct coherent accounts of the past. But historiographic metafiction may just as well be implicit, that is incorporate its metahistoriographic concerns formally into the structure of the novel. In either case, historiographic metafiction deals less with historical facts than with the epistemological problems attached to the reconstruction of historical events and the writing of history. (226)

In her estimation, implicit forms of historiographic metafiction often underscore the conflict between the actual past and recollected versions of the past and draw attention to the problematic nature of historical representation (227). She cites John Fowles’s *A Maggot*⁶ (1985) as an example of this form. Fowles’s murder mystery, set in the English county of Devon in the eighteenth century, explores “the textual nature of history by presenting itself as a heterogeneous mixture of various kinds of documents” (Holmes 229). The novel incorporates excerpts from newspaper articles (including a report of the death), personal letters, and transcripts of interviews and testimonies given by various characters to Henry Ayscough, a barrister. He is hired by a duke to investigate the disappearance of his son, “Mr. Bartholomew” (an alias), who went missing while

⁶ Fowles, John. *A Maggot*. Boston: Little & Brown, 1985. Print.

traveling with a group through the countryside; after an enigmatic event in a cave involving Bartholomew, a hired prostitute named Rebecca Lee (given the alias “Fanny”), and a servant named Dick Thurlow, Thurlow hangs himself near the inn where the party is staying and Bartholomew goes missing. The contradictory versions of the events produced by the various witness accounts provide no single authentic representation of the past but a plurality of competing versions (Nünning 227), and the novel’s dialogic and polyphonic structure, which incorporates a collection of different discourses, voices, dialects, and points of view, “revitalizes history” by displaying a multitude of perspectives on how the past can be interpreted (Holmes 230).

Scott’s text displays a narrative structure that is similar to *A Maggot* in terms of its dialogic and polyphonic elements and its focus on the “textual nature of history.” Childs suggests, the novels explore the concept of “historical parallax,” in which a change in a historical event is caused by a change in the angle of observation (71). The various narrative perspectives presented throughout the *Quartet* provide different versions of past events, and each voice attempts to inscribe its version of history with a sense of narrative unity—continuity and logical causality. Although many of the accounts conflict, none are exposed as complete fabrications; therefore, all are necessarily fragmented versions, and must be held to an equal level of suspicion. Jason Howard Mezey observantly points to an instance in Perron’s narrative where historical reconstruction explicitly becomes fiction when he recalls the episode of Ali Kasim’s death. On the eve on independence, Sarah, Perron, Kasim, and a few other Indo-Britons are taking a train from Mirat to Ranpur, and during the journey the train is stopped by a

mob, and Kasim sacrificially gives himself over. Mezey observes that Perron reflects in great detail on a sight that he has not actually observed:

In Perron's mind it remains so vivid that it sometimes seems to him that he raised a shutter himself and watched as the train drifted away along this stretch of line, on whose embankments bodies lay; some close, some farther off as though they had tried to run away and then been caught and struck down—men, women, youths, babies; in death looking all the same, like dummies stuffed for some kind of strange festival. (*Division* 1003; qtd. in Mezey 350)

In this particular instance, Perron explicitly fabricates history for the sake of continuity; interestingly, this point conflicts with Janet Tedesco and Janet Popham's argument that Perron is one of the most reliable narrators in the sequence (*Introduction to The Raj Quartet* 195). In this episode, Scott illustrates how even the most well-intentioned historian is incapable of freeing him or herself from the overwhelming impulse to construct a unified narrative out of available evidence. In Perron's case, his perception of the event is incomplete; as a result, an imagined version of the event takes precedence, and his account becomes an indistinguishable confluence of fact and fiction. Perron's instance of imaginative historical reconstruction implicitly underscores other explicit and possible instances of fabulation in the text and effectively draws all of novel's historical reconstructions into question, which includes those found in the various false documents that constitute many of the narrative voices. Similar to novels like *A Maggot*, the narrative structure of *The Raj Quartet* highlights the subjectivity of the historical process,

and reminds the reader that at its most fundamental level, history is the product of human reconstruction, and historians subjectively construct historical narratives.

Although Scott's text displays some elements consistent with what Nünning terms the "implicit" form of historiographic metafiction, *The Raj Quartet* never develops into the "explicit" form, which involves "overtly discuss[ing] epistemological and methodological problems of reconstructing the past" (Nünning 228). Although it implicitly approaches ontological and epistemological problems of historical representation through its formal structure, the text does not introduce characters that actively acknowledge the problem of historical reconstruction. Explicit historiographic metafictional novels like Julian Barnes *Flaubert's Parrot* (1984), Penelope Lively's *Moon Tiger* (1987) and *City of the Mind* (1991), and Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* feature self-conscious narrators who openly explore the boundary between fact and fiction, real and imaginary, as they attempt to construct versions of the past that are often freely acknowledged as either subjective or biased (Nünning 228-31). However, like Fowles, Scott evinces a concern for, and a distrust of, the mechanism by which historical knowledge is gained and transferred, albeit not in the form of a self-conscious narrative voice that overtly addresses the matter of historical representation. Additionally, the relatively early date of the *Quartet's* composition, in relation to other postmodern historical fictions, must be considered; with the *Quartet*, Scott consciously moves away from modernist and realist narrative techniques and modes of representation, and therefore shares Fowles's transitional character. Mahmoud Salami suggests that Fowles "traverses the narrative space between modernism and postmodernism" (23), and a

similar argument can be made for Scott, who, like Fowles, moves toward rejecting totalized narratives.

In light of the revisionist, metahistorical, and historiographic metafictional elements present *The Raj Quartet*, Nünning's argument for a more open critical approach to generic classification of contemporary British historical fiction is particularly applicable to Scott's text. The transitional aesthetic character of the text has likely placed it at a critical disadvantage. The novel can be differentiated from earlier forms of British historical fiction by its postmodern structural characteristics and their metahistorical and metafictional implications, but it stands apart from later developments in contemporary British historical fiction; its postmodern elements are neither overt nor foregrounded and therefore do not bear the recognizable hallmarks of later postmodern historical novels. However, the subtlety of Scott's technique does not negate the postmodern aspects of the text nor his status as a writer transitioning into postmodernism. Similarly, Morey's concerns about genre classification and historiographic metafiction in relation to Farrell's *The Siege of Krishnapur* may easily be applied to Scott's *Quartet*:

the very nature of the topic [formal definitions of historiographic metafiction] seems to have led to a proscriptive narrowing of focus which excludes a writer who works in what some would see as a parochial tradition, to undermine realism from within. Instead, critical treatises often privilege Continental European or American writing of the 1960s and 1970s over its British counterpart as containing purer examples or more 'radical' examples of metafiction—examples which have a

particularly overt and demonstrable relationship to philosophical developments after structuralism which posit a closed system of merely self-referential signification. Indeed, on surveying much of the available critical literature on metafiction, an uncharitable reader might conclude that subtlety has never figured highly in the list of postmodernist beatitudes And innovation is least likely to appear in the cobwebbed corner occupied by colonial fiction, with its tradition of empiricism and its often pragmatic concern with politics of a particularly intractable variety. (113)

Morey's argument supports claims by Marjorie Perloff, who observes, "It is a paradox of postmodern genre that the more radical the dissolution of traditional generic boundaries, the more important the concept of genericity becomes (qtd. in Nünning 233). Likewise, Janik suggests writers like Byatt, Barnes, Ishiguro, Ackroyd, and Graham Swift, who have all produced historical fictions "characterized by a foregrounding of historical consciousness, most often through a dual or even multiple focus on the fictional present and one or more crucial 'pasts' do not constitute a conscious 'school' of new historical novelists; however similar their subjects, their styles and approaches are too diverse" (161, 186). Despite the *Quartet's* similarities to other historical novels of the period—most notably other sequence novels⁷—it does not fall comfortably into a particular "school" of historical fiction, as Gardner observes. Its progressive formal structure causes it to blur the lines of genre distinction, and the novel alone may

⁷ See Chapter II, Section II.

constitute a “hybrid genre,” to borrow Nünning’s terminology (233). Critics have accommodated other writers whose works lie outside conventional generic margins; Salami acknowledges this to be the case with Fowles, and similar critical allowances must be made for writers such as Scott, who produce texts from outside the margins.

