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**THE ANGLO-INDIAN IN LITERATURE : FROM MARGINAL  
TO VISIONARY**

**Linda Daniels-Gonsalves**

**A Thesis  
in  
the Department  
of  
English**

**Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements  
for the Degree of Master of Arts at  
Concordia University  
Montreal**

**September 1989**



**Linda Daniels-Gonsalves, 1989**



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## ABSTRACT

### THE ANGLO-INDIAN IN LITERATURE : FROM MARGINAL TO VISIONARY

Linda Daniels-Gonsalves

The colonial experience in India ended in 1947 with the decline of what came to be known as the British Raj; since then there have been numerous studies on the influence of Empire on a people. This thesis is particularly interested in the effects of the 'politics of shame' on the colonized 'Other', especially on the literary imagination of post-colonial India including her expatriate writers. By 'politics of shame' I refer to imperialist policies on a subjugated people and to the practice of creating literary stereotypes that became embedded in the European as well as the Indian consciousness. The historical reality that best demonstrates this principle is the creation of a community known as the 'Anglo-Indians', i.e. the children of European (mainly British) fathers and Indian mothers. Because they were an embarrassment to the people who created them, the Anglo-Indians were ostracized by both the English and the Indians, leaving them with an ambivalent sense of identity.

By examining east-west attitudes in general and the post-colonial imagination in particular, this thesis explores the socio-historical and cultural dimensions of the politics of shame as they affected the Anglo-Indian community in India and the South Asian immigrant (embracing India, Pakistan and Bangladesh) experience in the west. Through the major works of Kipling and Tagore and the expatriate voices of Salman Rushdie and Bharati Mukherjee, I intend to examine the transition of the Anglo-Indian from 'marginal' to 'visionary' as reflected in the emerging consciousness of the 'Indian' exile.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The researching, writing and completion of this study is an achievement that must be shared with others. When I began my quest, I never dreamed of the many challenges awaiting me! Any branch of learning on the Anglo-Indian is considered obscure - add to this the difficulty of finding sufficient research material and one begins to understand the demands of scholastic pursuit. By the time I realized the implications of my undertaking it was too late to do anything but persist in my endeavour. There are several people whom I have to thank for placing me in this predicament and for encouraging me towards a conclusion.

First of all I wish to acknowledge certain members of Concordia University who so ably represent its pioneering spirit. In no particular order, they are : Betty MacLean and Stanley French whose avowal of "the Other" gave momentum to my efforts; John Hill and Sheila McDonough who willingly gave of their time and expertise; Mervyn Butovsky whose expression of confidence resulted in my having the honour of working with Clark Blaise. The

writer's intuitive knowledge of and love for India is exceeded only by his extraordinary warmth as a human being.

To Judith Scherer Herz, Thesis Director, I owe an enormous debt. By exacting high standards she instilled in me an even deeper appreciation of the written word and taught me the rigors and rewards of discipline.

Those individuals who worked so ardently behind the scenes in India, Pakistan, England, Canada and Australia to excavate long-forgotten texts are especially thanked. Peter and Sandra Palm come particularly to mind. Peter Kearvell is remembered in a special way and thanked for his unstinting support and constant encouragement. My brother, Rufus and my sister, June steadied my nerves with "massala chai". Computer gurus, Wolfgang Kamps and Christopher Dawson, rescued me from the pitfalls of Wordperfect. To them all I am grateful.

Very special thanks go to my family. My daughters, Ann-Mae, Michelle and Treasure were inspirational and

relentless in their support, while Daniel my son, proved that even a seven-year old can be stoic! Finally and most importantly, I wish to thank my husband, Denzil, whose patience, love and understanding were measured out with equally generous portions of Mughul-inspired culinary creations. Without his support and constant encouragement, this work might have remained a dream.



To my husband,

Denzil Vivian Gonsalves

I no longer want to be anything except what who I am. Who what am I ? My answer : I am the sum total of everything that went before me, of everything whose being-in-the-world affected was affected by mine. I am anything that happens after I've gone which would not have happened if I had not come. Nor am I particularly exceptional in this matter; each 'I', every one of the now-six-hundred-million-plus of us, contains a similar multitude. I repeat for the last time : to understand me, you'll have to swallow a world.

Salman Rushdie  
Midnight's Children

I believe that miscegenation through inter-marriage may solve many problems and produce a composite world culture in the 21st century.

Mulk Raj Anand

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## Introduction

I thought that my voyage had come to its end at the last limit of my power, - that the path before me was closed, that provisions were exhausted and the time come to take shelter in a silent obscurity. But I find thy will knows no end in me. And when old words die out on the tongue, new melodies break forth from the heart; and where the old tracks are lost, new country is revealed with its wonders.

Rabindranath Tagore, Gitanjali

The cross-cultural reality of today's mobile society raises a painful awareness of self projected by questions : "Who am I ? Where do I belong ? Have I changed ? Must I change ? How much change ?". This dilemma is articulated in the literary and creative activity of immigrants to the west who even though they transgress no code, commit no proscribed act and conform to the standards of western society, still experience a measure of inadequacy which violates the core of the self. Central to the problem of identity, be it individual or collective, is the understanding of what may be termed the 'politics of shame' by which I refer in this study, to

imperialist principles in the former British colony of India, now divided into India, Pakistan and Bangladesh and forming part of the South Asian sub-continent - principles which Gandhi described as causing "nearly irreversible damage to a people's identity wrought by colonial masters who often felt (and feel) with justification that they have 'advanced' their dependent peoples in some important way."<sup>1</sup> In this context it is important to consider the colonial interpretation or stereotyping of a people. Stereotyping, as practised in literature, gave rise to accepted attitudes of cultural superiority which widened the gulf between the imperialist and the colonised. Colonial power justified its presence therefore, by creating an ideology of cultural and racial superiority :

Political domination and economic exploitation needed the cosmetic cant of mission civilisatrice to seem fully commendatory. For the ideology of empire was hardly ever a brute jingoism; rather, it made subtle use of reason, and recruited science and history to serve its ends. The image of the European colonizer had to remain an honourable one: he did not come as exploiter, but as enlightener.

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<sup>1</sup>Erik H. Erikson, Gandhi's Truth : On the Origins of Militant Nonviolence. (New York : W.W. Norton & Company, 1969), p.266.

He was not seeking mere profit, but was fulfilling his duty to his Maker and his sovereign, whilst aiding those less fortunate to rise toward his lofty level. This was the white man's burden, that reputable colonial malaise, that sanctioned the subjugating of entire continents.<sup>2</sup>

This well-popularized stereotype of "burden" formed the basis of a politically expedient "maan-baap" (mother-father) concept that depicted the native Indian as weak and dependent on the British and from which derived the realisation that the sahib and the native feared and mistrusted each other. This fear was nurtured not only by physical force but by a subtle imposition of the "maan-baap" ideology which elevated the British to unimaginable social heights and relegated their subjects to an emotional dependency that was denigrating, yet instilled in them mixed feelings of admiration and resentment.

Nowhere is this situation more evident than in the role of the Anglo-Indian, formerly Eurasian. The term 'Anglo-Indian' is used throughout this study to

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<sup>2</sup>Rana Kabbani, Europe's Myths of Orient : Devise and Rule. (London : The MacMillan Press Ltd., 1986), p.6.

distinguish the children of mixed unions, that is of European (mainly British fathers and Indian mothers), from the dominant native 'Indian' population. The Anglo-Indian is defined in the Constitution of India as :

...a person whose father or any of whose other male progenitors in the male line is or was of European descent but who is domiciled within the territory of India and is or was born within such territory of parents habitually resident therein and not established there for temporary purposes only...<sup>3</sup>

In my study on the interdependence of shame and identity, I have chosen the marginalized Anglo-Indian as a metaphor to support my investigation of literary texts of hybridized cultures once yoked to colonial powers. The "silenced Voice" of the Anglo-Indian provides a classic study of marginality which manifests itself in the emerging consciousness of post-colonial dialogue. Against a background of pseudo-propriety and missionary fervour arose the community of Anglo-Indians who were the embodiment of contradiction of British policy and English

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<sup>3</sup>The Constitution of India. (New Delhi : Government of India Press, 1963), paragraph 366.

social conduct. A brief socio-historical account of the Anglo-Indians is contained in Appendix I where I will discuss the community in context of Orientalism, Evangelism and Imperialism.

The contribution of the community to the nation is out of proportion to its numbers yet remains largely unacknowledged. The history of the Anglo-Indians therefore, portrays the tragic experience of a people in exile in their own country and echoes the lament of immigrants to the west who have emerged from colonial domination only to discover "western cultural imperialism"<sup>4</sup> and the pangs of alienation. The identity crisis as experienced by the Anglo-Indians because of the 'politics of shame' is parallel to the questions of identity now being confronted by Indians in the West. As the Anglo-Indians disappear in reality through the process of assimilation, they re-appear as a metaphor for the effect of Westernisation on the "natively Indian"

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<sup>4</sup>Arun Mukherjee, Towards an Aesthetic of Opposition: Essays on Literature, Criticism & Cultural Imperialism. (Stratford : Williams-Wallace Publishers, 1988), p.11.



consciousness. The transformation of the role of the Anglo-Indian from 'mlechha' (outside the Brahminical pale of civilisation) to 'mediator', and from 'marginal' to 'visionary' will be the basis of consideration in this study. To strengthen my argument I have attempted to focus on key elements of colonial strategy, i.e. the established forms of colonial discourse, and the interaction of shame and identity within fictionalized worlds affected by a singular, momentous political process.

Imaginative administrative policies imposed on a subjugated people and a variety of British attitudes led to the creation of literary stereotypes that became embedded in the European as well as the Indian consciousness. This ideology was enunciated in dominant colonial discourse and 'discourse' is construed here as "any speech - act supposing a speaker and a listener, and in the speaker an intention to influence the listener in some way."<sup>5</sup> In order to appreciate the implications of the colonial presence it is important to understand its

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<sup>5</sup>Tzvetan Todorov, The Poetics of Prose. (New York: Cornell University Press, 1977), p.25

representation of reality or the 'truth'. Colonial discourse created boundaries of cultural/historical/racial differences that enabled the dominant power to impose a process of disavowal and to rule its subject people with rigid conviction of its own moral integrity and racial superiority. The colonial text usually contains social dialogue that serves a specific purpose as exemplified by the imagination of colonial writers like Kipling who, ideologically authoritative, invest in their characters the distinct dominant 'Voice'. Restraints and divestment of speech on the marginalized 'Other' recall images of a world peopled by passive pilgrims and complacent natives where the Kiplingesque demarcation of east and west is evoked in expressions like "one of us" and "obliging, little half-castes". A special feature of colonial discourse therefore, is the status of the listener and the speaker within a particular historical context. For the colonial writer the tension between the written word and the object of speech i.e. the Other, is determined first, by his own consciousness and second, by his external world. In an increasingly multi-racial, polyglot world it is the authorial interpretation of the colonized 'Other' in a colonial text that provides meaning to a word.

The authorial ability to organize the multi-voiced worlds of the hero into a recognizable harmony characterizes the stylistic unity of the novel. The focal point of such an artistic vision is the realization that the road the novelist must travel is already mapped out by social consciousness and that this undertaking is governed by contradiction, fundamental to which is the Other's voice.

Once the dominant class imposes its own culture on the subject people, the process of change and integration follows which leads to the experiencing of shame and questions of identity :

Experiences of shame are a painful uncovering of hitherto unrecognized aspects of one's personality as well as of unrecognized aspects of one's society and of the world. If it is possible to face them, instead of seeking protection from what they reveal, they may throw light on who one is, and hence point the way toward who and what one may become.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup>Helen Merrell Lynd, On Shame and the Search for Identity. (New York : Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1958), p.183.

It is in the literature of post-colonial India and her expatriate writers that the consequences of the "politics of shame" become increasingly apparent. British exclusivity created a feeling of inferiority amongst the Indians and instilled in them a confused sense of identity which manifested itself at home and abroad. This is particularly true of Bharati Mukherjee's work. In Rushdie's world the phenomenon of shame assumes various other proportions where self-consciousness and self-reproach play imposing roles within a serio-comical structure. In a society of increasing mobility where the presence of transcultural values often involves a whole area of complex possibilities, the individual placed in a hostile or unfriendly environment may suddenly discover hitherto unknown feelings of shame which may then lead to questions of identity; thus, it is no accident that the correlatives of shame and identity permeate the post-colonial imagination :

Sharam, that's the word. For which this paltry 'shame' is a wholly inadequate translation. Three letters, shin re mim (written, naturally, from right to left); ... A short word, but one containing encyclopaedias of nuance." (Salman Rushdie, Shame. pp.38-39).

My life, I now realize, falls into three disproportionate parts. Till the age of eight I lived in the typical joint family, indistinguishable from my twenty cousins, indistinguishable, in fact, from an eternity of Bengali Brahmin girls. From eight till twenty-one we lived as a single family, enjoying for a time wealth and confidence. And since twenty-one I have lived in the West. Each phase required a repudiation of all previous avatars; an almost total rebirth. (Clark Blaise and Bharati Mukherjee, Days and Nights in Calcutta. p.179).

There was no time to search for identities. There was only one way, and it was the American way. Every direction that she looked in there was growth. It was definitely not a time for comparisons. The only new awareness was the blurring of national outlines. (Nazneen Sadiq, Ice Bangles. p.95)

In the first part of this study I will look at colonial and post-colonial literature where the role of the Anglo-Indian as marginal will be examined in order to develop a parallel between these people of mixed parentage and the emerging consciousness of Indian expatriate writers as "invisible".

An analysis of Kipling's Kim will be undertaken in the next chapter for the purpose of examining the notion of superiority in the colonial imagination by which means European culture was able to administer and dominate an

entire people. By contrast, Tagore's Gora exhibits an extraordinary sensitivity to the colonial presence and seeks to send out a message to 'the Voice' through east-west relationships and attitudes. By precluding the presence of the 'Other', the word in Kim develops a linear movement towards a celebration of English supremacy, while in Tagore, the author's ability to orchestrate full-valued voices distinguishes the artistic will to create a synthesis between sahib and native.

Bharati Mukherjee and Salman Rushdie are two of many writers who represent the process of reverse colonization from east to west and whose works reflect the legacy of shame. The final chapter will chart the pattern of progression from Kipling's "baboo" to Rushdie's "peripheral man" and thence to Mukherjee's "invisible minority" suggesting thereby the cultural implications of the politics of shame. In the process of what I term "reverse colonization", immigrants are often confronted by racial prejudice in a society that promotes assimilation and homogeneity so that preserving one's identity becomes of paramount importance for "the oldest paradox of

prejudice is that it renders its victims simultaneously invisible and over-exposed."<sup>7</sup>

Salman Rushdie's Midnight's Children and Shame, and Bharati Mukherjee's Wife, The Tiger's Daughter and Darkness will be the major works examined in this concluding chapter, along with Days and Nights in Calcutta, co-authored by Clark Blaise. Also taken into account will be representative material from a few other contemporary South Asian expatriates.

I have also included a brief outline of the Islamic presence in India and the subsequent creation of Pakistan and Bangladesh (Appendix II) in order to provide background for the discussion of the carnivalized world of Salman Rushdie where "one ridicules in order to forget"<sup>8</sup>. The Rushdie imagination will be observed from the serio-comical perspective that reconciles the dual elements of the "politics of shame" and the quest for identity.