In addition to the possibility for new critical approaches to Scott that a postmodern critical appraisal holds, viewing the *Quartet* as a work that anticipates later developments in postmodern historical fiction potentially accommodates the production of other critical work outside the sphere of Scott scholarship. For example, Janik speculates that the Thatcherite neoconservative political atmosphere of the 1980s, which emphasized a return to “Victorian” values while contradictorily de-emphasizing national identity, may have played a part in the reexamination of the English past in historical fiction (187). Janik is not alone in this speculation; Suzanne Keen explores the link between the de-emphasis of history in the National Curriculum between the late 1970s and late 1990s, when history departments in publicly funded schools were routinely downsized, and “‘Old Fashioned History’ found itself displaced by a ‘New History’ invigorated by social-science methodologies and changes in pedagogical techniques” (105). Keen also explains, the new curriculum focused on chronology and the historical high points of Britain, and she suggests that the culmination of the historical narrative was the creation of a “great nation-state with its characteristic parliamentary democracy” (107); however, critics of the new curriculum argued that the “New History” approach “glossed over the darker episodes of British history” (107), and she explains that liberal critics “[saw] its promulgation of an airbrushed past as reflecting nostalgia for past

glories embodied in a celebrated heritage” (108). Byatt possibly draws a connection between new curricular approaches to history and the evolution of the contemporary historical novel when she says, “I think the fact that we have in some sense been forbidden to think about history is one reason why so many novelists have taken to it It may be argued that we cannot understand the present if we do not understand the past that preceded and produced it” (*On Histories and Stories* 11).

If clear links can be established between Thatcherism and the postmodern developments in British historical fiction of the late 1970s, 1980s, and early 1990s, then Scott’s frank and explicit rejection of Powellism in the late 1960s and early 1970s positions him as a prescient figure who anticipates the political concerns of later contemporary writers. Camilla Schofield contends that there is “no doubt” that the political policies of Enoch Powell helped to produce Thatcherism and that Powell contributed to both the New Right’s economic thinking and rhetorical style (95). By severely tightening policies on immigration, “Powell called for a reversal of history, a return to a certain world” (Schofield 101), and regaining certainty involved removing memories of the Empire’s failure in India from the collective consciousness (Childs 12). Additionally, Childs suggests, “Scott’s novels actively worked against Powell’s kind of parochialism and challenged both its polemical authority and its view of history” (12). Powell’s view of history, his desire to forget Britain’s failed dominion in India, is a discourse that is revisited in Thatcherism’s revised educational history curriculum. If the argument can be made that later contemporary writers of postmodern historical fiction are in part reacting against this ideology, then the argument can be made that Scott’s

approach to historical revisionism fundamentally responds to a similar reactionary impulse: the impulse to chronicle and historicize individuals and events that have either been unrecorded or omitted. Hence, through the study of writers like Scott and texts like *The Raj Quartet*, the evolution of the postmodern historical novel in England can be linked to the evolution of political and cultural ideology in the post-war period.

CHAPTER IV

REVIVING *THE RAJ QUARTET*: CINEMATIC MISAPPROPRIATION AND THE SHARED POSTCOLONIAL VISION OF PAUL SCOTT AND SALMAN RUSHDIE

In relation to Paul Scott's approach to historical fiction, the developing postmodern sensibility displayed in *The Raj Quartet* closely correlates with the co-development of themes, motifs, and methods of representation that are consistent with later works of postcolonial fiction. In this regard, however, the *Quartet* treads difficult waters. The novel sequence chronicles a period of sweeping cultural and political transition, 1942 to 1947; additionally, within the context of Scott's own historical vision, the late 1960s into the early 1970s, the work is influenced by the shifting tides of cultural and political discourse in England. Scott's writing reflects increasing public concerns about the relationship between national identity and the perception of England's imperial history. Additionally, during the 1960s and 1970s, Scott's interpretation of the final years of the British Raj was by no means a wildly popular one. Janet Haswell explains that Scott's novels were largely "marginalized" in both public and critical circles, and she further notes that Scott himself believed the reason for their poor reception was "a kind of MIASMA . . . an infectious or noxious emanation" that, in her words, "enveloped the English during the post-war years after Indian Independence in 1947" (qtd. in "Images" 203). During the period of the *Quartet*'s publication, the general attitude of the public toward India emphasized forgetting England's imperial failures, and stressed disregarding the lingering moral questions that the memory of the Raj conjured ("Images" 203). Aside from being peripheral in terms of popularity, Scott's chosen subject was not terribly

original either; Jacqueline Banerjee points out that before *The Jewel in the Crown* was completed, Indian novels dealing with the same events had already gained wide recognition (“Paul Scott as a Post-Imperial Author,” par. 2). As previously noted in the Introduction, Banerjee cites Kushwant Singh’s novel dealing with the bloody Partition of India and Pakistan, *Train to Pakistan*, and Manohar Malgonkar’s novel about the decline of the princely states in pre- and post-Independence India, *The Princes*, as two prominent examples; however, she suggests that these texts offer a perspective on the dissolution of the Raj that is fundamentally different from Scott’s:

[For Indian writers,] The need was to expose old wrongs, and in doing so to build confidence in the emergent national and cultural identity—not to re-examine the roles of the colonists, or to analyse the effects of the colonial past upon *them*.” (“Paul Scott as a Post-Imperial Author,” par. 2)

However, Scott’s literary approach compared with those of Indian novelists involves different conceptions and applications of symbolism, and this can be attributed in part to the inherent strains of developing nationalistic sentiment attached to early Independence Indian fiction.

Many of the Indian novels that chronicle the period of Independence and Partition, such as *Train to Pakistan*, function primarily as “national allegories” (Morey 162, 68; Jameson 69), and this phenomenon may perhaps best be understood through the lens of Fredrick Jameson’s essay, “Third-World Literature in the Era of Multinational Capitalism,” in which he suggests:

Third-world texts, even those which are seemingly private and invested with a properly libidinal dynamic—necessarily project a political dimension in the form of national allegory: *the story of the private individual destiny is always an allegory of the embattled situation of the public third-world culture and society*. (69)

For the majority of the early wave of post-imperial Indian texts, the individual is not conceived as separate from the community, and the synthesis of this approximation is the view of the individual as the allegorical extension of the new nation; the trials, fortunes, and future of the individual serve as a reflection of the collective whole. In the wake of colonialism, themes of nationalism and reclamation/reconstruction of cultural identity must certainly have contributed to the success of many of these texts with indigenous audiences, and in many ways, Scott produces a text that is thematically antithetical to the Indian fictions that Banerjee cites for comparison. More specifically, where post-Independence Indian texts, as “national allegories,” bolster the establishment of collective national identity and the reclamation of national history, Scott produces, for English readers, a text that interrogates these concepts; the *Quartet* actively questions notions of national identity and national history, and duly calls for a renegotiation of national responsibility on the part of England as ex-colonizers.

Moreover, Scott’s originality arises not from his subject but from his thematic approach. Where Indian fictions dealing with Independence primarily focus on the reclamation of cultural identity and heritage by formerly colonized Indians, the *Quartet*’s primary thematic concern is the reassessment and rearticulation of English cultural

identity in relation to imperialism. Additionally, a fundamental component of Scott's examination of English cultural identity is an intense metaphorical critique of imperial history, in which he deconstructs various aspects of the discursive cultural mythos of imperialism—those founding myths of English supremacy, which legitimized and rationalized colonialism in the minds of the English. Herein lies the correlation between the postmodern and postcolonial features of Scott's fiction: in order to deconstruct the founding myths of imperialism, Scott adopts a revisionist historical approach, which illustrates "a wish to rewrite history, particularly from the point of view of those all too long ignored by traditional historiography" (Nünning 222), and his incorporation of a non-linear and decentralized formal narrative structure challenges the unified and coherent historical worldview that colonialist/imperialist discourse creates, and, according to Banerjee, "[the text's] shifts of perspective make it resistant to thematic closure" ("Theme and Subject in Paul Scott's Works," par. 4).