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<sup>7</sup>Bharati Mukherjee, "An Invisible Woman", Saturday Night, March 1981, p.36

<sup>8</sup>M. Bakhtin, The Dialogic Imagination : Four Essays. Ed. Michael Holquist, Trans. Caryl Emerson and Michael Holquist. (Austin and London : University of Texas Press, 1981), p.23

CHAPTER ONE

THE ANGLO-INDIAN IN LITERATURE



It is only natural that they insist on measuring us with the yardstick that they use for themselves, forgetting that the ravages of time are not the same for all, and that the quest of our own identity is just as arduous and bloody for us as it was for them. The interpretation of our reality through patterns not our own serves only to make us ever more unknown, ever less free, ever more solitary.

Gabriel Garcia Marquez

One of the significant features of colonization was the inter-mingling of races which resulted in the creation of racially mixed minorities like the Burghers of Ceylon, the Coloreds of Guyana, the Part-Aborigines of Australia, the Metis of Northern Canada, America's Mestizos, the Brazilians of Mixed Racial descent and more recently, the children of American soldiers and Vietnamese women called Amerasians. The European endeavour in India marked the presence of the 'feringhee' or foreigner on Indian soil. It produced a climate of social confrontation which manifested itself in the political, economic and cultural reality of what ultimately (with the arrival of the British) came to be identified as 'the Raj'. Of specific interest to this study is the creation of a racial blend of people known as the Anglo-Indians i.e. the children of European (mainly British) fathers and Indian mothers.

I have chosen the Anglo-Indians as a metaphor of alienation so as to compare and discuss the fundamental theme of 'exile' that overwhelms the post-colonial imagination. Born of European fathers and Indian mothers, the Anglo-Indians were never accepted by either side and unwittingly found themselves portrayed as "peripheral" or "marginal" in the colonial and later, post-colonial writings.

In the colonial period serious writers like Kipling provided valuable insight into British life in India but whether implicitly or explicitly, they took for granted the British presence in the Raj and through their writing contributed to the stereotyped images of the native. It is to Kipling that we owe the portrait of Hurree Babu whose "oily voice" and ingratiating smile created an impression of the Bengali that would last for all time but it was the Anglo-Indian as 'outsider' that became a recurrent theme in colonial and post-colonial writing. In a short story entitled Beyond the Pale (1899), Kipling expresses the English sentiment on racial admixture :

A man should, whatever happens, keep to his own caste, race and breed. Let the White go to the White and the Black to the Black. Then, whatever trouble falls is in the ordinary course of things - neither sudden, alien nor unexpected.<sup>1</sup>

The rejection of the Anglo-Indian community continued to gain currency until it was not unusual for the Anglo-Indian to be consistently portrayed as 'marginal'. A prototype of the Anglo-Indians was fashioned by writers careful to distinguish between the English side and the Indian side of their character :

They invariably attribute all that is good in a Eurasian to the drop of English blood in him, and all that is objectionable to his Indian parentage.<sup>2</sup>

This theme of estrangement is reinforced in novels of post-independent India. In John Masters' historical romance, Bhowani Junction (1954), the author invests the Anglo-Indians with the familiar negative characteristics associated with this race :

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<sup>1</sup>Rudyard Kipling, "Beyond the Pale", Indian Tales. (New York : Tudor Publishing Company, 1899), p.703.

<sup>2</sup>Bhupal Singh, A Survey of Anglo-Indian Fiction. (London : Curzon Press, 1974), pp.179-180.

...all I could see in Patrick were the worse trade marks of our people - inferiority feelings, resentment, perpetual readiness to be insulted...<sup>3</sup>

The fragmented personalities and the crisis of identity experienced by Anglo-Indians are crystallized in the character of Victoria Jones :

...the twin roots of the matter were that she was an Anglo-Indian and that she had always loved him...and even those two were really one. She couldn't desert her people, and he was one of them. Even his luck was Anglo-Indian...Then the great changes swept across India and the world, and she had searched, not by deliberate plan but because the wind of change blew through her too, for ways of escape from a life that had come to seem small and doomed...She'd tried becoming an Indian - but she wasn't an Indian. She'd tried becoming English - but she wasn't English...We talked about the future of her people. When we English left India they could look beyond the telegraph lines and the railway lines. There would be nothing they could not achieve then, depending only upon themselves.<sup>4</sup>

The uncertainty awaiting the Anglo-Indians at independence was also representative of the internal conflict that permeated India during the 'wind of

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<sup>3</sup>John Masters, Bhowani Junction (New York : The Viking Press, 1954), p.73

<sup>4</sup>Ibid, p.371-372

change'. Rodney Savage, the Englishman in Bhowani Junction, epitomizes English superiority by wryly commenting :

The Ranjits and Surabhais, who were trying to change themselves, didn't light bonfires and dance around them. They read Paine and Burke and spoke in English because the ideas they were trying to express did not exist in their own language.<sup>5</sup>

In Combat of Shadows (1960), Manohar Malgonkar uses the familiar stereotype of the sensuous Anglo-Indian woman attempting to ensnare an Englishman so she can escape "home". As is expected, she is spurned in favour of a pure, all-white, English woman and Ruby Miranda's properly assigned role as 'outsider' is re-affirmed :

You half-caste slut!, hissed Henry... You don't deserve anything better than your colony and your half-breed lovers...You dare to speak to me like that, you chi-chi streetwalker.<sup>6</sup>

The relentless, verbal aggression against this minority continues even when the Anglo-Indian leaves

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid, p.353

<sup>6</sup>Manohar Malgonkar, Combat of Shadows, (London : Hamish Hamilton, 1962), p.22

India. Their "negative identity" is an albatross around their necks and their half-caste background remains a constant reminder of their inferior status in the social order. In a book published in 1974 by Saros Cowasjee entitled Goodbye to Elsa, the Anglo-Indian protagonist is a sexually-perverted, mentally tormented, half-blind failure. Tristan Elliot cannot escape his past and in case he should try to forget, an expatriate Indian reminds him :

We know the truth about you Anglo-Indians. You are all traitors, blackguards, knaves and time-servers. If it were not for you people, we would have had swaraj (freedom) fifty years ago, and there would have been peace and prosperity in the land. But you, with two drops of British blood in you, sold us to the Imperialists.<sup>7</sup>

The east-west confrontation is exemplified when Elliot's English aunt cautions him :

You must not be like the other Indians, and if you take my advice, son, keep away from them. We've done all we can for India, and it's now up to you to bring progress to your country. As for mixed marriages, they don't work, and it's not simply a question of colour. Apart from colour there is culture, and a lot of other things that go to make a community. I feel sorry for the Indians who

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<sup>7</sup>Saros Cowasjee, Goodbye to Elsa, (Toronto : New Press, 1974), pp.34-35

come here, creating problems for themselves and for us. Look at the slums they have built! And the jobs they have taken from us! Why should they be porters and plumbers here when they could be administrators back home ?<sup>8</sup>

An unusual comment on the Indian heritage is from the voice of V.S. Naipaul, the Trinidadian novelist of Indian descent but of Caribbean and British educational background whose own feelings of ambiguity parallel that of the exiled Indian. His much acclaimed study of India entitled An Area of Darkness contains the poignant reaction to the individual's crisis of identity. One of his first emotions on arriving in India is the feeling of anonymity:

And for the first time in my life I was one of the crowd. There was nothing in my appearance or dress to distinguish me from the crowd eternally hurrying into Churchgate Station. In Trinidad to be an Indian was to be distinctive. To be anything there was distinctive; difference was each man's attribute. To be an Indian in England was distinctive; in Egypt it was more so. Now in Bombay I entered a shop or a restaurant and awaited a special quality of response. And there was nothing. It was like being denied part of my reality. Again and again I was caught. I was

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<sup>8</sup>Ibid, p.21

faceless. I might sink without a trace into that Indian crowd. I had been made by Trinidad and England; recognition of my difference was necessary to me. I felt the need to impose myself, and didn't know how.<sup>9</sup>

Note that Naipaul ascribes great importance to an individual's "distinctiveness". His expectations of a society include "recognition of (his) difference" and "a special quality of response"; yet even writers with the stature of Naipaul have not been unaffected by the colonial interpretation when it comes to discussing the Anglo-Indian. Naipaul mimics the colonial imagination and gratuitously comments :

...the Anglo-Indian half-breed, however pale, however anglicized, can form no respectable part of...society unless graced by some notable family connexion; for this group there can be no room in India except as outsiders and not at the top. (Nor would they wish there to be room. Their dream is of England; and to England they come - the paler go to Australia, white - and they congregate in sad little colonies in places like Forest Hill, busy churchgoers in short dresses which, in India anti-

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<sup>9</sup>V.S. Naipaul, An Area of Darkness (London : Penguin Books, 1964), p.43.



Indian, and in London are un-English and colonial; and they read Woman's Own and the Daily Mirror on the day of publication : a dream of romance fulfilled.)<sup>10</sup>

Stereotypically, Naipaul's encounter with the community is limited to a "fat, impertinent Anglo-Indian girl" or "the rat-faced Anglo-Indian manager in a silky fawn-coloured suit" or "sad Anglo-Indian girls at the microphone". The author's confused lumping together of Goans, converted Christians, anglicized Indians and Anglo-Indians betrays hidden resentment and obvious ignorance of the Anglo-Indian reality as a legitimate and constitutionally recognized part of India's minority. I speak of the writer's "hidden resentment" with reference to Naipaul's preoccupation with colour. One of the "distinctive" (to use Naipaul's language) features of the Anglo-Indians is their skin colouring ranging from palely European, many with blue eyes and blond hair, to the dark complexioned, black hair of their Indian mothers.

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<sup>10</sup>Ibid, p.60

The anglicized, dark-complexioned Naipaul discovers that he is "faceless" amidst India's sea of brown faces and seeks assurance of his identity in a British accent while the "paler" Anglo-Indian becomes a figure of ridicule in spite of the fact that his "anglicization" is legitimate and rooted in birth by a European father! Naipaul's experience parallels Hari Kumar's anguish when Colin Lindsey, his English friend, fails to recognise him :

I am invisible, ... not only to white people because they are white and I am black but invisible to my white friend because he can no longer distinguish me in a crowd. He thinks - yes, this is what Lindsey thinks : 'They all look alike.' He makes me disappear. I am nothing, nothing, nothing.<sup>11</sup>

The stereotyped image of the worthless Anglo-Indian has permeated the Western imagination in books like Queenie (1985), where incestuous relationships and loose morals propel the heroine to the pinnacle of Hollywood fame. The author, Michael Korda, would appear to have

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<sup>11</sup> Paul Scott. The Jewel in the Crown. (London : Panther Books, 1966), p.335.

borrowed every cliché and every stereotype about the Anglo-Indian :

The Englishmen who took native wives were of the lower class - railwaymen, telegraph workers, people who looked after canals, waterworks, electricity plants, jute mill, machinery. The women they lived with were invariably of low caste, or no caste at all, for a woman of caste would never give herself to a foreigner, Indians being as racially prejudiced as the English, if not more so.<sup>12</sup>

This happens to be the more popular and commonly-held belief about the origin of the Anglo-Indians perpetrated by writers like Kipling but discounted since by sociologists and anthropologists, prominent among them being Gist and Wright.<sup>13</sup>

In literary examples outlined above the voice of the 'Other' is shown to be excluded or appropriated.

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<sup>12</sup>Michael Korda, Queenie. (New York : Linden Press/Simon & Schuster, 1985), pp.28-29.

<sup>13</sup>Noel P. Gist and Roy Dean Wright, Marginality and Identity : Anglo-Indians as a Racially-Mixed Minority in India. (Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1973).

In the British social order the Anglo-Indian remained "beyond the pale", and in the Indian consciousness he assumed the role of "mlechha", i.e. outside the Brahminical pale of civilization, which image was adopted by the western imagination.

In post-colonial literature the lament of culturally-hybridized, expatriate writers (from South Asia particularly) at being "invisible" or "stereotyped" or "alienated" echoes the emotions of the Anglo-Indians who expressed themselves inadequately or not at all. Increasingly the voice of what may be termed "the Other" echoes the isolation once imposed on the Anglo-Indian, as in this comment :

The term "visible minorities" seems to have taken root overnight just as "ethnics" seems to have come to stay. It is time we studied the term and perhaps resisted it. For one thing, it is a euphemism for "nonwhite" and therefore should be abhorred in the cause of precision. For another, it links colour to a politically-oriented concept, "minorities." This does a double injustice : it segregates Canadian society into two groups, or three, if one accepts "invisible minorities" as a category, and so goes farther from the concept of multiculturalism; it also clumps together everyone within the group, and one sure way to condone individual wrongs is by cloaking it under a collective umbrella. The politicization of a

sociological phenomenon - prejudice - is one of the most dangerous steps one can take.<sup>14</sup>

or in Salman Rushdie's strongly-expressed concerns :

...British thought and British society have never been cleansed of the Augean filth of imperialism. It is still there, breeding lice and vermin, waiting for unscrupulous people to exploit it for their own ends. The British may be the only people on earth who feel nostalgia for pillage and conquest and war...Meanwhile, the stereotyping goes on. Blacks have rhythm; Asians work hard...<sup>15</sup>

or in the ambivalence of emotional cripples like Maya in Bharati Mukherjee's short story, The Tenant :

She can't move. She feels ugly and unworthy. Her adult life no longer seems miraculously rebellious; it is grim, it is perverse. She has accomplished nothing. She has changed her citizenship but she hasn't broken through into the light, the vigor, the hustle of the New World. She is stuck in dead space.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>14</sup>Uma Parameswaran, "Ganga in the Assiniboine : Prospects for Indo-Canadian Literature. A Meeting of Streams. Ed. M.G. Vassanji. (Toronto : TSAR Publications, 1985), p.89.

<sup>15</sup>Salman Rushdie, "The New Empire within Britain", New Society, Vol.62, No.1047, December 1982, pp.418-420.