Scott's status as a postcolonial writer has undoubtedly been colored by the divided critical reception of the film adaptation of *The Raj Quartet*, titled *The Jewel in the Crown*, and due to the effect that the film has levied on Scott's reputation, a critical discussion of the relationship between the two works may be appropriate. Granada Television produced *The Jewel in the Crown* for the ITV British public television service in 1984, and the fourteen-episode serial, which aired from January 3 to April 3, 1984 (in the US, the series first aired in December of 1984 on PBS), was tremendously popular with British audiences, averaging over eight million viewers per installment (Brandt 197). In a larger cultural context, the television serial can be seen as the product of a

renewed public interest in imperial India that emerged in England in the early 1980s, and it is often identified as part of a group of films produced during the period that deal with aspects of the Raj. Other films associated with the movement include adaptations of Ruth Praver Jhabvala's *Heat and Dust* (1983), M. M. Kaye's *The Far Pavilions* (1984), E. M. Forster's *A Passage to India* (1984), and Richard Attenborough's original biographical film, *Gandhi* (1982). The cultural fascination with India during the early 1980s even trickled into the lower registers of the middlebrow (perhaps lowbrow) fiction: the 1983 film adaptation of Ian Fleming's short story *Octopussy* (the thirteenth film in the long-running film series) places famed fictional MI6 agent, James Bond (played by Roger Moore), in various exoticized locations throughout India. Although all of the British-India films produced during the period convey different representations of India's cultural landscape at different points in history, the composite image produced by the movement was often characterized by critics as Orientalized, and harkening back to older forms of colonialist representation, which relied on racial stereotypes (Rushdie, Desai, Sharpe, Booker).

Even though Scott's novel *Staying On* (1977), which revisits many of the characters from *The Raj Quartet* in post-imperial India, won the Booker Prize in 1977, it was the 1984 film adaptation that brought his work not only to the attention of the general public but to the attention of many notable postcolonial critics. As previously noted in the Introduction and elsewhere throughout this study, one of the most outspoken critical responses to Scott's work in the wake of the television production comes from Salman Rushdie in his essay "Outside the Whale," which was first published in *Granta* magazine

in April of 1984, and in *American Film* in January of 1985; shorter versions of the article also appeared in *The Observer* and *Gentlemen* in 1984 under the titles “The Raj Revival” and “Whitewashing the Raj.” In his essay, the topic of “Raj Revival” certainly strikes a strong chord with Rushdie. Anuradha Dingwaney Needham notes that his tone and stance in “Outside the Whale” are not typical of his criticism; she suggests that he is generally “more playful, irreverent . . . letting other voices, modulations, even contradictions creep in. In other words, Rushdie typically tends toward less authoritative and belligerent discourse” (613). Needham also suggests that the severity of Rushdie’s polemical response to “Raj Revivalism” in Britain indicates a “historical moment” in relation to postcolonialism and the cultural history of England. At the point in time when these films were released to varying degrees of popular acclaim, writers and critics such as Frantz Fanon, Ngugi wa Thiong’o, Wole Soyinka, Gabriel Garcia Marquez, and Edward Said had already produced work criticizing the West’s articulation of the formerly colonized world (Needham 612). Also, at the time of Rushdie’s essay, his literary celebrity was more or less secured with the commercial and critical success of *Midnight’s Children* (1981), and Needham argues that with “Outside the Whale,” readers witness “not only the radical diminution, even disappearance of Kayes’ and Scott’s so-called authority on the subject of colonial rule on the subcontinent, but also a corresponding rise in Rushdie’s authority, which allows him to indict them in the first place” (613). Accordingly, an analysis of Rushdie’s response to *The Raj Quartet* must take into account the cultural and political climate of the period in which it was produced.

Rushdie's polemic addresses the entire cycle of Raj-related films produced in the early 1980s, and in relation to Scott, it is important to note that he extends his critical attack to both the film and the text. The inherent problem with this approach lies with the incongruity of adaptation and appropriation between the text and the film and with either Rushdie's inability or unwillingness to view the two as separate works. Additionally, the *Quartet's* association with the cultural atmosphere of "Raj Revivalism," which Scott (who died in 1978) played no direct role in creating, perhaps unfairly influences Rushdie's negative reaction to the text. Haswell has addressed this problem, contending that Rushdie's criticisms of Scott, and others like it—Jenny Sharpe and M. Keith Booker both follow Rushdie's lead, viewing Scott as a purveyor of "Raj nostalgia"—are "*post hoc*" fallacies ("Images" 202). She notes, Scott did not "cash in" on the movie boom of the 1980s, and the majority of his novels, which were written between the 1950s and 1970s, deal with the imperial experience some twenty to thirty years before the projects were popular or profitable ("Images" 202). The point is vital, in part because Rushdie's severe critical treatment of Scott's text appears more as an indictment of the *adaptation* and presumed *cultural appropriation* of his work than of the text itself and because Rushdie's essay may have done more than any other one piece of criticism to determine Scott's literary and critical reputation up to the present time.

Apart from the *Quartet's* association with the Raj fervor of the early 1980s, it is important to note the differences between the text and the screen adaptation in order to understand how the film, in its attempt to make the text more accessible to popular viewing audiences, may be to blame for the "imperial nostalgia" claim that is often

levied against the text. Although it is fairly faithful to the novel in terms of plot and action, with all major plot points being retained and only minor sub-plot points being omitted, the most drastic change that the adaptation makes is to the narrative structure. In his history of British television drama of the 1980s, George Brandt describes how the writers and producers of the film decided to arrange the events of the novel in chronological order for the film series in the interest of story continuity and viewer interest (204). Hence, the film opens in 1942, not in the fictional present of the mid 1960s with an unnamed historian returning to Mayapore. Likewise, the film omits the interview and false-document format of the original text, save for some reproduction of voice-over narration; however, these narrative aspects of the text obviously present problems for the film in terms of their translation to the visual medium. Problematically, the form of the adaptation practically dissolves the metahistorical and historiographic metafictional elements of the original text by imposing a linear and monologic narrative structure on the source material. Therefore, the film erases much of the historical ambiguity and revisionist implications of the original text, which the disjunctive narrative structure creates. Also, by omitting the narrative frame, which in the original text incorporates a reconstruction of past events from the perspective of the fictional present, the film performs an altogether different act of historical revisionism. By adopting a chronologically linear narrative, the film effectively divorces the story from the socio-political sphere of the 1960s and instead implicitly imparts a view of the final days of the Raj that is ideologically informed by the cultural climate of the 1980s. Therefore, Scott's original text, which itself performs an act of historical revisionism, is assimilated and

appropriated by film adaptation by another cultural and historical moment. From this perspective, critical arguments for the film's inherent "nostalgia for empire" are not necessarily gross misreadings of the film.

The impulse towards nostalgia for the grandeur of the "Golden Age" of the Raj is evident in the film's opening title montage. The sequence, which begins each of the fourteen episodes, is composed of eleven short clips of archival footage, spliced together over a regal orchestral march (the piece is also titled "The Jewel in the Crown"), which was written specifically for the adaptation by television and film score composer George Fenton (Brandt 209). The clips show large processions of Indian and British Foreign Service troops in military formation; soldiers on horseback and atop elephants; seated dignitaries under large awnings with tending Indian servants. Perhaps the most memorable clip shows a line of presumably Sikh military officers in full dress, with feathered turbans, sashes, and long white gloves, rigidly arranged in a line while a young Indian boy, bare-footed and raggedly dressed, quickly polishes their boots before being gestured away by the first officer. Additionally, many of the clips shown in the title sequence are taken from the Delhi Durbar in 1911, which marked the coronation of King George V; King George and Queen Mary (the only British monarchs to visit India during the period of colonial rule) are both shown in full ceremonial dress. Although the events in the title sequence are actual pieces of archival footage, the image of India that they present is drastically different from the India depicted in Scott's text. The Delhi Durbar not only preceded the events in the text by thirty-six years, but the text does not depict high-ranking colonial officials, ornate displays of imperial pageantry, specifically focus

on military affairs, feature ornately adorned Sikhs, and elephants only appear once in the text (never in the film)—in *A Division of the Spoils*, where Sarah Layton and Guy Perron briefly observe an elephant and its calf, which presumably belong to the Nawab of Mirat, on a roadside (932), but no one, English or otherwise, is ever depicted riding one.

Moreover, the archival footage used in the title sequence for the film functions as a type of informal preface for each episode of the series. Despite the rather loose association between the images in the title sequence and the plot of the film, the sequence no doubt succeeds in forging a visual association between the imperial pageantry of events like the Durbar of 1911 and the adaptation of Scott's fiction. The anachronistic nature of the title sequence is evidence of the retrogressive approach of the film adaptation, and in a far more obvious way than the narrative modifications, it illustrates the inherent "nostalgic" attitude of the film via its association with an earlier period in Indo-British colonial history.

The inherent irony of the film's staging and marketing is that the text was ultimately co-opted into a vision of imperial history that, in many ways, Scott actively rejects. Conjectures concerning what Scott's feelings would have been about the film adaptation of his work, or about the Raj fervor of the 1980s, can only be speculative; however, his non-fiction writings may provide some insight for speculation. For example, in "Enoch Sahib: A Slight Case of Cultural Shock" (1969), he progressively speaks out against Enoch Powell's proposed immigration policies, which proceed from Powell's own revisionist positions on imperial history (*Appointment* 91-104); and in "After Marabar: Britain and Indian, A Post-Forsterian View" (1972), he discusses the

persistence of British “ignorance” on the topic of Indo-British history, and addresses the need for a revisionary approach to imperial history that acknowledges the deep cultural and historical connections between the two nations—one that acknowledges the breadth of tyrannical oppression that England inflicted upon India through colonial rule (*Appointment* 121, 111-29). In these essays, Scott preemptively speaks out against the mounting cultural and political impulse to ameliorate the public perception of Britain’s failed imperial relationship with India. Moreover, “Raj Revivalism” can be seen as a progressive outgrowth of this impulse to revise the past, the difference being that the focus during the Thatcher years shifts from the expunction of the imperial past from public memory, as was Powell’s emphasis, to a nostalgic idealization of England’s imperial period.

Although Rushdie in “Outside the Whale” takes critical aim at many of the films produced during the period, the motivation for his critique lies more with the cultural inclination toward nostalgic approaches to historical revisionism:

there can be little doubt that in Britain today the refurbishment of the Empire’s tarnished image is under way. The continuing decline, the growing poverty and the meanness of spirit of much of Thatcherite Britain encourages many Britons to turn their eyes nostalgically to the lost hour of the precedence. The recrudescence of imperialist ideology and the popularity of Raj fictions put one in mind of the phantom twitchings of an amputated limb. Britain is in danger of entering a condition of cultural psychosis, in which it begins to strut and to posture like a great power

while, in fact, its power diminishes every year. The jewel in the crown is made, these days, of paste. (91-2)

If Rushdie is correct in assuming that the popularity of Raj fiction is related to the socio-political climate of England under Margaret Thatcher's Conservative Party leadership, it is notable that political historians like Camilla Schofield have emphatically stated that there is "no doubt" that Enoch Powell's conservative political policies of the 1970s, although unsuccessful during his tenure with the Party, helped to form the ideological foundation for Thatcherism, or the New Right, in the 1980s (95). When examined from this perspective, Scott's rejection of Powellism and its cultural implications in the 1970s anticipates Rushdie's forthright condemnation of the perceived racist undertones of Thatcherism in the 1980s. Ironically, Rushdie's focus on history, which dominates his polemic, is fundamentally skewed in relation to Scott, and Haswell's "*post hoc* fallacy" accusation is exposed in one of Rushdie's primary critical points concerning the political interrelationship between art and society:

I am trying to say something which is not easily heard above the clamour of praise for the present spate of British-Indian fictions: that works of art, even works of entertainment do not come into being in a social and political vacuum; and that the way they operate in a society cannot be separated from politics, from history. For every text, a context; and the rise of Raj revisionism, exemplified by the huge success of these fictions, is the artistic counterpart of the rise of conservative ideologies in modern Britain. (92)

While he takes great pains to historicize the film adaptations of certain Raj fictions, Rushdie effectively dehistoricizes the texts themselves. Moreover, he mistakenly places Scott's text in the same cultural context as its film adaptation and removes it from its actual historical context—the late 1960s and early 1970s. Although similar arguments can be made about his references to other prominent Raj films of the period, of those films he discusses, the fallacy is arguably the most problematic for Scott. Aside from Attenborough's *Gandhi*, for which an original screenplay was developed, *The Jewel in the Crown* is the only film set in the late 1940s, the period of the empire's demise. *Heat and Dust* primarily takes place in the 1920s, *The Far Pavilions* is set against the backdrop of the Sepoy Uprising of 1857 (as noted previously, the text is a late return to "Mutiny fictions," a trend also adopted by John Masters), and *A Passage to India*, in identical fashion to the novel, is set in a non-specific date in either the 1910s or 1920s.

Furthermore, it should be noted that *Gandhi*, a biographical work, does not necessarily fall into the category of "Raj fiction." Additionally, *Heat and Dust* and *The Far Pavilions* are both romances that do not deal directly with political aspects of colonialism, and their relatively earlier settings recall the "illusions of permanence" exhibited in earlier colonialist texts, and in some ways they sustain the Orientalized and exoticized imperial nostalgia that permeate earlier colonialist works. Hence, Rushdie's accusation of Kaye's "borrowing" from earlier "finer" novels carries with it a certain amount of validity ("Whale" 89).

Compared with other prominent fictional Raj films of the "Revival," Scott's work, which does not recall the empire's "golden age," is certainly an outlier. By

associating the *Quartet* with non-political imperial romances, and by judging the work from this perspective, Rushdie's critique largely undermines the postcolonial political implications of the novel. Additionally, he holds a considerably higher opinion of Forster's fiction than Scott's and appears able to view the film and the text of *Passage to India* as separate works when he notes Forster's lifelong refusal to have his novel filmed ("Whale" 91). Accordingly, the result of Rushdie's reading of Scott is a categorical reduction of the text to the status of an imperialist/colonialist romance, and this has focused later critical examinations of specific aspects of the text that support this reading—primarily, interracial love affairs, the rape motif, and homosexual desire. Furthermore, much of the attention that *The Raj Quartet* has garnered from postcolonial critics in recent years can arguably be traced to its association with the "Raj Revival" of the 1980s, and evidence of this can be observed in the numerous references to the film serial and the overwhelming number of citations of Rushdie's essay included in recent scholarship on the text. Indeed, the term "nostalgia" is now commonly applied, when in years prior to the film's release, it was rarely used.