<sup>16</sup>Bharati Mukherjee, "The Tenant", The Literary Review. Summer 1986. Vol. 29. Number: 4., p.490.

or even in Naipaul's rueful acknowledgement after a visit to his ancestral country, India :

The Indo-British encounter was abortive; it ended in a double fantasy. Their new self-awareness makes it impossible for Indians to go back; their cherishing of Indianness makes it difficult for them to go ahead...it is possible to find the India whose mimicry of the West is convincing until, sometimes with dismay, sometimes with impatience, one realizes that complete communication is not possible, that a gift of vision cannot be shared, that there still survive inaccessible areas of Indian retreat.<sup>17</sup>

Colonial authority reached indisputably unchallenged proportions in politics and in government, and the discriminatory effect of colonialism was exposed in its discourse. The deliberate policy of a ruling class to divest a people of a sense of self-esteem may be termed the "politics of shame" for :

"...the evidence seems to show that it is almost impossible for an individual to develop a sure sense of himself unless he can find aspects of his social situation with which he can clearly identify. For some persons identifications with

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<sup>17</sup>V.S. Naipaul, An Area of Darkness.  
(London : Penguin Books, 1964), p.217.

family, neighbourhood, or immediate community are apparently adequate. For others identifications with a larger community, such as the nation, are essential."<sup>18</sup>

A struggle between east and west of two ideologies and two disparate cultures evolved over the years into a form of cultural hybridity. The choice of the Anglo-Indian as metaphor is abundantly justified when examining the literary imagination of the culturally-hybridized native Indian transplanted in the west. The burden of the past weighs heavily on the Anglo-Indian community as it does on all people once colonized, especially those immigrants of eastern roots who feel buffeted between cultural values of east and west :

The discriminatory effects of the discourse of cultural colonialism for instance, do not simply or singly refer to a "person", or to a dialectical power struggle between self and Other, or to a discrimination between mother culture and alien cultures. Produced through the strategy of disavowal, the reference of discrimination is always to a process of splitting as the condition of subjection : a discrimination between the mother culture and its bastards, the self and its

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<sup>18</sup>Helen Merrell Lynd, On Shame and the Search for Identity. (New York : Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1958), p.215

doubles, where the trace of what is disavowed is not repressed but repeated as something different - a mutation, a hybrid.<sup>19</sup>

The identity crisis as experienced by the Anglo-Indians during the Raj thus parallels the questions of identity now being confronted by Indians in the west and embodied invariably by Hanif Kureishi's "Renaissance man", Salman Rushdie's "peripheral man", Bharati Mukherjee's "invisible woman", Surjeet Kalsey's "migratory birds", Uma Parameswaran's "rootless ones" and the growing facelessness of the so-called 'third world'.

The next chapter examines the dialectic between self and Other in the marginalized worlds of Kipling and Tagore. The "maan-baap" relationship in Kim exemplifies the self-serving benevolence of Empire that fortified itself through its "politics of shame", while Tagore's Gora reveals a humanistic quality and the disturbing realisation that estrangement between sahib and native was the result of 'white' supremacy and colonial appropriation of the voice of the 'Other'.

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<sup>19</sup>Homi K. Bhaba. "Signs Taken for Wonders : Questions of Ambivalence and Authority under a Tree Outside Delhi, May 1817." Critical Inquiry. 12 (Autumn 1985), p.153.



CHAPTER TWO

A COMPARISON OF KIPLING'S KIM AND  
TAGORE'S GORA

...from the earliest times, the stranger from another tribe, the "barbarian" who speaks in incomprehensible language and follows "outlandish" customs, but also the woman, whose biological difference stimulates fantasies of castration and devoration, or in our own time, the avenger of accumulated resentments from some oppressed class or race, or else that alien being, Jew or Communist, behind whose apparently human features a malignant and preternatural intelligence is thought to lurk: these are some of the arch typical figures of the Other, about whom the essential point to be made is not so much that he is feared because he is evil; rather he is evil because he is Other, alien, different, strange, unclean, and unfamiliar.

Frederic Jameson, The Political Unconscious :  
Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act, p.115

Evidence of the "narrative as a socially symbolic act" lies in the fact that literature plays a crucial role in cultural representation, for western curiosity about former colonies, India in particular, revolves more upon the imaginative and creative outpourings of literary moghuls like Conrad, Kipling and Forster rather than upon the worlds of Kalidasa, Tagore and Derozio. The remarkable economic and political influence over the east resulted in the creation of myths embellished by notions of eastern despotism, eastern splendour, noble savage, white man's burden, ignorance and eastern sensuality that excluded eastern civilization, its literature and art and propounded instead an ambivalent or negative concept of

'the Other'. Edward Said argues that "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self"<sup>1</sup>; Homi Bhaba asserts that "the objective of colonial discourse is to construe the colonised as a population of degenerate types on the basis of racial origin, in order to justify conquest and to establish systems of administration and instruction"<sup>2</sup> and Rana Kabbani's view is that "in the European narration of the Orient, there was a deliberate stress on those qualities that made the East different from the West, exiled it into an irretrievable state of 'otherness'"<sup>3</sup>. These are but a few evaluations on the axiomatics of imperialism in the context of which the Jameson aphorism correctly reflects the dialectics of colonial discourse and its corrosive effect on east-west consciousness.

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<sup>1</sup>Edward W. Said, Orientalism. (New York : Pantheon Books, 1978), p.3

<sup>2</sup>Homi K. Bhaba, "The Other Question..." Screen. London : Vol. 24, No.6. Nov-Dec. 1983, p.23

<sup>3</sup>Rana Kabbani, Europe's Myths of Orient : Devise and Rule. (London : The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1986), pp.5-6

Kipling's interpretation of the colonial experience is particularly significant although some critics relegate his works simply to the realm of adventure and manhood. This is a mischievous notion for :

"... by definition the cultural monuments and masterworks that have survived tend necessarily to perpetuate only a single voice in this class dialogue, the voice of a hegemonic class, they cannot be properly assigned their relational place in a dialogical system without the restoration or artificial reconstruction of the voice to which they were initially opposed, a voice for the most part scattered to the winds, or reappropriated in their turn by the hegemonic culture".<sup>4</sup>

It is precisely the restoration of this voice 'scattered to the winds' in east-west dialogue that I choose to address and for this reason I have selected Kipling's Kim as representative of the hegemonic class while Tagore's Gora represents the voice of 'the Other'. Both writers reflect their historical backgrounds and set their novels in the post-Mutiny period where the protagonists share the

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<sup>4</sup>Frederic Jameson, The Political Unconscious : Narrative as a Socially Symbolic Act. New York : Cornell University Press, 1981, p.85

common theme of the search for identity which in a political sense is analogous to India's own struggle for self-assertion. In this quest both, Kim and Gora are helped by native Indians.

Kipling grew in popularity amongst a certain class of Englishmen, and as his image of India was widely acknowledged, it became painfully evident that his portrayal of certain characters revealed an insensitivity that was shared by his compatriots. As memsahibs, poets, writers, educationists, missionaries and politicians of Empire poured into India and expressed unbridled views on their subjects, racial prejudice widened and stereotyped images emerged. In 1836 Emily Eden declared her initial revulsion :

It certainly is tiresome not being able to speak the language of the country one lives in but as for attempting to learn their gibberish, I can't. I get such horrible fits at times (particularly when I am driving out) of thinking that we are gone back to an entirely savage state, and are at least 3000 years behind the rest of the world. I take all the naked black creatures squatting at the doors of their huts in such aversion...I cannot abide India, and that is the truth.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Emily Eden, Letters from India, I, 148 cited by Marian Fowler, Below the Peacock Fan : First Ladies of the Raj, (New York : Penguin Books, 1987), p.38

Writing in 1853, Mrs. Colin Mackenzie observed :

It is, I believe, almost impossible to find a native who is either truthful or pure-minded. How can they be with their impure creeds ? You know the tendencies of Mohammedanism, but you are not aware of the unspeakable abominations of Hinduism.<sup>6</sup>

Hockley was another novelist who made judgemental comments on the Indians :

Nothing can be more irksome to the European than the society of the inhabitants of Hindustan, for these people did not have very admirable qualities - only a 'garb of hypocrisy' concealing selfishness, vice, superstition, and ingratitude.<sup>7</sup>

Romantic illusions of India were woven into the poetic works of Southey (The Curse of Kehama, 1810), Thomas Moore (Lalla Rookh, 1817), Scott (The Surgeon's Daughter, 1827)

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<sup>6</sup>Mrs Colin Mackenzie, Life in the Mission, the Camp and the Zenana, II. London, 1853, pp.230-231 cited by Marian Fowler, Below the Peacock Fan: First Ladies of the Raj (New York : Viking, 1987), p.123

<sup>7</sup>W.B. Hockley, Pandurang Hari, or Memoirs of a Hindoo, 3 vols., London, 1826, I. v-xiv cited by George D. Bearce, British Attitudes Towards India 1784-1858. (London : Oxford University Press, 1961), p.41.

and in the aristocratic world of Thackery where "indifference, ignorance, and conventionalized sentiments clogged the minds of the Englishmen..."<sup>8</sup>

The verbal assault on the Indians continued with Thomas Babington Macaulay's condemnation of India's "medical doctrines which would disgrace an English Farrier -- Astronomy, which would move laughter in girls at an English boarding school -- History, abounding with kings thirty feet high, and reigns thirty thousand years long -- and Geography made up of seas of treacle and seas of butter."<sup>9</sup> As for the missionaries, they judged Indian civilization to be wicked and corrupt and they sincerely believed that Christianity was the remedy. This sentiment was shared by the Radicals and Utilitarians who "believed

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<sup>8</sup>George D. Bearce, British Attitudes Towards India 1784-1858. (London : Oxford University Press, 1961), p.247

<sup>9</sup>Thomas Babington Macaulay, "Indian Education", Eds. Clive and Pinney, p. 242-3 cited by John Clive, Macaulay : The Shaping of the Historian (New York : Alfred A. Knopf, 1974), pp.372-3.

passionately in the superiority of the western world, and its indefinite progress with the release of the principle of reason as the mainspring of development. All other civilizations were static or in decay; moreover they lacked the secret which might enable them to catch up."<sup>10</sup>

This then was the general pattern of opinion prevailing in India during the British reign of Kipling's Kim. There are two kinds of Kipling readers - those who like him and those who don't. He has been accused of being a "vulgar poet" and a "jingo imperialist." George Orwell has been scathing in his comments :

It is no use pretending that Kipling's view of life, as a whole, can be accepted or even forgiven by any civilized person.<sup>11</sup>

Many in India cannot forgive him for his endeavours in the imperialist cause :

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<sup>10</sup>Percival Spear, A History of India, Vol. Two, (Harmondsworth : Penguin Books, 1965), p.122.

<sup>11</sup>George Orwell, "Rudyard Kipling", Kipling's Mind and Art. Selected Critical Essays. Ed. Andrew Rutherford. (London : Oliver & Boyd, 1964), p.70



Calling upon the English people to consider the Empire as a sacred trust, Kipling made a religion out of the imperial theme. He laid stress on the superiority of the Anglo-Saxon race. He invested it with a new power and position by expounding the doctrine of the "white man's burden". All his Indian writings can be considered an amplification and interpretation of this doctrine.<sup>12</sup>

And yet others have conceded that :

...not enough recognition has been accorded to the exuberant vitality that he bequeathed to his characters in fiction and poetry.<sup>13</sup>

Kim is the story of a white orphan boy who journeys across India in the company of a holy man and meets an assortment of interesting characters that represents the diversity of the country. His origin of birth is no secret to him but instead of it being an obstacle, the boy's chameleon-like personality enables him to blend into the English and Indian environments.

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<sup>12</sup>Bhaskara Rao, Rudyard Kipling's India (Norman : University of Oklahoma Press, 1967), p.5

<sup>13</sup>Vasant A. Shahane, Rudyard Kipling : Activist and Artist. (Carbondale & Edwardsville : Southern Illinois University Press, 1973), p.122

In the character of Kim, Kipling uses the conventional portrait of a romantic Idealist i.e. the sahib whose appearance on eastern soil should be regarded as a second coming. This ideology was consistently reflected in the dominant colonial discourse:

Even the most superficial consideration of the 'India' construed by Western texts, an India which was virtually conterminous with the European consciousness of it, will show that this canon of historical, analytical, propagandist and fictional writings (official minutes, political treatises, scholarly studies, geographical surveys missionary tracts journalists' copy, memoirs of civil servants and army officers, educational manuals, school textbooks, adventure stories, children's books, Anglo-Indian romances, the works of Kipling) devised a way of dividing the world which made British rule in India appear a political imperative and a moral duty.<sup>14</sup>

It is through Kipling's subtle intrusion in the text of Kim that we discover society's rules of exclusion, which is reinforced as one follows the adventures of the boy who

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<sup>14</sup>Benita Parry, "The Politics of Representation in A Passage to India". John Beer, Ed. A Passage to India : Essays in Interpretation. (London : The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1985), p.28

in believing: "I shall be made great by means of a Red Bull..." proceeds to outwit the simple-minded natives and fulfil the prophecy in "great, gray, formless India", never forgetting that "one is a Sahib, and that some day, when examinations are passed, one will command natives" made up of "scowling babus" and "thieving Orientals" and helpless holy men and "fat Hindu money-lenders" and "dreamers, babblers, and visionaries". Thus, the role of the Other in Kipling is repudiated and re-created with powerful elements of a "maan-baap" ideology that enabled the British to carve out an empire.

The authorial voice in Kim represents the all-pervasive colonial presence in the illusory, "eternal peace" of the east, a presence doomed from the start, but reified in the language of heroics and high adventure, illustrated here through the domineering presence of Kipling's voice merging with that of the character of Kimball O'Hara, Kim's father :

...Kim's horn would be exalted between pillars - monstrous pillars - of beauty and strength. The Colonel himself, riding on a horse, at the head of the finest regiment in the world, would attend to Kim - little Kim that should have been better off than his father (p.8).

The double-voiced words within the text draw attention to the game within the game, i.e. the colonial administration of "bloomin' Injia" where the English feel like "prisoners at large" (p.135). Kim may be said to represent a single consciousness for the purpose of projecting the author's ideas, thoughts and vision as opposed to the plurality of consciousness in Gora which explores the internalized and externalized worlds of "the Other".

In Kim the 'voice' of authority is immediately established with Kipling's dramatic introduction of the central character :

He sat in defiance of municipal orders, astride the gun Zam-Zammah on her brick platform opposite the old Ajaib-Gher - the Wonder House, as the natives call the Lahore museum. Who hold Zam-Zammah, that "fire-breathing dragon", hold the Punjab, for the great green-bronze piece is always first of the conqueror's loot...and Kim was English. Though he was burned black as any native; though he spoke the vernacular by preference and his mother-tongue in a clipped uncertain sing-song; though he consorted on terms of perfect equality with the small boys of the bazar; Kim was white - a poor white of the very poorest.pp.6-7)

Note the suggestions of dominance in the words "defiance", "hold", "conqueror" followed by an affirmation of racial supremacy that "Kim was English" and "white".