If the literary associations that the screen adaptation and "Raj Revivalism" foster are removed, a more appropriate critical approach can be made in terms of examining the text's topicality and temporality. Perhaps this is why Scott's work bears the brunt of Rushdie's critical malice; *The Raj Quartet* and Rushdie's own *Midnight's Children* fundamentally respond to the same historical moment, albeit Scott provides a view from the British end, just before Indian independence, and Rushdie gives an Indian perspective of the event from the years 1915 to 1978. If Needham's argument is correct, that

Rushdie's "Outside the Whale" functions as a display of critical authority, then Scott, whose text occupies virtually the same literary territory as *Midnight's Children*, must be appropriately attenuated, if only because Scott's presumed literary authority presents the most direct challenge to Rushdie's critical and authorial voice. However, a comparative analysis of the two texts reveals that the writers are not necessarily working at cross-purposes, as Rushdie would have it. Both texts articulate a desire to undermine colonialist/imperialist discourse through similar methods of historical revisionism, which they express through narrative ambiguity and fragmentation, and in Scott's case, through the complication and inversion of conventional colonialist/imperialist representational themes and motifs. Danny Colwell supports the notion that Scott's work represents a literary move toward postcolonialism, which differentiates it from earlier colonialist texts. Additionally, Colwell views Rushdie's fiction as an evolution from Scott's work, as opposed to a reaction against it:

[Scott] situates *The Raj Quartet* within the dominant paradigms of the representations of empire, and yet . . . the novels challenge tropes upon which the discourse of the Raj had been structured since the eighteenth century. Thus *The Raj Quartet* inhabits an ambiguous space between the colonial text, which established the dominant of representing India, and the postcolonial, which challenges them. It in fact reflects the decolonising mentality of the 1960s, rather than simply the nostalgia of the imperial grandeur of the past. The tetralogy may begin with an image of Forster, but two thousand pages later, the narrative has mapped out the contours of

a literary world that will be taken up by Salman Rushdie in *Midnight's Children*. (214)

Although Chapter I, Section II, provides a comparative discussion of the colonial rape motif's function in *The Raj Quartet* and Forster's *A Passage to India*, further elaboration is pertinent in relation to Rushdie's critical response. In "Outside the Whale," Rushdie argues, "It is useless, I'm sure, to suggest that if rape must be used as a metaphor of the Indo-British connection, then surely, in the interests of accuracy, it should be the rape of an Indian woman by one or more Englishmen of whatever class. But not even Forster dared to write about such a crime" (89). Nannette Hale suggests that this statement is a "grave misreading" on the part of Rushdie and other postcolonial critics who have adopted his approach to Scott; she argues,

The Raj Quartet is *not* an exploration of the pros and cons of imperialism. Had it been, Rushdie's criticism would have been entirely appropriate. The rape/exploitation of India by Britain, for Scott, is an unquestionable fact, as are the iniquities of imperialism, but that does not invalidate an investigation into its nature and origins; in Scott's view, it makes it more important. (73)

Hale also suggests that the text is a "post-Forsterian, psycho-social pathology of imperial decline," and the rape of Daphne Manners in the Bibighar Gardens functions to uncover the essential element of fear and insularity that precludes all efforts of bridge-building between the East and West; for Hale, the event symbolizes the rape of liberal ideals and beliefs which Daphne personifies (73). Hale and Colwell both identify a discursively

progressive quality in Scott's fiction, which is of vital importance to a comparative examination of Scott and Rushdie. Scott's consummate movement away from Forsterian forms of representation, which as Colwell suggests, reflects the "decolonising mentality of the 1960s," marks *The Raj Quartet* as one of the first pieces of fiction by a white English writer to approach the subject of imperial India from a perspective that actively challenges dominant and established modes of colonialist/imperialist discourse and representation. Furthermore, many of the ideological questions that Scott raises in the *Quartet* are also explored, and in many instances modified or extended, by Rushdie in *Midnight's Children*.

Considering both texts are works of historical fiction, and taking into account that much of Rushdie's critical denigration of Scott concerns the *Quartet*'s method of historical representation, the function and fashioning of history in these texts is perhaps the most crucial point of comparative critical inquiry. Chapter II, Section II extends the critical works of Theodore Steinberg, who argues that Scott's approach to historical representation—his immense scope and construction of intricate and often contradictory veins of causality—evolves out of a Tolstoyan form of the historical novel (125-6). However, following from the critical and theoretical work of Linda Hutcheon, Brian McHale, and Ansgar Nünning, Chapter III, Section II argues that the structural narrative form of the *Quartet* differentiates it from earlier historical novels, and from other sequence novels of the period, because its dialogic and heteroglossic form problematizes the epistemological concerns of conventional "realism" and forces ontological questions concerning the nature of history. Due to these unique structural aspects of the narrative,

the *Quartet* displays characteristics that are consistent with later works of postmodern historical fiction. In comparison to Scott's text, Rushdie's method of historical representation in *Midnight's Children* displays a similar interest in ontological concerns, and the text's impulse toward historical revisionism arises from a similar desire to challenge dominant modes of imperialist and colonialist discourse, and manifests in Rushdie's particular postmodern construction of magical realism in *Midnight's Children*.

Although *Midnight's Children* adopts what Nünning refers to as an "explicit" form of historiographic metafiction, which "overt[ly] discuss[es] epistemological and methodological problems of reconstructing the past" through the "self-conscious exploration of the recording of history" (228), the text can also be seen as an example of what Jameson terms a postcolonial "national allegory." In the novel, Rushdie's supremely self-conscious narrator, Saleem Sinai, born at midnight, August 15, 1947, at the very moment of Indian Independence from British colonial rule, now thirty-one years of age, recounts the story of his life; Saleem's story functions as an allegorical parallel for the creation and struggles of India in its first decades of nationhood. Rushdie's magical realism narrative form, which freely mixes realistic and fantastic elements, has led critics to associate his work with earlier works of postcolonial historical fiction that adopt similar styles of narration, such as those of Márquez (Dhar 94, 98), whose *One Hundred Years of Solitude* (1967) displays a similar mix of real and unreal narrative elements. Saleem tells how he and all of the other Indian children born between twelve o'clock A.M. and one o'clock A.M. on the date of Independence are endowed with supernatural powers; he is telepathic and can communicate with the other "Midnight's Children," as

they come to be called. Additionally, Saleem's supernatural abilities extend to his physical appearance: he is born with an unusually large nose and later develops a supernatural sense of smell, and the ability to smell emotions. Jane M. Kane asserts, "[Saleem's] suggestive anatomy anticipates the novel's central conceit, the fusion of an individual body with the subcontinent and a personal biography with its political history" (95). To further this notion, Saleem's physiology reflects the cultural fragmentation of India in the wake of its post-Independence struggle, over-burdened by its history of violence and collective strife. As he tells his story, he continually expresses fear that his body is literally disintegrating into pieces:

Please believe that I am falling apart.

I am not speaking metaphorically, nor is this the opening gambit of some melodramatic, riddling, grubby appeal for pity. I mean quite simply that I have begun to crack all over like an old jug—that my poor body . . . buffeted by too much history . . . has started coming apart at the seams. In short, I am disintegrating, slowly for the moment, although there are signs of acceleration. (36)

From the opening of the novel, Saleem describes himself as being "handcuffed to history" (3), and his literal disintegration at the novel's conclusion, into 600 million specks of dust on his birthday, the anniversary of Indian Independence, signifies the dispersal and intermingling of his personal history with the some 600 million inhabitants of India. Todd Giles posits that through the act of writing his personal history, "Saleem's project . . . is predicated on his own destruction: a destruction manifested in his physical

deterioration as well as that of his country, both politically and geographically” (183). As a “national allegory,” Saleem’s historical reconstruction of his own life parallels the establishment of an Indian history that is distinct from British discursive models; Saleem’s fantastical autobiography serves as a symbolic palimpsest for Rushdie’s revisionist historical schema. Additionally, Rushdie’s use of magic realism also serves the revisionist concern of his “national allegory” through the incorporation of indigenous myth, religion, and storytelling motifs; Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin explain that the use of magic realism narrative techniques by postcolonial authors “is seen to interrogate the assumptions of Western, rational, linear narrative and to enclose it within an indigenous metatext, a body of textual forms that recuperate the pre-colonial culture” (119).