Throughout the book, Kipling returns to his insistence that Kim was white. But was he ? Note that Kipling suggests that Kim was "burned black as any native", yet later in the game, he has Huneefa dye Kim's skin the colour of a native :

...for there went in at twilight a Mohammedan horse boy, and there came out an hour later a Eurasian lad - the Lucknow girl's dye was of the best...  
(p.192)

Again,

Tonight we change thy colour. This sleeping under roofs has blanched thee like an almond. But Huneefa has the secret of a colour that catches. No painting of a day or two. (p.235)

There is not enough justification to accept Kim's Englishness, made all the more tenuous by Kipling's 'voice' reverberating throughout the book : "Kim was English...Kim was white - a poor white of the very poorest" (p.6); "...he's not very black" (p.114); "...he was Irish enough by birth" (p.52); "Where a native would have lain down, Kim's white blood set him upon his feet" (p.65); "He is certainly white, though evidently neglected." (p.115); "...if the Sahibs were to be impressed, he would do his best to impress them. He too

was a white man" (p.126); "They'll make a man o'you, O'Hara, at St. Xavier's - a white man..." (p.155). Racial overtones resound in the authorial voice connecting the notion of white supremacy with images of "the pedigree of the white stallion" (p.33, p.35); Englishmen with "white beards" (p.49); "white roads across the fields" (p.59); "white tents" (p.129) etc. This peculiarity of British fiction which portrays the Englishman as being able to successfully pass for native is discounted by at least one critic who remarks that :

Despite the popularity of the legend, there was little substance to the idea that Britishers could easily pass as natives if they chose. Only a rare Englishman would not have been betrayed by his physique, carriage, accent, and manner, even if he were fluent in the language.<sup>15</sup>

There has been much speculation about the identity of Kim, some critics believing him to have actually been an Anglo-Indian (referred to then as Eurasian) :

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<sup>15</sup>Francis G. Hutchins, The Illusion of Permanence : British Imperialism in India. (New Jersey : Princeton University Press, 1967), p.156

...(the mother's race and nationality are unspecified, but there are grounds for supposing she might have been a Eurasian.<sup>16</sup>

Rupert Croft-Crooke observes :

Kim, it appears, was the orphan of an Irish Colour-Sergeant and a nursemaid in the colonel's household. His mother's race is not specified, but was presumably British or Eurasian since she is not referred to as an ayah.<sup>17</sup>

Kipling's own remarks on the members of this community are devastating and have had long-lasting, damaging effects. In this context, it is perhaps relevant to examine the Anglo-Indian's place in India's intricate caste system. Nirad C. Chaudhuri offers this explanation:

The Aryan Hindus had a horror of miscegenation, especially that kind of miscegenation in which a woman of the superior and dominant race married a native. They treated the offspring of such intermarriages with such contempt that even the products of these were left with a permanent sense of inferiority.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Norman Page, A Kipling Companion. (London : The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1984), p.153

<sup>17</sup>Rupert Croft-Cooke, Rudyard Kipling. (New York : Haskell House Publishers Ltd., 1974), p.67.

<sup>18</sup>Nirad C. Chaudhuri, The Continent of Circe (Bombay : Jaico Publishing House, 1965), p.311

Kipling seems to have shared this abhorrence for the half-caste as witness Kim's outburst :

Their eyes are blued and their nails are blackened with low-caste blood, many of them. Sons of metheeranees - brothers-in-law to the bhungi. (pp.5-6)

In socio-anthropological studies, the question of accent becomes essential to identifying the various cultures. Kipling's reference to Kim's "sing-song" manner of speaking (p.6, p.68) reflects the observation of other writers commenting on the Anglo-Indian characteristic of speech for whom "English is a living language, not an adopted language. In the language of speech the accent and pronunciation display the influence of Indian vernaculars. Speech forms are replete with idiomatic and colloquial expressions rooted both in Indian and European languages."<sup>19</sup>

Precariously poised therefore, between the English and the natives, it was the Anglo-Indians' obstinate adherence to their own westernized tradition and values

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<sup>19</sup>Noel P. Gist and Roy Dean Wright, Marginality and Identity : Anglo-Indians as a Racially Mixed Minority in India. (Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1973), p.149



that placed them in a vulnerable position and elicited from their British fathers repressive measures and from the native Indians a rejection that seemed calculated to relegate them to marginal status.

This policy of shame, however, was not reserved for the Anglo-Indians alone; from the British imagination was created the stereotypes of the Indian that cling to the Western world even today of "subject peoples of whom they can think, and with whom they can deal, in very much the same way as their predecessors thought of and dealt with "the fluttered folk and wild", the "new-caught, sullen peoples, half-devil and half-child", who made up, for Rudyard Kipling, the white man's burden."<sup>20</sup>

Kipling's book, although considered by many to be the story of one grand adventure, is essentially a paean to the white man's Raj given expression by the Kipling hyperbole as exemplified by various appellations :

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<sup>20</sup>Salman Rushdie, "The New Empire within Britain". New Society. December 1982. Vol. 62, No.1047. p.417

"Little Friend of all the World", "King of the Castle", "O Fountain of Wisdom", "Protector of the Poor", "Friend of the Stars". Kim, to use a good Anglo-Indian expression is a "subjuntawallah", i.e. he knows it all.<sup>21</sup> His India rests in the palm of his hand, he knows everything there is to know (or thinks he does) for when he is not serving his benefactors well, he is burdened with the responsibility of being "maan-baap" to the Lama, saving Mahbub Ali's life and serving as "chain-man" to the "hulking, obese Babu". Although both Kipling and Tagore present characters that are representative of the master race, Kim is the author's manipulative device for an affirmation of the belief in class superiority that prevailed in the British mind.

As a colonial writer, Kipling projected an India of pristine innocence, its inhabitants as children incapable of self-government. He imprinted in Western minds archetypal images that linger till today:

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<sup>21</sup>The Anglo-Indian penchant for coining expressions like "Begum Hardam Taza", "Mama ko pucho", "Chutnee Mary", etc., has yet to be recognized and the phrases catalogued.

While the West began to pull at his heart-strings, at the string of ambition, he saw the Indian Empire in a clearer light : the gigantic, bulk of native India, so complex, so rich with humanity, so remote from western understanding, so lovable, so helpless, was organized, modernized, protected, and cautiously moved forward into the path of progress by a corps of young English officials who gave it their youth and health with no expectation of any reward beyond a bare livelihood. If India was being wickedly exploited, certainly they were not the exploiters.<sup>22</sup>

This so-called dependency on the British evolved into a "maan-baap/burden" theory used with expediency to justify the colonial presence in India. This ideology sought and found fulfillment through the imperialistic 'voice' which becomes an integral feature in the Kipling text. An example of the author's interpretation of this "maan-baap" psychology exists in the brilliant execution of particular scenes in which Kipling reverses roles to suggest the "burden" ideology, one example being the diatribe that follows when Kim is thrown off the train:

Kim burst into a flood of tears, protesting that the lama was his father and his mother, that he was the prop of the lama's declining years, and that the lama would die without his care. (p.44).

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<sup>22</sup>Charles Carrington, Rudyard Kipling : His Life and Work. (London : Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1955), p.83

In a later incident, the dialogue between the lama and the ressalदार is filled with innuendo when the lama "asked him why the Friend of the Stars had gone that way only six days before" and this is how the old soldier quotes Kim :

"And what said he ? asked the lama eagerly.

"Sweet words - an hundred thousand - that thou art his father and mother and such all. Pity that he does not take the Queen's service. He is fearless." (p.220)

This reversal of roles between the lama and Kim is a subtle intrusion by the author for the purpose of crystallizing the lama-Kim relationship. Kipling furthers the notion that it is really the old man (the Other) who is dependent on the boy (Empire) and this is borne out by Kipling's (soldier's) gratuitous "aside" about the Queen's service. In the dialogized strategy of this passage, the double-voiced word not only emasculates the object of speech but appropriates the voice of the Other.

Kim professes to know everything there is to know about India but what he encounters are mystery and intrigue, tiresome outpourings of the colonial imagination. The world that Kipling creates belies the colonial eye for the "picturesque" :

But it was all pure delight - the wandering road, climbing, dipping and sweeping about the growing spurs; the flush of the morning laid along the distant snows; the branched cacti, tier upon tier on the stony hillsides; the voices of a thousand water-channels; the chatter of the monkeys; the solemn deodars, climbing one after another with down-drooped branches; the vista of the Plains rolled out far beneath them; the incessant twanging of the tonga-horns and the wild rush of the led horses when a tonga swung round a curve; the halts for prayers (Mahbub was very religious in dry-washings and bellowings when time did not press); the evening conferences by the halting-places, when camels and bullocks chewed solemnly together and the stolid drivers told the news of the Road - all these things lifted Kim's heart to song within him. (p.191)

The Grand Trunk Road, that sprawling sea of humanity, over which Kim travels is suggestive of Empire's conviction of infinity. Strategically it allows Kipling to focus on the "backbone of all Hind" from which imperialism draws its scattered subjects, its "burdens" together from "great, gray, formless India" :

For the most part it is shaded, as here, with four lines of trees; the middle road - all hard - takes the quick traffic. In the days before rail-carriages the Sahibs travelled up and down here in hundreds. Now there are only country-carts and such like. Left and right is the rougher road for the heavy carts - grain and cottor and timber, boosa, lime and hides...All castes and kinds of men move here. Look! Brahmins and chumars, bankers and tinkers, barbers and bunnias, pilgrims and potters - all the world going and coming. (p.79)

The language here is suggestive of the British policy of exclusivity that echoes throughout the book :

The Grand Trunk Road at this point was built on an embankment to guard against winter floods from the foothills, so that one walked, as it were, a little above the country, along a stately corridor, seeing all India spread out to left and right (p.86).

The image of the colonial presence is reinforced in the language of dominance, "so that one walked...a little above the country, along a stately corridor, seeing all India spread out ..." Where then are the Englishmen ? As Kim points out, they have retreated to the trains. The lama, imitative of the Englishman, traverses this "river of life", yet remains distant and aloof in an attempt to attain "freedom from the Wheel of Things". In an earlier symbolic gesture he has exchanged his vision with that of the Englishman who is "Keeper of the Images" and whose generosity to the lama includes gifts of pencils and books in the Ajaib-Gher or Wonder House recalling here the magical gift of the English language to colonized India :

"...Now lend me thy spectacles."

The curator looked through them. They were heavily scratched, but the power was almost exactly that of his own pair, which he slid into the lama's hand, sayir , : "Try these."

"A feather! A very feather upon the face!" The old man turned his head delightedly and wrinkled up his nose. "How scarcely do I feel them! How clearly do I see!" (p.21)

How "clearly" the lama sees is of course dependent on the "eyes" he sees with. While he sets off in the happy knowledge that he has replaced his "heavily scratched" spectacles with the "clear" British invention, it is abundantly "clearer" that Kipling's rendition of native simple-mindedness versus British superiority is an impressive authorial sleight of hand.

The transition from Kipling's "Ajaib Gher" (House of Wonder) to Forster's "Asirgarh" (House of Reality) to Scott's "Bibighar" (House of Wives) and finally to the New World is in essence the agonizing trail laid out by Kim whose struggle with identity foreshadows that of the Anglo-Indian in India and of the native Indian transplanted to the west:

"Oh, Mahbub Ali, but am I a Hindu?" said Kim in English (p.31).

"No; I am Kim. This is the great world, and I am only Kim. Who is Kim?" He considered his own identity, a thing he had never done before, till his head swam. He was one insignificant person in all this roaring whirl of India, going southward to he knew not what fate. (pp.155-156).

"What am I? Mussalman, Hindu, Jain, or Buddhist ? That is a hard nut." (p.188).

If a "burden" was imposed, it was by the white man on the native. The legacies of shame and identity are interdependent and the difference in ideologies of colonizer and colonized is expressed through Kipling's closed environment i.e. the containment of Empire and through Tagore's home which is the world.

When Tagore won the Nobel Prize in 1913 for Gitanjali, this is what the Globe of Toronto had to say :

It is the first time that the Nobel Prize has gone to anyone who is not what we call "white". It will take time, of course, for us to accommodate ourselves to the idea that anyone called Rabindranath Tagore should receive a world prize for literature (Have we not been told that the East and the West shall never meet ?) The name has a curious sound. The first time we saw it in print it did not seem real.<sup>23</sup>

"Rabi" is a Bengali word derived from the Sanskrit "ravi" which means the sun, so it is perhaps apt that

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<sup>23</sup>Quoted in Krishna Kripalani, Rabindranath Tagore, A Biography. London : Oxford University Press, 1962, p.226



Tagore helped illuminate the western world by presenting an India that contained more than "jungle" and "burdens" for the white man. Tagore's significance lies in the fact that through his writings he bridged a gulf between the east and west, a gulf that had been created by the colonial imagination. He accomplished this through his insistence on the development of the human personality and his extraordinary devotion to the spirit of humanism, earning the title of "The Great Sentinel" from another immortal Indian, the Mahatma.

Tagore believed strongly in the interdependence of man and nature forming a single unity. The energy that directs this harmony is composed of a universal rhythm, whether it be "jivan- shakti" (force of life) or "jivan- pravaha (current of life) or "prana-dhara" (flow of breath). This rhythm of life is what Tagore exulted in, and his humanistic outlook is expressed in many of his works. Tagore's fundamental philosophy lies in the poet's glorification of the deified energy of life in nature and man, sometimes referred to as "jivan-devata" or the Deity of Life. Tagore's aesthetic approach to philosophy arose out of a love for the beauty and simplicity of life and

was greatly influenced by the Upanishads. While western philosophers insist on well-defined boundaries between contradictory qualities, the eastern tendency is to consider life's contradictions as aspects of reality and it is the human significance in Tagore's stories that transcends all boundaries and is so brilliantly executed in his major novel, Gora.

Gora is the story of a young, white man who had been adopted as a baby by a Hindu family. He embraces all religious traditions and practices of an orthodox Hindu with a fervour and dedication that surpass all normal bounds while his love for country and deep respect for religious conventions are emotions that nearly destroy him until the revelation of facts concerning his birth. The historical background of Gora reflects the nationalistic movement that began in 1828 with the founding of the Brahma Samaj by Raja Ram Mohan Roy who propounded a universal religion which made no distinction between colour, caste and creed. Its members borrowed much from the Christian faith and practice as well as from Hindu tradition. Theism was its creed as opposed to idol-worship, with an emphasis on spiritual worship to God rather than an outward display of ceremony. Rabindranath

Tagore's father Debendranath succeeded Ram Mohan Roy in this movement and he was obviously a great influence on his son. This movement later lost its religious tradition and became a revolutionary centre seeking reform of the orthodox Hindu customs and practices but instilling instead renewed zeal and pride in the Hindu religion. What impression this made on Rabindranath Tagore is noted by his biographer, Kripalani :

All his life Tagore hesitated to take sides in the battle which each generation renews for itself. His imaginative sympathy and understanding of human nature enabled him to appreciate the passionate partiality of both outlooks and he himself entered the lists only when he felt that justice and humanity were at stake.<sup>24</sup>

Tagore approaches the conflict between religious and political fervour with an assertion of tolerance and love, suggesting that:

...more important than reforms are love and respect. Reform will come of itself from within, after we are a united people.<sup>25</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Ibid, p.118

<sup>25</sup>Rabindranath Tagore, Gora. (London : Oxford University Press, 1962), p.118

The introduction of Gora as chairman of the Hindu Patriots Society is as remarkable, ludicrous and provocative as the British presence in India itself. Gora's physical attributes defy all credibility to his claim of being a Hindu and an Indian:

The name of the chairman was Gourmohan, called by his friends and relations Gora. He seemed to have utterly outgrown all around him. One of his college Professors used to call him the Snow Mountain, for he was outrageously white, his complexion unmellowed by even the slightest tinge of pigment. He was nearly six feet tall, with big bones, and fists like the paws of a tiger. The sound of his voice was so deep and rough that you would be startled if you suddenly heard him call out, "Who is there?" His face seemed needlessly large and excessively strong, the bones of his jaws and chin being like the massive bolts of a fortress. He had practically no eyebrows, his forehead sloping broadly to the ears. His lips were thin and compressed, his nose projecting over them like a sword. His eyes, small but keen, seemed to be aimed at some unseen distant object like the point of an arrow, yet able to turn in a flash to strike something near at hand. Gourmohan was not exactly good-looking, but it was impossible to overlook him, for he would have been conspicuous in any company. (p.6)

Like Kipling, Tagore lionizes the presence of the white man in India through the character of Gora. However, both writers fail to reconcile the opposing forces of the man-baap relationship; Kipling through a lack of sensitivity and Tagore through the constraints imposed by a rigid caste system.