Like earlier post-Independence “national allegories,” *Midnight’s Children* can only be compared to *The Raj Quartet* from an adjusted critical perspective that takes into account the social and political motivations for textual production. As previously specified, the *Quartet*’s approach to historical revisionism does not attempt nor render a “national allegory”; its objective is not the establishment of a new cultural history and cultural identity from the perspective of the formerly colonized subject; conversely, it interrogates these concepts from the perspective of the former colonizer. Therefore, Scott largely eschews allegorical constructions and instead relies primarily on a complex matrix of interrelated and overarching metaphorical constructs in order to critique the ideological foundation of the empire. The individual novels of the *Quartet* develop an overall metaphor for Scott’s view of the end of the British Raj: the eponymous picture of

“The Jewel in the Crown” in the first novel, the scorpion in the circle of fire in *The Day of the Scorpion*, the Parsi towers in *The Towers of Silence*, and the deaths of Ronald Merrick and Ahmed Kasim in *A Division of the Spoils* (Badiger 49). These images represent stages in the lives of individual characters, and they also function as extended conceptual metaphors for the what Scott views as the final stages in the complex and volatile imperial relationship between India and England at the close of the Raj—thwarted love, imprisonment, madness, and death (Badiger 49). Hence, the metaphorical function of characters and locations in the text—many of which have been discussed in previous sections—contribute to the manifold metaphorical content of the novel. Furthermore, Scott’s symbolic construction in terms of locations¹, characters², and dates³ situates these aspects of the text within a larger metaphorical structure and advances his postmodern cyclical time construct via the motif of repeating symbolic patterns.

Another consideration that must be made for the *Quartet* in relation to postcolonial “national allegories,” such as *Midnight’s Children*, concerns the “anti-colonial” agenda that many non-English postcolonial texts adopt. Banerjee argues, “[the *Quartet*] is an ‘Indian’ novel, yet postcolonial critics have been looking for a more overtly anti-colonial agenda, and have . . . been more interested in Indian authors writing in English than in English authors writing about India” (“Women of Affairs” 83).

Likewise, Michael Gorra suggests that for Scott, unlike Kipling and Forster, the subject

¹ Boyer discusses Scott’s use of symbolic location names in the *Quartet*. He notes the symbolic connection between “Chillianwallah Bagh” and Jallianwala Bagh, the site of the Amritsar Massacre in 1919; likewise, he notes a similar connection between the “Bibighar Gardens” and the Bibi-garh House where 211 women and children were killed during the Sepoy Uprising of 1857 (68).

² Guy Perron comments on the symbolic significance of Merrick’s name in *Division*, explaining to Susan’s son, Edward, “Ronald means the same as Rex or Reginald. It means someone with power who rules” (919).

³ The deaths of Mabel Layton and Barbie Bachelor occur on June 6, 1944 and August 6, 1945, the dates of D-Day and the bombing of Hiroshima (*Towers*).

of the Raj comes as a “dead letter,” and this allows Scott to explore the subject without attacking or defending it, and Gorra argues that current postcolonial criticism should allow for such a position: “a postcolonial literature, a postcolonial politics, is one that rests on and requires a foundation of anticolonialism even if it cannot, at the end of the century, be limited to that” (29, 6). In retrospect, as Banerjee posits, the *Quartet* challenges the simplistic “picture of a tyrannical imperialistic power grinding the faces of its coloured subjects in the dust” (*Jewel* 361; qtd. in “Paul Scott as a Postimperial Author” par. 4) that is prevalent in current postcolonial fiction and criticism. Following from Gorra’s contention, Scott’s removed temporal perspective allowed him to address the Raj not only as a national failure with respect to England’s fallen empire, but also as a globalized metaphor for human failure. Therefore, when Scott writes that in India “the British came to the end of themselves as they were” (*Scorpion* 496), he refers to both to how the British “lost” their Indian empire, and how, in the end, they lost any sense of moral obligation to India (Childs 36-7). In a related point, Scott was also fond of using the phrase “the moral drift of history” to illustrate his view of time, and he uses the phrase to show how systems of morality are modified and dictated by historical progression—that is, how ideology shapes general conceptions morality—and in his essay, “Literature and the Social Conscience: The Novel” (1972), he suggests, “we have to cope with the detail [of our own lives and moral views], while keeping our eye on the pattern [or moral progression] as a whole” (*Appointment* 145). In relation to Scott’s ambiguity and ambivalence toward colonialism in India, his “moral drift of history” construct allows him to situate moral characters within what he sees as a fundamentally

immoral social system. Therefore, the English characters in the *Quartet* that exhibit positive moral qualities (e.g. Daphne Manners, Barbie Batchelor, Mabel Layton, Sarah Layton, Sister Ludmila, Edwina Crane, and Guy Perron) are not figured as positive aspects of the Raj; alternatively, they symbolize the positive aspects of humanity that exist despite the negative “moral drift” fostered by Raj rule. Through this construction, Scott complicates the moral implications of Raj society, and what emerges is a certain degree of political equivocality that resists moral certitude and claims to absolute historical truth. Therefore, to view Scott as an imperial/colonial apologist not only indicates a misreading of the metaphorical aspects of the *Quartet*, but it may also confirm the current “anti-colonial” slant of much postcolonial criticism.

In his critique of the *Quartet*, Rushdie does not consider the contrasting motivations of Indian fictions that adhere to the Jamesonian “national allegory” paradigm and Scott’s fiction, which incorporates an alternate metaphorical approach. Therefore, his comment, “The form [of the *Quartet*] insists that *they* [British colonizers] *are the ones whose stories matter . . . Indians would only have . . . bit-parts*” (“Whale” 90) displays a misunderstanding of Scott’s motivation for his revisionist historical project.

Additionally, his observation neglects the stories and voices that are allowed to carry on after the text’s conclusion—those voices that Scott endows with a future. The voices of imperial ideology that impose power over the colonial body, the voices of Merrick and Teddie Bingham, are killed off; the legitimizing discourses of Christianity, symbolized by Edwina Crane and Barbie, are deconstructed, de-authorized, and finally silenced by death; and the British characters that do survive past the novel’s conclusion must live as

exiles. For the remaining members of the Layton family, the cultural identifier “Anglo-Indian” no longer holds meaning in the present—they are transformed into refugees. However, the one voice that Scott endows with future agency at the novel’s conclusion is that of Hari Kumar. After he is released from prison, Hari resumes writing for the *Mayapore Gazette* and publishes essays under the pseudonym “Philoctetes,” after the archer of Greek mythology who is plagued by a continually festering wound. Near the conclusion of *Division of the Spoils*, Perron is particularly moved by one of Hari’s essays in which he ponders the meaning of his past life in England, before coming to India. In one of last scenes of the novel, Perron attempts to find Hari in Mayapore, but only comes as far as his door; unable to enter or even knock, he leaves India without making contact with Hari (1017-8). Hari is figured as a metaphor for the festering wound left by British colonialism at the dawn of Independence, and his pen name “Philoctetes” reinforces this implication. He is the unintentional hybrid creation of the Raj, a product of both nations and cultures, but he neither belongs to nor is completely accepted by either culture. Hari perhaps suffers more than any other character in the *Quartet*, but his story and voice are allowed to endure. Although his future is left uncertain, he is able to establish and maintain agency apart from the colonizer/colonized binary; regardless of his hybrid cultural identity, his character enacts progressive psychological movements towards decolonization.

If Colwell’s contention that “[Scott’s] narrative has mapped out the contours of a literary world that will be taken up by Salman Rushdie in *Midnight’s Children*” (214) is considered, then Scott’s specific approach to the issue of cultural hybridity can be cited

as support for Colwell's claim. Like Hari, Saleem Sinai is also a cultural hybrid, the dual product of English education and Indian upbringing. In Rushdie's essay "Imaginary Homelands," where he discusses *Midnight's Children*, Rushdie himself explains how he, as a post-diaspora writer, feels hybridized:

The Indian writer, looking back at India, does so through gilt-tinted spectacles. (I am of course, once more, talking about myself.) I am speaking now of those of us who emigrated . . . and I suspect that there are times when the move seems all wrong to us, when we seem to ourselves, post-lapsarian men and women. We are Hindus who have crossed the black water; we are Muslims who eat pork. And as a result—as my use of the Christian notion of the Fall indicates—we are now partly of the West. Our identity is plural and partial. Sometimes we feel that we straddle two cultures; at other times, that we fall between two stools. (15)