Tagore's decision to create a character as incongruous as Gora reinforces the central preoccupation of east-west polemics. The language of aggression constitutes the personal world of the hero in words and phrases like "strong", "massive bolts of a fortress", "sword", "point", "arrow" and "strike". The strength of the colonial presence is never in doubt by the writer whose emotions are delicately balanced, never thrust upon the character. Even Tagore's selective use of the expression "Who is there ?" echoes the popular "Qui-hai ?" which came to be associated with the English from their practice of calling servants "Koi hai?" (Is any one there?).

Throughout the book, Gora is an angry, young man whose endless ruminations are directed against an external world which he can never quite understand nor grasp. While Kim is intent on "playing the game", Gora sets about to penetrate the mind and heart of a people through a whole range of human emotions that pour into the troubled waters of colonized India. The essential conflict in the book is Gora's obstinacy and blind adherence to values and traditions which are neither fully understood nor within his domain. Gora is really the son of an Irishman, as is

Kim but, where Kipling exposes his character to the "mysterious Orient", Tagore invites the white man to cross the threshold and enter the home of the "native". It is Gora's close contact with the native community that enriches his life and endows him with a new meaning and passion for discovering the real India. Confronted with the truth about his birth, he approaches Paresh Babu in all humility and entreats him :

It is you who have the mantram of that freedom...and that is why today you find no place in any society. Make me your disciple! Today give me the mantram of that Deity who belongs to all, Hindu, Mussulman, Christian, and Brahma alike - the doors to whose temple are never closed to any person of any caste whatever - He who is not merely the God of the Hindus, but who is the God of India herself! (p.14)

Strengthening his belief in a united India, Tagore delineates the disunity that exists within the country describing in Gora the breakdown of the family nucleus. The Brahma Samaj family of Paresh Babu is torn apart by hypocrisy and stubborn adherence to Reform which is in direct juxtaposition to Gora's total commitment to orthodox Hinduism. The stabilising personalities in Gora are Anandamoyi, Sucharita and Paresh Babu. As Gora's step-mother, Anandamoyi represents the universal woman,

the mother figure of India, but more specifically surrogate mother for the white man. Characters in the book are drawn towards her seeking peace, enlightenment and comfort, none more than Gora himself, who on the loss of innocence, exclaims :

Mother, you are my mother!...The mother whom I have been wandering about in search of was all the time sitting in my room at home. You have no caste, you make no distinctions, and have no hatred - you are only the image of our welfare! It is you who are India! (p.407).

Note Tagore's use of the same "maan-baap" ideology in relationships which may also be construed as author consciousness.

An essential element that lies within the hero's realm of consciousness is the author's ability to unite his characters in a relational field of vision in which would appear the truth as perceived by each individual but which would not be finalized by the author for the simple reason that self-consciousness in an individual cannot be finalized from the outside, it has to develop from within. Conflicts of opinion are therefore an integral part of this relationship. There is no evidence of this in

Kipling where, as indicated earlier, Kim is possessed of abundant intelligence out of all proportion to and the exclusion of characters around him. In the internalized world of the hero in Gora, the hero's words and thoughts are not only his but reflect the multi-voiced, conflict of opinions of Binoy, Paresh Babu, Sucharita and Anandamoyi :

Alas, where is my country ? Is it real only to myself ? Here is my earliest friend, he with whom I have discussed all my life's plans and hopes, ready at a moment's notice to sever all connection after so many years with his past and future, with complete callousness, in order to marry some girl he has taken a fancy to! And here are those who belong to what every one called my party, after my having explained my views to them so many times, deciding that I am avatar born only to preserve the Hindu religion! I am merely a personified form of the Scriptures! And is India to be given no place?  
(p.269)

Each character's presence is felt, yet the speaker's own intonations of bitter irony, indignation and melancholy are super-imposed to create a harmony of conflicting truths. The world created by Tagore is an external one that remains outside the consciousness of the hero, yet the people, events, objects, scenes are considered within the convention of dialogue. The hero is free to question and be questioned and his world either places him diametrically opposed to others or allows him a measure of self affirmation. The author does not possess, neither



does he enforce, a superiority of information. This is absent in Kipling, noted as well by Philip Mason :

In some of the stories the longer you look and the deeper you ponder, the more there is. But - still on this voyage of rediscovery - there are the other occasions where I am conscious of a faint nausea. This happens most often when Kipling himself intrudes in the first person. Sometimes he seems to be trying to push his way into an inner circle to which he does not really belong, or hinting that he does belong to an inner circle to which the reader cannot hope for admission. And to that doubt may be added a suspicion that he probably does not really belong to it himself. I begin to feel, as I read these tales again after long abstinence, that in Kipling there were a number of elements that had never been reconciled with each other nor even held in healthy tension within a mature personality.<sup>26</sup>

The multi-voiced hero in Gora is consumed by an idea that renders his acts noble and defines the humanistic motif in the novel. Tagore transcends the narrow boundaries of colonialism and offers a vision that is profoundly concerned with the individual, whether it be matters of the heart :

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<sup>26</sup>Philip Mason, The Glass, the Shadow and the Fire. (New York : Harper & Row Publishers, 1975), pp.25-26.

The emptiness of the human heart could never be filled except by an unlimited feeling. (p.312)

or of religious thought :

There is a place for imagination in Art, in Literature, and even in Science and History, and I will never admit that only in religion it has no place. The perfection of all man's powers is revealed in religion, and do you mean to say that the attempt made in our country to harmonise imagination with wisdom and devotion in idol worship does not reveal a truth to mankind greater than that of any other country. (p.329)

or of nationalism :

I want you to remember one thing. If we have the mistaken notion that because the English are strong we can never become strong unless we become exactly like them, then that impossibility will never be achieved, for by mere imitation we shall eventually be neither one thing nor the other. To you I make only this request : come inside India, accept all her good and her evil : if there be deformity then try and cure it from within, but see it with your own eyes, understand it, think over it, turn your face towards it, become one with it. You will never understand if you stand opposed and, imbued to the bone with Christian ideas, view it from outside. Then you will only try to wound and never be of any service (pp.102-103)

of life :

Everything nowadays came close to him, touched him, had for him a new meaning. He had never known before that he loved the world so deeply, that the sky was so wonderful, the light so marvelous, that even the stream of unknown wayfarers along the streets could be so profoundly real! He longed to do something for every one he came across, - to dedicate his powers to the eternal service of the world, as did the sun. (p.68)

of truth :

We must select for ourselves the field on which we would focus our attention, and forego our greed for all the rest outside it, else we shall never find the truth at all. I cannot worship at the shrine where you have seen truth's image, for if I did I should have to lose the inner truth of my own life. (p.69)

or of the sanctity of the individual :

It can never be right that man should remain narrow and confined out of regard for society - rather society ought to become more liberal out of regard for the individual. Therefore I can never find fault with those who are ready to face the suffering their actions involve. (p.316)

Both Kipling and Tagore examine the social climate of a world governed by the profound realities of caste, race, Hinduism, women, patriotism and colonialism. The incidents and people that Kim and Gora encounter form part of the fabric of Indian society and demonstrate the interaction between the various groups. However, the authorial position in Kim assumes a superiority that reflects the distancing between the sahib and native - witness how Kim holds the Others in contempt, betraying a superficial attachment to the "great and beautiful land". Tagore's approach to this contentious subject of caste is to place the white man, Gora, in a Brahmin family to be

raised a devout Hindu. In reality, Gora's conditions of birth relegates him to the realm of the Untouchable and Gora's strong protests against men of lower caste are silenced by the wise Anandamoyi :

When you hold a little child to your breast then you feel certain that no one is born into this world with caste. (p.13)

Of course, Gora cannot know that this is a direct reference to his situation but the Tagore message of humanism is explicit. His aesthetic vision was a fulfillment of the reconciliation he sought with his colonial masters and his art transcended the narrow confines of empire and embraced instead a harmony between culture and language.

What might have been the course of history had the white man in India stopped (stooped ?) to listen to the voice of the Other! Those Englishmen who accepted the Tagore invitation to enter the native home embraced the women and produced a hybrid race of Anglo-Indians whose rejection by their British fathers and their peculiar position in India's history form the basis for consideration of the later generation of writers in the following chapter.

CHAPTER THREE

FROM MARGINAL TO VISIONARY

...they will trample me underfoot, the numbers marching one two three, four hundred million five hundred six, reducing me to specks of voiceless dust, just as, all in good time, they will trample my son who is not my son, and his son who will not be his, and his who will not be his, until the thousand and first generation, until a thousand one midnights have bestowed their terrible gifts and a thousand and one children have died, because it is the privilege and the curse of midnight's children to be both masters and victims of their times, to forsake privacy and be sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes, and to be unable to live or die in peace.

Salman Rushdie, Midnight's Children

...O blind innocence of childhood!...O God...all this tamasha, all this performance...

Midnight's Children

A university professor and his wife, also an educationist, were frequent visitors to India. The wife expressed her delight at a forthcoming holiday by confessing that one of her favourite diversions in India is to sleep in and have breakfast brought to her by a 'gullible servant' who is informed that this ritual is part of the memsahib's religion! Amusing as this story is to westerners, it is recalled here to reinforce the image of Jameson's "Other" where the gullible servant is transformed into a symbol of "voiceless dust" and where the master-slave psychology of colonialism still lingers.

Such encounters set the boundaries for marginality and concretize the politics of shame as prescribed by the dominant, colonial presence. A unique synthesis exists therefore between the Anglo-Indian and the native Indian because the identity crisis as experienced by the Anglo-Indians during the Raj (Appendix I) parallels the questions of identity now being confronted by Indians in the west. If the 'gullible servant' was to be heard, it would be through the less gullible voice of the "alien, different, strange, unclean, Other" where the syndrome of marginality permeates the imagination of expatriate writers whose hybridity is comprised of eastern values and western reality.

Bharati Mukherjee and Salman Rushdie are two of many writers who represent the process of reverse colonization i.e. migration from east to west and whose writings confront the dilemma of identity and the legacy of shame comparable to the Anglo-Indian experience. The stereotypical attitudes and perceptions of the British colonials and the Indians towards the Anglo-Indians have already been discussed. This same process extends to the westerners who perceive Indians "as picturesque entertainment and accept Indian hospitality as their due.

But underneath this assumption that the natives are colourful and curious relics of a bygone era lies the sincere belief that the Indians have not altered essentially from the early days of the empire."<sup>1</sup>

It is through the imagination of strangers from other tribes that the dichotomy of colonialism is crystallised : the west representing social and economical stability; the east a reminder of one's roots. Expatriates desiring both vacillate between one world and the other as necessity dictates, since the two realities seem incompatible. Thus, the echoes of a colonial past resonate through the corridors of Fort Williams and Writers Building on to Camac Street and Resh Behari Avenue spilling over into the "New World" of Queens, Gerrard, Birmingham and Brixton.

Bharati Mukherjee's vision is considered within the parameters of a colonial heritage in which contradictions and opposing relationships in the internal and external

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<sup>1</sup>Frances M. Mannsaker. "East and West : Anglo-Indian Racial Attitude as Reflected in Popular Fiction, 1890-1914." Victorian Studies. Autumn, Vol.24, No. 1 (1980), p.40



worlds of the individual are examined. In Mukherjee's narrowly constructed world the tension between cultures is painfully evoked in the hidden polemics and basic social tone, particularly in the area of language, which Judith Scherer Herz suggests in a discussion of the function of language in A Passage to India, "is the meeting-ground between listener and speaker; it is the space where the disruptions and discontinuities caused by language occur and where a new link between speaker and hearer can be forged."<sup>2</sup> Speech, voice, characters and ideas are especially orchestrated towards a harmonizing unity and theme, i.e. - the problem of identity in a multi-racial, polyglot world.

Mukherjee's first novel, The Tiger's Daughter, published in 1973, deals with the racially-mixed marriage of the protagonist and her experience on a return visit to independent India. Tara Banerjee Cartwright, educated in the west, meets and marries her American husband, David.

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<sup>2</sup>Judith Scherer Herz, "Listening to Language", A Passage to India : Essays in Interpretation. Ed. John Beer. (London : The Macmillan Press Ltd., 1985), p.65

The strong currents of a Brahmanical background and the espousal of a liberalized, western world impinge on Mrs. Cartwright who must come to terms with her new role as intermediary. Nowhere is the analogy between the Anglo-Indian and the expatriate Indian more poignantly drawn than during a discussion over the housing of American exchange students when Tara Cartwright releases her pent-up emotion at the discovery that her friends think of her husband as mlechha :

And again that bitterness, that instinct for destruction of smug people like Reena. She had never thought of David as a mlechha, an outcaste, not good enough for girls like Reena. She was numb with anger against Reena's mother...It was useless to pursue this anger. Reena and the others were surrounded by an impregnable wall of self-confidence. Through some weakness or fault, Tara had slipped outside. And reentry was barred (pp.109-110)

Tara Cartwright's anguish continues in the character of Dimple Das Gupta in Mukherjee's Wife (1975) which concerns the catharsis of a young Bengali girl, Dimple Basu. She and her husband, Amit, leave India for the United States where she is unable to accept the imposition of an alien culture. The Hindu woman, nauseated by western decadence, commercialism and

materialism is gradually transformed into a tormented, tortured individual who peregrinates into infidelity and homicide.

Mukherjee describes her book, Darkness (1985), as "stories of broken identities and discarded languages, and the will to bond oneself to a new community, against the ever-present fear of failure and betrayal".<sup>3</sup> The stories in the collection deal with ambivalence, rejection and loneliness crystallized by internal monologues :

I had thought myself provocative and fascinating. What had begun as an adventure had become shabby and complex. I was just another involvement of a white man in a poky little outpost, something that "men do" and then come to their senses while the memsahibs drink gin and tonic and fan their faces. I didn't merit a stab wound through the heart. ("The Lady from Lucknow", Darkness, p.33)

One imagines the Anglo-Indians, Ruby Miranda and Victoria Jones commiserating with Nafeesa Hafeez! Alienation stalks the characters and sweeps the expatriate landscape :

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<sup>3</sup>Bharati Mukherjee, Darkness (Markham : Penguin Books Canada Ltd., 1985), pp.2-3.

In Montreal she was merely "English", a grim joke on generations of British segregationists. It was thought charming that her French was just slightly short of fluent. In Toronto, she was not Canadian, not even Indian. She was something called, after the imported idiom of London, a Paki. And for Pakis, Toronto was hell. She had only a secondhand interest in the English language and a decided aversion to British institutions; English has been a mutually agreed upon second language in her home, in her first city, in her first country, in her career and it had remained so...("The World According to Hsu", Darkness, p.41).