Eric Grekowitz contends that Saleem's hybridity reflects Rushdie's, and he explains that Rushdie's feelings about his own double culture parallel Homi Bhabha's concept of colonial "double vision" (Grekowitz 221). "Double vision" is an aspect of Bhabha's larger theoretical concept of colonial mimicry, which he defines as "the desire [on the part of the colonizer] for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of difference that is almost the same but not quite*," and concerning "double vision," he explains, "The *menace* of mimicry is its *double* vision which in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse also disrupts its authority" (Bhabha 122, 26). Grekowitz notes that critics generally view Saleem's hybridity as a negative aspect of the character, but Grekowitz

offers a contrasting opinion: “critics tend to bemoan [Saleem’s] fragmentation as symptomatic of Indian reality However, far from being negative in Rushdie’s work, hybridity’s fragmenting aspects are a source of power and unity” (222). Following from Rushdie’s sentiment that hybridity offers the postcolonial writer a way “of finding new angles at which to enter reality” (“Imaginary Homelands” 15; qtd. in Grekowitz 222), Grekowitz argues that Saleem, who is also positioned as postcolonial writer within the text of *Midnight’s Children*, gains the potential for greater power and insight through his hybridity; Grekowitz contends, “The more fragmented, the more multiple the subject is, the greater variety of insight possible—the more angles by which he can interrogate realities (222). Within the cultural sphere of India, Saleem’s hybridity—his “inbetweenness”—is multi-faceted. He is switched at birth with Shiva, who functions as Saleem’s allegorical double in the novel; because of the switch, Saleem is raised by a prosperous Muslim family in Bombay, and Shiva, who is named for the Hindu god of destruction and transformation, is raised as a Hindu and in poverty. Saleem’s hybridity therefore extends to religion and social class, and due to his supernatural powers, he also exists in a liminal space between the real and the fantastic. As noted in Chapter I, Section I and elsewhere in this study, Hari is not a traditional mimic according to Bhabha’s theoretical model for colonial mimicry in *The Location of Culture*; however, Hari does experience colonial ambivalence as a result of his cultural hybridity. However, by the *Quartet*’s conclusion, Scott does not construct Hari’s cultural hybridity as an agent of colonial menace but as a positive force toward decolonization. Like Saleem, Hari’s

hybridity provides him with greater power and insight, and after his imprisonment, he emerges not only as a postcolonial voice, but also, like Saleem, as a postcolonial writer.

When considering the *Quartet's* status as a postcolonial text, and likewise, Scott's status as a postcolonial writer, the period of the text's composition, and the complex social and political motivations that inform Scott's overall metaphorical structure must be taken into account. Childs and Colwell correctly suggest that the novels are socially and ideologically directed towards the 1960s and 1970s and therefore reflect the decolonizing attitude of the period (Childs 12, Colwell 214). However, the postcolonial aspects of the texts cannot be adequately measured against the fiction of Indian writers, primarily those who have produced texts with characteristics that are consistent with Jamesonian "national allegories." The *Quartet* emerges from a fundamentally different social and political perspective, and although both Rushdie and Scott's narratives attempt revisionist approaches to historiography, they do so for different purposes. Additionally, critical steps must be taken to separate Scott's text from its film adaptation; the close association between the two works has led to fundamental misreadings of Scott's work, and his association with the "Raj Revival" of the 1980s has likely attached the erroneous labels of "imperial nostalgia" and "neo-colonial" to his work. Although later postcolonial Indian novels, like Rushdie's *Midnight's Children*, perhaps display a more progressive and experimental approach to issues of cultural history, cultural identity, and cultural hybridity, Scott's work predates much of the landmark postcolonial criticism that appeared in the late 1970s and 1980s. Therefore, his attention to many of the issues addressed by later writers, such as Rushdie, may be viewed as prescient and progressive

for the period. Moreover, approaching Scott as a transitional writer, who exists between the colonial and postcolonial, may in fact be an understatement—the intricacies of his revisionist project, coupled with the complex counter-discursive implications of his metaphorical schema, certainly place him in the order of early postcolonial writers.

CONCLUSION

In February 2013, David Cameron became the first serving British Prime Minister to visit the site of the 1919 Massacre in Amritsar, India. During an official observance at the memorial site in the Jallianwala Bagh public gardens, in a book of condolences to the victims, he quoted Winston Churchill, who in 1920 described the incident as “a deeply shameful event” (qtd. in Watt par. 3). However, Cameron declined to issue a formal apology, and he later articulated his refusal, stating:

In my view . . . we are dealing with something that happened a good forty years before I was even born, and which Winston Churchill described as ‘monstrous’ at the time and the British government rightly condemned at the time. So I don’t think the right thing is to reach back into history and to seek out things to apologize for. (qtd. in Watt par. 4)

On the same trip, the Indian Government also requested the return of the Koh-i-Noor diamond from Cameron, which came into British possession in 1850 (M. Taylor 269). Cameron also declined the Indian Government’s request for the jewel’s return, and later commented, “I don’t think it’s the right approach I certainly don’t believe in returnism” (qtd. in Watt, par. 12).

The events of Cameron’s recent trip illustrate how, nearly sixty-six years after the dissolution of the British Raj, the two nations still struggle to reconcile the terms of their shared history. Additionally, these recent events emphasize the continued relevance of Paul Scott’s *The Raj Quartet* within the scope of contemporary political and cultural history. It is difficult to speculate what Scott’s response to Cameron’s statements might

have been, had he lived to hear them. While he may not have advocated “reach[ing] back into history” with the specific intent of redressing wrongdoing, in the *Quartet* and in various essays, he adamantly maintains that the shared history between India and Britain must be acknowledged and examined. Indeed, he asserts that the British must “seek out” their history, and he expresses a grave concern for the British public’s general “ignorance” of historical relationship between India and Britain; in his 1972 essay, “After Marabar: Britain and India, A Post-Forsterian View,” he writes,

It has seemed to me subsequently that no record of history of the British-Indian relationship can be complete unless the ignorance of India of a vast majority of the British living on their island is taken account of. I do not mean ignorance of the manners, customs but ignorance of the way India was acquired, of the way it was administered, and of the way it contributed to the well-being of the people on that island . . . ignorance of the multiple conflicting interests at stake. (*Appointment* 121)

Scott mirrors this sentiment in the last installment of the *Quartet*, via Perron’s correspondences with his relative in Britain, Aunt Charlotte. She refuses to take any responsibility for the “one-quarter million deaths in Punjab and elsewhere”; Perron explains, “it confirmed my impression of her historical significance (and mine), of the overwhelming importance of the part that had been played in British Indian affairs by the indifference and the ignorance of the English at home” (*Division* 631). Although Scott’s desire for British-Indian history to be “taken account of” is a recurrent theme in his writings on India, he does not view historical knowledge as a source of consolation for

Britons in the post-imperial world. Instead, the *Quartet* depicts history as a substantial weight on its characters, and the text functions to examine the load's source and contents. Margaret Scanlan suggests, the *Quartet* and other post-World War II British historical novels do not operate under the presumption "that the past will teach us how to behave"; instead, she explains, these texts assume a "conviction that it is better to know than to remain ignorant, even though what we learn is the enormous difficulty of understanding our lives historically" (*Traces* 16). In order to address what Scott perceives as Britain's historical "ignorance of India," *The Raj Quartet* assumes the dual task of exposing various historical absences ("unrecorded" people, places, and events) and also rupturing many pre-existing historical narratives that generate racism, cultural division, and apathy towards India in the minds of the British. The preceding chapters provide a comparative exploration of how Scott's revisionist historical approach necessitates the particular trajectory of his literary development, which not only provides the *Quartet* with a unique postcolonial sensibility but also allows multiple literary traditions and lines of genre to coalesce within the text.

At the time of the *Quartet*'s composition, the two most prominent images of British imperial India existed in the Indian fictions of Rudyard Kipling and E. M. Forster. Although they assumed opposing political stances in relation to the Raj rule—Kipling a staunch paternalist, and Forester a critical, but compassionate liberal humanist—the vision of India that emerges from their texts is similarly figured as an India of unreality, an invention of the western imagination. As a writer in the wake of empire, Scott is divorced from the "illusion of permanence" that informed the colonial vision of Kipling

and Forster, and the *Quartet* functions as a revision and a critique of the colonialist literary tradition. Through the inversion and alteration of colonial narrative conventions, the *Quartet* challenges the cultural and historical authority of writers like these by proposing alternate modes of viewing and representing the colonial sphere and body. Therefore, the similarities between the *Quartet* and texts like Kipling's *Kim* and Forster's *A Passage To India* function to underscore the extrahistorical lens through which earlier writers saw India; Scott's vision of India and the Raj, rigorously tempered by his historiographic approach, simultaneously recalls earlier colonialist narratives, and directs attention to the unreality of their representations.