Compare the Anglo-Indian anguish:

...the Indians looked down on the Anglo-Indians because to them you were neither one nor the other. They used to call us kutcha butcha, that is to say, half-baked bread, and depending on the shade of your colour they used to talk about the Anglo-Indian as being teen pao, three-quarters, or adha seer, half a pound, if you were nearly white.<sup>4</sup>

Part of the bonding process and one of the ambiguities of identity are the Indian characters' attachment to things foreign such as the "eclectically furnished" home of Bengal Tiger Banerjee where "Italian marble tables", "glass cabinets" and "heavy, dark, incongruous pieces" (The Tiger's Daughter, pp.32-32)

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<sup>4</sup>Charles Allen, Ed. Plain Tales from the Raj : Images of British India in the Twentieth Century. (London & Sydney : Future Macdonald & Co., 1975), pp.216-217.

recall the Anglo-Indian who was scorned by the native Indian for his westernized lifestyle, whose domestic environment was criticized for being too English and whose preference for an English lifestyle considered presumptuous :

It was a good parlour, that. Mr. Jones had done it up very tastefully with mahogany furniture he'd bought second-hand. The chairs had embroidered white pieces hanging over the backs to keep your hair oil off them. There was a big mirror, and a beautifully fringed green cloth on the table, and on the floor there was a skin of black bear with its head up. There were pictures of the King Emperor and the Queen Empress, and old Sergeant Duck, and several paintings - a deer in a fog, two dogs with a salmon, and others by famous painters.<sup>5</sup>

Nowhere are pictures of any British King or Queen to be seen. At the same time there is a marked absence of pictures of Indian leaders and heroes including that of Jawaharlal Nehru, whom Anglo-Indians so often praise...Another thing which catches the eye is the number of old trophies, silver cups and medals found in so many houses. In many houses these things are proudly displayed. These may be arranged on the mantelpiece or in a glass panelled almirah which is generally kept in the drawing room.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>John Masters, Bhowani Junction. (New York : The Viking Press, 1954), p.5

<sup>6</sup>V.R. Gaikwad, The Anglo-Indians : A Study in the Problem and Processes Involved in Emotional and Cultural Integration. (Bombay : Asia Publishing House, 1967), p.127

To the Anglo-Indian this must all be faintly amusing as various groups vie with one another to prove themselves more 'westernized' than the other; witness the Parsi character in a short story "Swimming Lessons" from Rohinton Mistry's Tales from Firozsha Baag who remarks about the Parsi community : "It also claims to be the most westernized community in India"<sup>7</sup>

Another paradox of identity is the subject of first names. The adoption of appellations such as Dimple, Pixie, Manny, Archie and Shawn characterizes the new Indians' experiment with a "discarded language" which in reality remains part of the colonial legacy, noted elsewhere by V.S. Naipaul :

So Firdaus becomes Freddy, Jamshed Jimmy and Chandrashekar, which is clearly impossible, becomes the almost universal Bunty or Bunny. Bunty knows it will count in his favour, as a mark of his broadmindedness, though at this level it requires a minimum of heroism, if he makes a mixed marriage; if, say, as a Punjabi Hindu he marries a Bengali Muslim or a Bombay Parsi. Freed of one set of rules, he obeys another...<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Rohinton Mistry, Tales from Firozsha Baag. (Markham : Penguin Books, 1987), p.280

<sup>8</sup>V.S. Naipaul, An Area of Darkness. (London : Penguin Books, 1964), pp.58-59.

Agonizing over possession of the right credentials holds special significance in baby-naming rituals as this dialogue from Mukherjee's Wife illustrates :

"You must decide on a name quickly," Ina urged. "To go nameless in New York is a terrible fate. That baby doesn't deserve that. She's going to have enough problems anyway."

"We are waiting for a letter from Jyoti's mother," said Meena. "I want Sushmita but Joyti thinks his mother will want Alokanda. I think that's such a horrible, old-fashioned name."

"Look," said Milt Glasser, "since she's an American kid, why don't you give her a good all-American name? Judy or Susan or something."

"Eesh, terrible," said Meena. "I couldn't even talk to my daughter if her name was something like Judy. I wouldn't know what to say to her."

"And everyone would take her for a bloody Anglo or a Christian when she went back home," said Jyoti. (Wife, pp.123-124).

The reference here of "bloody Anglo" is unmistakably to the Anglo-Indian. The irony of Mukherjee's works is that while her characters rant and rail against the injustice of "Paki bashing" and western insensitivity, there is the gratuitous "bashing" of Anglo-Indians and Christians that distorts the credibility of the author's vision which consciously or unconsciously aligns itself with the very sentiments it sets out to oppose.

However great the aversion of the mlechha, the expatriate Indian drinking gin and tonic in split-level homes and absorbing western lifestyles is unabashedly disposed to want :

"names which would reflect this new spirit within her. At her finger-tips was the sometimes cumbersome weight of her Eastern heritage, but she was surrounded by the blinding vigour of the American nation which launched designer clothing and rockets to the moon with devil-may-care abandon. The child she would give birth to would be a Pakistani-Canadian-American, and she didn't want a confusing series of names."<sup>9</sup>

This passage from Nazneen Sadiq's Ice Bangles is particularly revealing since the protagonist, Naila Siraj, like Mukherjee's Dimple Basu, is a new bride from Pakistan who arrives in Toronto, Canada. Unlike Dimple Basu, however, Naila is a survivor and in the process of transformation she rejects the hypocrisy of her Asian neighbours; she is especially indignant with their capitulation to westernized names :

Every time she had met an Asian family who had abandoned their names in the great rush to play the immigration game, she had to quell the rush of anger which coursed through her.

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<sup>9</sup>Nazneen Sadiq, Ice Bangles. (Toronto : James Lorrimer & Company, Publishers, 1988), p.103



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"Eesh, terrible," said Meena. "I couldn't even talk to my daughter if her name was something like Judy. I wouldn't know what to say to her."

"And everyone would take her for a bloody Anglo or a Christian when she went back home," said Jyoti. (Wife, pp.123-124).

The reference here of "bloody Anglo" is unmistakably to the Anglo-Indian. The irony of Mukherjee's works is that while her characters rant and rail against the injustice of "Paki bashing" and western insensitivity, there is the gratuitous "bashing" of Anglo-Indians and Christians that distorts the credibility of the author's vision which consciously or unconsciously aligns itself with the very sentiments it sets out to oppose.

However great the aversion of the mlechha, the expatriate Indian drinking gin and tonic in split-level homes and absorbing western lifestyles is unabashedly disposed to want :

"names which would reflect this new spirit within her. At her finger-tips was the sometimes cumbersome weight of her Eastern heritage, but she was surrounded by the blinding vigour of the American nation which launched designer clothing and rockets to the moon with devil-may-care abandon. The child she would give birth to would be a Pakistani-Canadian-American, and she didn't want a confusing series of names."<sup>9</sup>

This passage from Nazneen Sadiq's Ice Bangles is particularly revealing since the protagonist, Naila Siraj, like Mukherjee's Dimple Basu, is a new bride from Pakistan who arrives in Toronto, Canada. Unlike Dimple Basu, however, Naila is a survivor and in the process of transformation she rejects the hypocrisy of her Asian neighbours; she is especially indignant with their capitulation to westernized names :

Every time she had met an Asian family who had abandoned their names in the great rush to play the immigration game, she had to quell the rush of anger which coursed through her.

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<sup>9</sup>Nazneen Sadiq, Ice Bangles. (Toronto : James Lorrimer & Company, Publishers, 1988), p.103

"What's his name?" she had asked the mother of a liquid-eyed Indian boy.

"Nathan", the woman replied.

"Nathan!" Gales of laughter shuddered through her.

"What's so funny?"

"How could he possibly be Nathan?" Her own voice rose with scorn.

"Well, they can't pronounce his name at school," the mother bristled defensively.

"It doesn't matter. Eventually they'll get it." She knew her words were falling on deaf ears.

Dark eyed Nathan with his chiselled features and impeccable ancestry would grow up to be just a boy from Scarborough. He had absolutely no choice in the matter. His parents had laid their head down submissively for the Ministry of Citizenship's axe. He would join the ranks of people like 'Harry Lal' who had whipped around Toronto in late model cars, with business cards the size of dinner menus inscribed with his Canadian name. The Anglicized name had given him wheels to move faster through life. He had become a good ole boy, flashing his indispensable Hindu grin and saying 'zee' instead of 'zed' (Ice Bangles, pp.104-105).

In the narrator's thoughts, imposed by the author, there is the contradiction of ideas which attempts to suggest that Harry Lal's mother tongue is English since he says 'zee' (which is American) for 'zed" (Oxford English) suggesting thereby a natural progression from one accent to another. This cannot be further from the truth for it is unlikely for a Hindu (excluded here are converts to Hinduism), to have anything else but Hindi as a native

language. The author of the double-voiced word thus appropriates the existence of the Anglo-Indian whose mother tongue, on the other hand, is no other than English!

Naila Siraj gives birth to a daughter whose name is never revealed to the reader, who is left instead with questions and mysterious clues. Having found a book with baby names, Naila listlessly goes through the pages and makes an exciting discovery:

The last page of the book, had one name written under it. A mistake? Sealing the end of the long list of names was a strange name without an Anglo-Saxon nuance to it. It rested in tiny print, like a pebble washed on the white bleached page, singing a siren song to her. She had never heard it before, and now it felt as though she had known it all her life. (Ice Bangles, p.103).

The obvious reader conclusion is that Naila chooses the name "Zora" which means "dawn" for the child. While it is symbolically appropriate, Naila questions her motivations and is nagged by doubt:

The whole trick was to come out on top of the name game. She wondered if she had just about managed to swing it for herself. Was she protecting, in some primitive fashion, the flavour of her western-born daughters' lives? Or had she committed the same crime as Harry Lal, but just given it another name? (Ice Bangles, p.105).

Expatriate writers, especially from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh choose either to ignore the existence of the Anglo-Indian community within their borders or to imitate their colonial masters by stereotyping and belittling the group. Sadiq, like Mukherjee, narrows her vision and defeats the purpose of her message by professing ignorance about the Anglo-Indian presence. The intermittent concentration on the problem of "names" in which the writer completely ignores the reality of mixed marriages in India's colonial past, appropriates the voice of 'the Other' and focuses instead on the evangelical presence in India whose role became synonymous with the missionary zeal to convert the natives :

All Pakistani names were either Persian or Arabic in origin. Before Pakistan was hacked out of pre-partition India, European and British missionaries added a confusing touch. Floundering at the bottom of the rigid Hindu majority's caste system were the economically deprived and socially maligned "Harijans" or the Untouchables. The lure of an essentially democratic Jesus mesmerized hordes of them, and zealous missionaries dunked the dark-skinned Indians into the murky waters of the River Ganges baptizing them with Anglo-Saxon names. The result was ludicrous, as "Johns" and "Marys" were tacked on to the multi-syllabled native Indian names. The adoption of these names created a riot of confusion and searing contempt for the bright-eyed converts. The smug hierarchy of their patrician Hindu and Muslim brethren promptly erected more discriminating social barriers for them. (Ice Bangles, pp.101-102)

How strange that there is no reference to the legitimate historical presence of the Anglo-Indian. By consistently ignoring this fundamental fact and emulating the colonial policy of excluding the community, the expatriate Indian displays a remarkable lack of sensitivity and invites the observation that like the colonials their efforts are now directed to re-inventing their own past by emasculating the voice of the marginalized Other.

In their book, Days and Nights in Calcutta, Bharati Mukherjee and Clark Blaise, her Canadian husband also a writer, return to India - Blaise to explore the traditions and culture of his Indian wife and Mukherjee seeking solace from a callous, western society :

...in Canada I feel isolated, separate in the vastness of this underpopulated country...I am both too visible and too invisible. I am brown; I cannot disappear in a rush-hour Montreal crowd. The media had made me self-conscious about racism. I detect arrogance in the slow-footedness of salesclerks. At lunch, in the Faculty Club, I am not charmed when colleagues compliment me for not having a "singsong" accent. I am tired of being exotic, being complimented for qualities of voice, education, bearing, appearances, that are not extraordinary...so I am a late-blooming colonial who writes in a borrowed language (English), lives permanently in an alien country (Canada), and

publishes in and is read, when read at all in another alien country, the United States. My Indianness is fragile; it has to be professed and fought for even though I look so unmistakably Indian. Language transforms our ways of apprehending the world; I fear that my decades-long use of English as a first language has cut me off from my desh. (pp.169-170).

In the dialectic of Self and Other, the memory of the past is central to the Mukherjee imagination where language, speech, characters and ideas betray a nostalgia for lost values and privileged youth. Tara Banerjee Cartwright's Brahmanical background creates an external milieu where "all anxiety and unpleasantness was prevented from entering the premises by two men in khaki suits" (p.30). This exclusivity translates into a measure of protectiveness symbolic of the colonial maan-baap philosophy that was used with ingenuity by the British to render both the Indian and the Anglo-Indian dependent. In Mukherjee's post-colonized India, the men in khaki represent a "distancing" that recalls the colonial past. Thus, while Mukherjee echoes the marginalized Anglo-Indian's quest for identity it is oddly Blaise, the westerner, who legitimizes this process of self-discovery:

In India "identity" seems to me joint and collective, and one of the battles being fought in this generation...is to settle the demands of duty, as son, wife or daughter, with the rising self-consciousness brought by education and Western influence. (p.80).

Anglo-Indians recall with bitterness the abrasive comment used by native Indians to stigmatize them : "Dhobi ka kutha, na ghar ka na ghat ka" (a homeless dog) that imprinted in their hearts and minds the bitter realization that they were exiles in their own country. The wheel comes full circle and the sense of alienation and rejection as experienced by the Anglo-Indian is now shared by the expatriate, Brahmanical, Islamic, culturally-hybridized, Indian-Pakistani-Canadian-American. The anguish of 'not belonging' is a recurrent theme in the post-colonial, expatriate experience and it is in the Rushdie imagination that the Anglo-Indian fulfills the role of visionary, for in this context it is significant to note that two of the central characters in Midnight's Children and Shame are children of mixed British-Indian parentage!

Salman Rushdie's books, with the exception of Grimus, have caused a furore leading to questions of an author's right to self-expression. The climate itself



surrounding the controversy resembles a carnival. The first novel, Grimus, published in 1975, although considered a commercial failure, is deserving of further evaluation providing as it does the earliest clues to the writer's explorations into the Islamic psyche. When Midnight's Children was published in 1981, it was banned in India because the satirization of Indira Gandhi, who was then head of government, was considered politically offensive. Rushdie's third book, Shame (1983), met the same fate in Pakistan because it was judged politically inflammatory. The sensibilities of Islam are easily offended especially in India where passions are easily aroused and communal violence between Hindus and Muslims are sparked by the slightest provocation; hence this may be one of the reasons for banning of the book, The Satanic Verses, which has irrevocably changed the publishing world, placing the writer's life in jeopardy. The book, accused of being morally corrupt, has been banned and burned. At this point I should like to recall what Northrop Frye once stated : "There's no such thing as a morally bad novel: its moral effect depends entirely on the moral quality of its reader, and nobody can predict what that will be."<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Northrop Frye, The Educated Imagination.  
(Toronto : Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, 1963) p.39.

The primary responsibility of this study is to consider the role of the Anglo-Indian from marginal to visionary. It is in Rushdie's multi-voiced, huggermugger, kucher-mucher, carnival world that the voice of the Other asserts itself and that the transition of the Anglo-Indian from Kipling's 'peripheral' to Mukherjee's 'intermediary' and ultimately to Rushdie's 'visionary' is fulfilled.

The incongruity of existence and the transformation of the individual are the underlying principles in the Rushdie vision leading to fundamental questions of identity. I propose to examine Midnight's Children and Shame within the context of the Bakhtinian prescription for the serio-comical genre where carnivalistic traditions are recognizable by a carnivalized attitude to the world. Rushdie's work falls into the realm of "indirect satire", one form of which, the Menippean, addresses mental attitudes of characters and their particular approach to life. Carnivalized literature was influenced by carnivalistic folklore and is characterized first, by its relationship to reality, second, by a consciousness based on experience and free imagination, and third by the rejection of stylistic unity. Various other elements

are united in the literature to reflect the carnivalistic tradition such as place of action, laughter, language and speech patterns to interact with thematic features which include madness, masks, degradation, alienation and regeneration.

The constant shifting of scenes in Midnight's Children and Shame between the idyllic hills of Kashmir and the foetid streets of Bombay; between the nondescript border town of Q and the military cantonments of Pakistan; between the indifference of Britain and the oppressiveness of Pakistan is strategically related to political and religious events that link characters to their fate in much the same way as in ancient Greece and Rome where the square was a meeting place for the masses and the grotesque reality of life was parodied and affirmed through expressions of satire. Medieval literature in the Latin language developed the same carnivalistic atmosphere and the symbolic square was suggested by plot and reality. On the streets, roads and arenas celebrations of a carnivalistic nature such as religious rites, fairs, harvest rituals, etc. took place. Life assumed the comic proportions of masquerade, and obscenity and abandonment gave new meaning to the language of the street. With the

Renaissance, the culture and attitude of the street were replaced by court masquerade which evolved in Romantic and pre-Romantic times into "an expression of subjective, individualistic world outlook...<sup>11</sup> lasting through the centuries. If Lifafa Das "did not believe in shielding his audiences from the not-always-pleasant features of the age..." (p.76) neither does his creator hesitate to extend an invitation for a glimpse into a half-crazed world not far removed from predators, parasites and tyrants of ancient times.

The presence of laughter in the carnivalized tradition originated in folk humour and one of its peculiarities is its ambivalent nature directed simultaneously at external events and internally at the individual. This carnivalized laughter assumed various aspects and in time bordered on madness which came to be associated with the spirit of alienation.

Language is reduced to its coarsest form and reflected in a series of speech patterns that include

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<sup>11</sup>Mikhail Bakhtin, Rabelais and his World. Trans. Helene Iswolsky. (Cambridge, The M.I.T. Press), 1968, pp.36.

abusive expressions, profanities and oaths and the familiar harangue of the marketplace. The use of a double for the hero is another important aspect of the serio-comical genre. His existence is minimized in order for the hero to gain redemption. This role is adequately fulfilled by the Anglo-Indian, for one fundamental detail that appears in both Midnight's Children and Shame is the reality of mixed unions and its implication in a pluralistic, multi-voiced society. This metaphor of a 'mixed generation' is the structural basis for both novels and accurately describes the Anglo-Indian dilemma. Saleem Sinai, the protagonist in Midnight's Children, is the illegitimate child of an Englishman and an Indian woman, while in Shame, this motif is repeated with the dubious parentage of Omar Khayyam Shakil who is also a child 'fathered by history' - thus certifying both characters, biologically and constitutionally, as Anglo-Indians. The spirit of alienation associated with the Anglo-Indian is intimately connected with the idea of the quest for identity, and Saleem, as protagonist in Midnight's Children cries out in a voice that includes a sea of children adrift in darkness : "my certainties are falling apart...and the cracks spreading all over me, radiating like a spider's web from my navel...then as now, there is

hunger'. It is a hunger shared by Omar Khayyam, Tara Cartwright, Dimple Dasgupta, Wee Willie Winkie, Joseph D'Costa and the so-called 'visible minority' of the west that seeks appeasement!

The spectacle of carnival is sustained throughout Midnight's Children and Shame the first as seen through the peep-show world of Lifafa Das, and the second through the military capers of Omar Khayyam Shakil and his friends. Salman Rushdie approaches two dominant facets of Indian life, religion and politics, and shows their interdependence in a socio-historical context. The hero pitted against murder and political intrigue is ensnared in an external world that is itself controversial and incomprehensible, "...a terrifying world, alien to man. All that is ordinary, commonplace, belonging to everyday life, and recognized by all suddenly becomes meaningless, dubious and hostile. Our own world becomes an alien world. Something frightening is revealed in that which was habitual and secure."<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup>Ibid, pp.38-39.

The story chronicles the strange adventure of Saleem Sinai whose voyage across India, then to Pakistan and finally to Bangladesh and then back to India represents a journey in search of atman or the Inner Self. This analogy reinforces the thematic presence in Midnight's Children of fragmentation and transformation, and parallels India's own efforts towards self-discovery :

In the basket of invisibility, a sense of unfairness turned into anger; and something else besides - transformed by rage, I had also been overwhelmed by an agonizing feeling of sympathy for the country which was not only my twin-in-birth but also joined to me (so to speak) at the hip, so that what happened to either of us, happened to us both. (p.373).

In Midnight's Children, although Saleem Sinai's world stretches from Bombay, India to Dacca (now Dhaka) in Bangladesh, his kingdom is the streets and slums where as a child he peeps through "the miraculous peepholes of a private 'Dilli-dekho' (see Delhi) machine; his ear is pierced by the rattle of "dugdugee-drums" and his nose is assaulted by the distinctive smell of humanity :

I walked along what-had-once-been-Kingsway, breathing in the numberless perfumes of the street, which blew out of State Handicraft Emporia and the exhaust-pipes of auto-rickshaws; the aromas of banyan and deodar mingled with the ghostly scents of long-gone viceroys and mem-sahibs in gloves, and

also with the rather more strident bodily odours of gaudy rich begums and tramps...I marched resolutely onwards, smelling, like everything else in sight, to high heaven. (p.377).

Having been born "at the stroke of midnight...at the precise instant of India's arrival at independence", Saleem Sinai confides that he "had been mysteriously handcuffed to history, my destinies indissolubly chained to those of my country" (p.11). Rushdie examines the fruit of independence and its effect on the individual through the character of Saleem Sinai whose daring and free-spirited fantasies and adventures appear to be internally motivated to justify some philosophical endeavour. The hero in the carnivalised genre is plunged into the most ludicrous and extraordinary situations serving in every way to support his idealistic pursuit of the truth, "a thing concealed just over the horizon" (p.79). As midnight's child he aspires to even greater freedom of invention and fantasy, holding dominion over five hundred and eighty-one members of M.C.C., "a sort of many-headed monster, speaking in the myriad tongues of Babel; they were the very essence of multiplicity..." (p.223).

The "double-voiced word" as an effective technique of language in the carnivalized tradition is used to



tremendous advantage by the narrator in Midnight's Children and Shame. The reader while welcomed into the internal world of the speaker is extremely conscious of the external world and the swirling events surrounding it and of their interaction in a socio-historical context:

The voices babbled in everything from Malayalam to Naga dialects, from the purity of Lucknow Urdu to the Southern slurrings of Tamil. I understood only a fraction of the things being said within the walls of my skull. Only later, when I began to probe, did I learn that below the surface transmissions - the front-of-mind stuff which is what I'd originally been picking up - language faded away, and was replaced by universally intelligible thought-forms which far transcended words...but that was after I heard, beneath the polyglot frenzy in my head, those other precious signals, utterly different from everything else, most of them faint and distant, like far-off drums whose insistent pulsing eventually broke through the fish-market cacophony of my voices...those secret, nocturnal calls, like calling out to like...the unconscious beacons of the children of midnight, signalling nothing more than their existence, transmitting simply : 'I.' From far to the North, 'I.' And the South East West : 'I.' 'I.' 'And I.' (p.166-167)

The process of transformation continues as Saleem confronts the naturalism of the underworld in its extreme expression of worldly evil, vulgarity, baseness and depravity, an "underground of licentiousness...a world of Stygian darkness, black as hell" (p.437).

The carnivalistic overtones are furthered by the composition of plot where the adventures and misadventures of Saleem Sinai culminating in "sperectomy : the draining-out of hope" Midnight's Children, (p.421) is essential to the bleak undertow in the novel which swells with elements of the fantastic in which the hero appears both rational and eccentric. The birth of the Midnight Children's Conference is pivotal to the novel, for it delineates the visionary role of the outsider. Saleem inherits "the greatest talent of all - the ability to look into the hearts of man".

I am the sum total of everything that went before me, of all I have been seen done, of everything done-to-me. I am everyone whose being-in-the-world affected was affected by mine. I am anything that happens after I've gone which would not have happened if I had not come. Nor am I particularly exceptional in this matter; each 'i', every one of the now-six-hundred-million-plus of us, contains a similar multitude. I repeat for the last time: to understand me, you'll have to swallow a world.  
(p.370)

Interpretation of the interaction between politics and religion on the one hand and the experience of shame and the search of identity on the other is the axis upon which the Rushdie imagination revolves, for throughout all of Sinai's peregrinations, he exists in "the basket of

invisibility", assailed by prattling voices and the enigma of existence :

...they will trample me underfoot, the numbers marching one two three, four hundred million five hundred six, reducing me to specks of voiceless dust, just as, all in good time, they will trample my son who is not my son, and his son who will not be his, and his who will not be his, until the thousand and first generation, until a thousand and one midnights have bestowed their terrible gifts and a thousand and one children have died, because it is the privilege and the curse of midnight's children to be both masters and victims of their times, to forsake privacy and be sucked into the annihilating whirlpool of the multitudes, and to be unable to live or die in peace. (p.446).

In Shame the character of Omar Khayyam Shakil is promptly relegated to the shadows of marginality : "Dizzy, peripheral, inverted, infatuated, insomniac, stargazing, fat : what manner of hero is this ? (p.25) but his presence as "outsider" is integral to the thematic structure of the book where, as I have indicated, the dramatic function of his role is to parallel that of the alienated individual. The absence of identity is therefore immediately established and it will be Omar Khayyam's fate to remain an obscure character throughout the book. The historical allusion here of course is to the dramatic creation of a nation called Pakistan, "that failure of the dreaming mind", whose future is uncertain

and threatened with possible extinction, having lost half of its territory under very shameful circumstances; that "peeling, fragmenting palimpsest, increasingly at war with itself", (p.87). The incongruity of colonialism is evoked through carnivalistic images of a dying Empire as the post-Independent observer describes a scene at Nishapur :

Through one of the building's few outward-facing windows Mr. Shakil on his death-bed was able to stare out at the dome of a large Palladian hotel, which rose out of the intolerable Cantonment streets like a mirage, and inside which were to be found golden cuspidors and tame spider-monkeys in brass-buttoned uniforms and bellhop hats and a full-sized orchestra playing every evening in a stuccoed ballroom amidst an energetic riot of fantastic plants, yellow roses and white magnolias and roof-high emerald-green palms - the Hotel Flashman, in short, whose great golden dome was cracked even then but shone nevertheless with the tedious pride of its brief doomed glory; that dome under which the suited-and-booted Angrez officers and white-tied civilians and ringleted ladies with hungry eyes would congregate nightly, assembling here from their bungalows to dance and to share the illusion of being colourful - whereas in fact they were merely white, or actually grey... (p.12).

The last vestiges of Empire are described in mocking tones as comic verbal composition describe "tame spider-monkeys in brass-buttoned uniforms and bellhop hats" (a reference to the uniformed attendants of a proud British past), "whose great golden dome was cracked even then but shone nevertheless with the tedious pride of its

brief doomed glory", "suited-and-booted Angrez (British) officers", "share the illusion" and "merely white, or actually grey...)." Following the disintegration of the British empire, the author focuses on the historical division of Pakistan into two halves with the creation of Bangladesh. As Omar Khayyam makes his descent into the jungle of despair, his journey from the "remote border of Q" and across Pakistan is riddled with signposts of decay and hypocrisy, the horrors chillingly embroidered by Rani Harappa on a creation of eighteen shawls which she entitles : "The Shamelessness of Iskander the Great" :

Locked in their trunk, they said unspeakable things which nobody wanted to hear: the badminton shawl...the torture shawl, on which she embroidered the foetid violence of his jails, blindfolded prisoners tied to chairs while jailers hurled buckets of water, now boiling hot (the thread-steam rose), now freezing cold, until the bodies of the victims grew confused and cold water raised hot burns upon their skins: weals of red embroidery rose scarlike on the shawl; and the white shawl, embroidered white on white, so that it revealed its secrets only to the most meticulous and squinting eyes: it showed policemen, because he had given them new uniforms...policemen running discotheques in which the booze flowed freely...and the shawls of international shame...and the election shawls...shawls swarming with figures, each one a breathtakingly lifelike portrait of a member of the Front, figures breaking seals, stuffing ballot-boxes, smashing heads, figures swaggering into polling booths to watch the peasants vote, stick-waving rifle-toting figures, fire-raisers, mobs...and the allegorical shawl, Iskander and the Death of Democracy, his hands around her throat,

squeezing Democracy's gullet...while in the background the Generals watched...but Iskander had done for them, there it all was in scarlet, scarlet and nothing but scarlet, what he did for the sake of no-more-secessions, in the name of never-another-East-Wing, the bodies sprawled across the shawl, the men without genitals, the sundered legs, the intestines in place of faces, the alien legion of the dead blotting out memory of Raza Hyder's governorship...the people hanging upside down with dogs at their open guts, the people grinning lifelessly with bullet-holes for second mouths, the people united in the work-feast of that shawl of flesh and death...her eighteenth shawl and her supreme masterpiece...Little Mir Harappa dangling by the neck under the eaves of his family home, dead in the first months of the Chairman's reign, his sightless eyes staring down at the very spot where, once upon a time, the cadaver of an unloved dog had been permitted to decay, yes, she had delineated his body with an accuracy that stopped the heart, leaving out nothing, not the disembowelling, nor the tear in the armpit through which Mir's own heart had been removed, not the torn-out tongue, nothing...(pp.191-195).

It is characteristic of the menippean satire that the cynical frankness of the incongruous word exposes something which crudely violates the norms of human behaviour and addresses the ideological concerns of the times. By creating an image of the industrious Rani Harappa, Rushdie evokes the Dickensian portrait of another chronicler of her time, Madame Defarge, whose knitting needles clacked furiously to the pulse of the revolutionary beat. Rushdie, like Dickens, is a committed writer and observer of the times. Woven into the fabric

of his works are images that convey the horrors of reality which are otherwise eclipsed by tyrants cloaked in the self-imposed acouterments of grandeur or by well-intentioned individuals, sometimes like Rushdie himself, who are constrained to stand by and "understand" - read "conform".

Shame contains overt and covert polemics with various philosophical, religious, ideological and scientific considerations but with a sharp preponderance of the carnivalistic-comical element. The use of special techniques like diatribe and soliloquy relates directly to the menippean genre where the external and internal nature of human life and human thought is determined. The two elements in Rushdie's work relate to the grotesque reality of existence but more importantly they exist as a challenge to any expressions of disbelief that may prevail within the reader :

So-called Islamic 'fundamentalism' does not spring, in Pakistan, from the people. It is imposed on them from above. Autocratic regimes find it useful to espouse the rhetoric of faith, because people respect that language, are reluctant to oppose it. This is how religions shore up dictators; by encircling them with words of power, words which the people are reluctant to see discredited, disenfranchised, mocked (p.251).