Scott's withdrawal from the imperial "illusion of permanence" is indicated by his adoption of a narrative form that necessitates historiographic consideration. Although the scope and style of the *Quartet* approximates Leo Tolstoy's "realist" historical novels, and many critics have made comparisons between the two writers¹, the dense metaphorical overlay that Scott constructs throughout the text causes it to test the limits of "realist" fiction. In order to emphasize the complex breadth of history's influence on the present, the *Quartet*'s dense fabric of symbol and metaphor functions to dissolve not only the relative distance between the past and the present but also the space between public and private history. Moreover, Scott's manner of historical representation involves a unique construction of time and space, which differentiates his text from earlier colonialist forms; his adoption of Emersonian temporal cyclicity allows him to infuse the novel with multiple histories—both English and Indian—and produce an overall vision of the past

¹ See Chapter II, Section I.

that resists the narrativized linearity that characterizes conventional colonialist texts. Furthermore, Scott's temporal model occasions a differentiation of colonial space, which contrasts the colonialist "island chronotope" through the restoration of indigenous presence within the colonial sphere. Following from the work of critics like Paul Smethurst and Tara Collington, the *Quartet's* time-space schema constitutes a postcolonial generic chronotope, and the text's chronotopic evolution (out of the colonialist form) is concurrent with its revision of the Tolstoyan "realist" historical novel.

Although Scott modifies the "realist" form through his intricate metaphorical matrix, the symbolism that runs throughout the novels fundamentally serves to compound the text's historical focus. Additionally, the *Quartet's* unique "realist" aesthetic differentiates it from comparable post-war British historical long-form sequence novels, such as Anthony Burgess's *Malayan Trilogy* and Lawrence Durrell's *The Alexandria Quartet*. Unlike Burgess and Durrell, Scott's narrative form eschews the modernist preoccupation with the individual in exile and examines the complex structure of Raj society as a composite whole. *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet* offer fond, if somewhat ironic and melancholic, recollections of the empire's twilight, and in many ways, their images of the East recall those of earlier colonial writings and mourn the passing of the exotic Orientalized illusions those texts provided. In contrast, the theme of failure that emerges from the *Quartet* does not correspond with the collapse of Orientalist illusions but with the cultural division and seemingly ceaseless racial violence that those illusions created. Peter Childs suggests that the novel demonstrates "failure necessitated by an ingrained racism which is not characteristic of the Raj so much as the

way the West's meeting with its Others has evolved race as a primary signifier of status, before class, gender, religion, or nationality" (34). Moreover, Scott's ability to recognize the inherent destructiveness of Orientalized modes of perception instills the *Quartet* with a postcolonial sensibility that is noticeably absent in *The Malayan Trilogy* and *The Alexandria Quartet*.

This study also attempts to challenge the critical contention that the *Quartet* conveys "nostalgia for old imperial days" (Stallworthy and Ramazani 1841) by exploring how Scott's stylistic approach to the historical representation anticipates the developments of later British authors of historical fiction. Although M. Keith Booker has lauded J. G. Farrell's *The Siege of Krishnapur* for its lack of imperial "nostalgia" in comparison to the *Quartet*, he fails to recognize the *Quartet*'s similar revisionist impulse. Furthermore, Booker overlooks the implications of Farrell's Orientalized representations of native Indians, which strongly echo those of earlier colonialist fictions. Additionally, few critics have explored the postmodern implications of the *Quartet*'s formal narrative structure, and this project endeavors to clarify postmodern aspects of Scott's aesthetic, and expose comparative links between the *Quartet* and later works of British metahistorical fiction and historiographic metafiction. The *Quartet*'s disjunctive and fragmented narrative framework, which incorporates temporal shifts and multiple instances of "false documents," serves to interweave and juxtapose people, events, and locations in the past with symbolic counterparts in the present. When Scott's text is viewed through the lens of Linda Hutcheon and Brian McHale's theoretical work on historiographic metafiction, as well as more recent critical delineations of the concept,

such as those by Ansgar Nünning, the *Quartet*'s narrative structure exhibits qualities that are consistent not only with revisionist historical fiction but also with metahistorical and "implicit" historiographic metafiction. Furthermore, Scott's approach to historical representation can be recognized as anticipating the narrative developments of later writers like A. S. Byatt and Peter Ackroyd.

The value of delineating Scott's anticipation of later narrative evolutions in British historical fiction lies both in the possibility for additional critical applications of the text, and in the ability to examine the text's postcolonial aspects from an alternate critical perspective. Moreover, this study illustrates how framing the *Quartet* in an alternate trajectory of postcolonial development adequately quells critical claims about the text's "nostalgia," like those expressed by Salman Rushdie in his essay "Outside the Whale." Additionally, this project details how the 1984 film adaptation of *Quartet*, which resulted in Scott's association with the "Raj Revival" cultural phenomenon of the 1980s, effectively misrepresents his historical vision and leads to an erroneous conflation of the text, the film, and the latent racism that many postcolonial critics believed "Raj Revival" phenomenon implied. If the *Quartet*'s association with the film and the "Raj Revival" is disregarded, and its alternate trajectory of development is considered, then the approaches to historical representation exhibited in the *Quartet* and in Rushdie's *Midnight's Children* do not emerge as oppositional. On the contrary, both authors are actuated by a desire to perform "corrective exposition" (Lazarus 116) on the colonial record, and although their narratives address this issue from opposite sides of the British-Indian cultural divide, their approaches are complementary. Additionally, within the

context of the 1960s and 1970s, Scott's representation of race and hybridity within the colonial sphere is remarkably progressive in comparison to many other writers of the period. Although Rushdie admonishes the *Quartet's* focus on the British, Scott's depiction of Hari Kumar defies traditional colonial narrative conventions, and the issues of cultural identity that Scott addresses through the character are comparable to those that Rushdie poses with *Midnight's Children's* narrator, Saleem Sinai. Moreover, this comparison suggests that Scott and Rushdie's texts propose similar thematic questions, albeit from different social and cultural positions.

This project attempts to address Paul Scott and *The Raj Quartet's* relative marginality within the convergent fields of British and postcolonial literary studies. As a result of the *Quartet's* unconventional trajectory of influence, the text resists generic classification because Scott's approach to the construction of narrative requires unfixing the boundaries of earlier narrative conventions. This study appeals to the need for a more inclusive approach to generic classification, which would allow for a wider range of critical readings of texts, like the *Quartet*, that tread outside the lines of genre conventions. Additionally, a more inclusive approach to genre in postcolonial studies would open up the possibility for British writers, like Scott, to be viewed as early postcolonial writers. However, in relation to postcolonial studies, the fundamental problem for Scott, according to Neil Lazarus, is "The attempt to 'unthink Eurocentrism' [which] is lodged as a foundational aspiration of postcolonial scholarship" (126). Rushdie's criticism of Scott—"[the British] *are the ones whose stories matter*" ("Whale" 90)—appears to illustrate this problem. However, for Scott, both stories matter, and with

the *Quartet*, he acknowledges the shared and inseparable history between India and Britain and asserts how history must be “taken account of” (*Appointment 121*). Furthermore, the events of David Cameron’s recent trip to India illustrate how the shared history between the two nations continues to be a contemporary political concern. Both countries have left an indelible mark on the other that refuses to be erased, and Cameron’s refusal of the Indian Government’s request for the return of the Koh-I-Noor appears to indicate that Britain and India are not yet free from their “imperial embrace.”² For now, the diamond stays in Britain. The jewel remains in the crown.

² *Jewel* pg. 5.

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