This type of author intrusion serves the purpose of demonstrating the dilemma of a people whose lives are governed by the tenets of the Qur'an, the aim of which is to maximize man's moral energy. It is important to differentiate between the contents of the Qur'an and the teachings of the prophet Mohammad in the Hadith. In Muslim law, the Qur'an takes precedence over the Hadith; however, the Qur'an becomes open to interpretation by an elite few who govern with the assistance of the ulema strong in belief that their actions have the sanction of Allah. Religious ideology governs the policies of state, and since Islam is an Arabic word that calls for submission, surrender and obedience, it allows for people with no formal religious training to inflict their thinking and understanding of the Qur'an on the masses :

In Pakistan, where the phrase Islamic state is used more frequently than anywhere else, none of the leading commentators on Islam has had a theological background. Among them have been, and are, retired government servants, newspaper editors and schoolteachers.<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Freeland Abbott, Islam and Pakistan. (New York : Cornell University Press, 1968), p.19.



Some of the glory and prestige of the Islamic past is suggested in the accomplishments of Omar Khayyam who educates himself in the verses of Ghalib, absorbs the letters written by Mughal emperors to their sons, discovers the Burton translation of Alf laylah wa laylah and trains himself in classical Arabic, Persian, Latin, French and German. At the age of 10 he becomes interested in hypnosis, Sanskrit mantras and stories of the Kalevala of the Finns. His lonely childhood is interrupted by his practice of hypnosis on the servants. By now one expects great things from Omar Khayyam Shakil but at 12 he is sent out into the world in search of an identity :

...he began watching the Angrez gentlemen for signs, examining them for facial resemblances to himself, waiting to pounce on some casual or inadvertent expression or gesture that might reveal the identity of his unknown male progenitor. He had no success. Perhaps the father was long gone...(p.46).

Befriended by a Goan schoolteacher with a dubious past and a young girl, Farah Zoroaster, whom he seduces, Omar leaves his birthplace of Nishapur (the word "Nisha" is a play on the word "nasha" which means "intoxication" and is suggestive in Shame of the obsession with or intoxication on various levels with power, religion and

identity), and arrives at the age of 18 armed with a scholarship to the best medical college in Karachi and devoid of all sense of shame. The pressing concern of identity is now an affliction of the post-Raj individual. As Rushdie elaborates, it is the voice of the Other that now tries feebly to assert itself but Words are elusive :

Sharam, that's the word. For which this paltry 'shame' is a wholly inadequate translation. Three letters, shin re mim (written, naturally, from right to left); plus zabar accents indicating the short vowel sounds. A short word, but one containing encyclopaedias of nuance. It was not only shame that his mothers forbade Omar Khayyam to feel, but also embarrassment, discomfiture, decency, modesty, shyness, the sense of having an ordained place in the world, and other dialects of emotion for which English has no counterparts. No matter how determinedly one flees a country, one is obliged to take along some hand-luggage; and it can be doubted that Omar Khayyam (to concentrate on him), having been barred from feeling shame (vb. int. : sharmana) at an early age, continued to be affected by that remarkable ban throughout his later years, yes, long after his escape from his mother's zone of influence ?...What's the opposite of shame ? What's left when sharam is subtracted ? That's obvious : shamelessness (pp.38-39).

This indoctrination is comparable to the Qur'anic injunctions on the subject of shame in the Qur'anic verses 2:169, 3:134, 6:152 and 7:28, 33.

Say: The things that my Lord  
Hath indeed forbidden are :  
Shameful deeds, whether open  
Or secret; sins and trespasses

Against the truth or reason; assigning  
Of partners to God, for which  
He hath given no authority;  
And saying things about God  
Of which ye have no knowledge.<sup>14</sup>

The blurring lines between reality and illusion dominate the Rushdie imagination and contribute vastly to the characters' burden of shame and quest for identity. So too with Omar Khayyam in Shame as he laments : "I am a peripheral man...Other persons have been the principal actors in my life-story...Immigrant and native, Godly and profane, military and civilian...I watched from the wings, not knowing how to act." (p.283)

The development of self-awareness in Rushdie's works takes on certain dream-like qualities that correspond to the basic ideological content. Amidst the murders and political intrigue, the cauldron of religious fervour is kept bubbling by the constant haranguing of the fanatic, Maulana Dawood who "made unheralded raids on the servants' quarters to check that God was in charge. 'Even a city of scuttling monstrosities', he assured Raza Hyder,

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<sup>14</sup>Abdullah Yusuf Ali, Text. Translation and Commentary, The Holy Qur'an, p.348.

'can be purified with the help of the Almighty'" (p.120). His words drift like incense over the waters to East London where an actual incident inspires Rushdie to introduce thoughts on the phenomenon of "blushing" which dignifies the character of "brain-fevered" Sufiya Zinobia.

Rushdie's use of a real-life incident effectively illustrates the conflict within Islam between the opposing forces of tolerance and rigid conformity which to the onlooker is at times perplexing and beyond comprehension. A father murders his daughter in England for going out with a white boy, to preserve the Pakistani code of honour. Even more chilling is the Muslim community's reluctance to condemn the parent's act, as "sorrowing, they told radio microphones and television cameras that they understood the man's point of view, and went on supporting him even when it turned out that the girl had never actually 'gone all the way' with her boyfriend" (p.115). Rushdie himself confesses to a "realization that, like the interviewed friends, etc., I, too, found myself understanding the killer. The news did not seem alien to me. We who have grown up on a diet of honour and shame can still grasp what must seem unthinkable to peoples living in aftermath of the death of God and

tragedy; that men will sacrifice their dearest love on the implacable altars of their pride." (p.115). By attributing the phenomenon of blushing to the young girl, Sufiya Zinobia, the author endows her with the quality of being essentially human in a world that balances precariously on the edge of hypocrisy and political expedience, "between shame and shamelessness lies the axis upon which we turn; meteorological conditions at both these poles are of the most extreme, ferocious type. Shamelessness, shame : the roots of violence" (pp. 115-116).

Throughout the Rushdie imagination there are encounters with brutality and death juxtaposed by elements of carnival which heighten the essential fragility of human existence. This "fragility" manifests itself in the immigrant experience especially in the lives of those individuals of the South Asian community (and here I exclude the Anglo-Indians) who are positioned between traditions and values of the old world and the economic and cultural reality of the new. Increasingly the problems within the community are not so much the result of so-called "culture shock" as it is the reluctance of immigrant "Canutes" to acknowledge that even "back

home" the tides of modernity are washing ashore. In the west, scenes of violence are enacted behind closed doors and screams of victims are shrouded in a "code of honour", and it is this hypocrisy that Rushdie satirizes and which he skillfully executes in the carnivalized framework.

Finally, the metaphorical allusion to the Anglo-Indian is significant for it is the Anglo-Indian who has inherited the best of both worlds and managed to reconcile his dual identity with the recollection of another voice, another time:

When English and Indians were both present, he grew self-conscious, because he did not know to whom he belonged. For a little while he was vexed by opposite currents in his blood, then they blended, and he belonged to no one but himself.<sup>15</sup>

Rushdie's children perch perilously close to the "cinema screen" and their carnivalized existence is echoed later by Gibreel Farishta whose plummet into our world of tamasha may well be expressed in typical filmi gheet :

Aiye hai akela  
Jaingay akela  
Do din ka zindagee  
Do din ka mela

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<sup>15</sup>E.M. Forster, A Passage to India. (Harmondsworth: Penguin Books, 1924), p.89

which roughly translated summarizes the Rushdie vision :

I came into this world alone,  
Alone I shall depart  
This fleeting life, this carnival  
Is nothing but an act!

What of the redemptive value of the colonial text ?  
Should we conclude that the imperialist intervention in  
the course of history has overwhelmingly affected the  
voice of "the Other" ? Unfortunately, Forster's "demon of  
chronology" or what we call history cannot be exorcised,  
and seeds sown by Empire are being harvested today.  
Writing in 1982 on racism in Britain, Rushdie grimly  
asserts :

If you want to understand British racism - and,  
without understanding, no improvement is possible -  
it is impossible even to begin to grasp the nature  
of the beast unless you accept its historical  
roots; unless you see that 400 years of conquest  
and looting, centuries of being told that you are  
superior to the fuzzy-wuzzies and the wogs, leave  
their stain on you all; that such a stain seeps  
into every part of your culture, your language and  
your daily life; and that nothing much has been  
done to wash it out.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>16</sup>Salman Rushdie, "The New Empire Within Britain".  
New Society. December 1982. Vol.62. No. 1047. p.417

The human consequences and effects of the 'politics of shame' on individuals warrant a new mode of perception and the traditional impression the west holds of India should be counter-balanced by an exploration of writers whose exodus from the mother country provides material for another dimension. If one is to understand the complexity of India, one is reminded of Saleem Sinai's advice : "I have been a swallower of lives; and to know me, just the one of me, you'll have to swallow the lot as well". (p.11).

The universal blind spot that has been consistent in the interpretation of the role of the Anglo-Indian overlooks the tragic history of this community, for "life's histories are inextricably interwoven with history...The study of psychosocial identity therefore, depends on...the personal coherence of the individual and role integration in this group, his guiding images and the ideologies of his time; his life history - and the historical moment."<sup>17</sup> The problem of identity involves the development of the human spirit which can only be

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<sup>17</sup>Erik H. Erikson, Life History and the Historical Moment. (New York : W.W. Norton & Company, Ind., 1975), p.20



achieved in a tolerant, multi-racial world. Where the Anglo-Indian was once considered an outcast, mlechha and misfit, it is now culturally-hybridized South Asian immigrants who are "adrift in the new world, wondering if they would ever belong" (Mukherjee's Darkness, p.2).

While the Rushdie landscape may be terrifying and depressing, amidst all the carnage and madness, there emerges the "figure of dreams". Saleem observes that the "finger pointed even further than that shimmering horizon, it pointed beyond teak frame, across a brief expanse of sky-blue wall, driving my eyes towards another frame, in which my inescapable destiny hung, forever fixed under glass: here was a jumbo-sized baby-snap with its prophetic captions...". In Saleem, son of an English father and an Indian mother, rests the hope of India. The Nehru of Midnight's Children expresses this hope : "My belated congratulations on the happy accident of your moment of birth! You are the newest bearer of that ancient fact of India which is also eternally young. We shall be watching over your life with the closest attention; it will be, in a sense, the mirror of our own" (p.122) and although the Rushdie irony is overwhelming, it belies a message that is universal as questions of identity assail the imagination

of hybridized individuals for the intriguing and essential fact remains that Salman Rushdie chose to create characters of Anglo-Indian background thereby elevating the role of the Anglo-Indian from 'peripheral' to 'visionary'. In doing so, Rushdie shares Mulk Raj Anand's view that :

Miscegenation through inter-marriage may solve many problems and produce a composite world culture in the 21st century.<sup>18</sup>

The enduring irony of the Anglo-Indians is that all Indians are like these children of mixed parentage - poised between traditions of the East and the West.

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<sup>18</sup>Saros Cowasjee and Mulk Raj Anand. Author to Critic ; The Letters of Mulk Raj Anand to Saros Cowasjee. (Calcutta : Writer's Workshop, 1973), p.45

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APPENDIX I

The Anglo-Indians : Recreating Broken Moulds

Thus: it is possible to live almost without memory, and to live happily moreover, as the animal demonstrates; but it is altogether impossible to live at all without forgetting. Or, to express my theme even more simply: there is a degree of sleeplessness, of rumination, of the historical sense, which is harmful and ultimately fatal to the living thing, whether this living thing be a man or a people or a culture.

To determine this degree, and therewith the boundary at which the past has to be forgotten if it is not to become the gravedigger of the present, one would have to know exactly how great the plastic power of a man, a people, a culture is : I mean by plastic power the capacity to develop out of oneself in one's way, to transform and incorporate into oneself what is past and foreign, to heal wounds, to replace what has been lost, to recreate broken moulds.

Friedrich Nietzsche  
Untimely Meditations

Observers of India with a mild interest in the word 'Anglo-Indian' conjure images of white sahibs with sola topees strolling under the Indian sun, or of anaemic memsahibs reclining languorously under a punkah. While it is true that the term 'Anglo-Indian' does apply in an anachronistic sense to the British in India, it is now applied to the children of European fathers and Indian mothers. The Constitution of India, Article 366 (2), acknowledges the presence of this minority, and reflects the definition of the Government of India Act of 1935 :



...a person whose father or any of whose other male progenitors in the male line is or was of European descent but who is domiciled within the territory of India and is or was born within such territory of parents habitually resident therein and not established there for temporary purposes only...<sup>1</sup>

Although minuscule in number (there are 150,000 Anglo-Indians reported in India, there are no established figures for those that have dispersed to other parts of the world), the community is one of six minorities in India that is awarded political recognition. In the Census Report of India, 1981, Anglo-Indians are not indicated as a separate community but are included as Christians who comprise the third largest group i.e. 2.43% of the total Indian population (the Hindus number 82.63% and the Muslims 11.36%).

No history of India would be complete without some reference to this group of individuals who in contrast to their size contributed so much to the country's development. In her book, Modern India - The Origins of an Asian Democracy, Judith M. Brown states :

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<sup>1</sup>The Constitution of India (New Delhi : Government of India Press, 1963), paragraph 366.

Eurasians of mixed descent (known as Anglo-Indians, though, confusingly this could also mean pure British people and families who had lived a long time in India or had extensive Indian career connections) had no place in the polite society of the raj; except in the lowlier church pews or as the recipients of charitable interest in such forms as children's Christmas parties. In the early twentieth century they numbered over 110,000...They were accepted neither by Indians nor by the British. To the rulers they were, nonetheless, an invaluable source of man-power in such strategic and technical positions as the railway and telegraph services. Until 1878 the Indian Telegraph Office was entirely manned by Anglo-Indians and domiciled Europeans<sup>2</sup>

With the independence of India in 1947, the only inheritance bestowed on the Anglo-Indians by their departing British fathers was a dubious sense of identity. The dilemma of this people can best be described through an acknowledgement of their history.

The European colonization of India began in the late 16th century when Vasco de Gama landed at Calicut on the Malabar Coast in May 1498. India's wealth of spices and precious gems was reason enough for the Portuguese to establish their colony and traces of their influence can

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<sup>2</sup>Judith M. Brown, Modern India : The Origins of an Asian Democracy. (New York : Oxford University Press, 1985), p.94.

be found principally in Goa which became part of India in 1961. Alfonso d'Albuquerque, the Viceroy, saw the wisdom and necessity for strengthening the Portuguese position in India by instituting a policy encouraging his compatriots to marry native women.

He probably knew that the Romans had been accustomed to protect and strengthen the confines of their Empire by quartering in newly acquired lands Roman soldiers, so that they might raise a mixed population which would be loyal to the home of their fathers, and ward off attacks from the barbarian tribes beyond the frontiers.<sup>3</sup>

Another reason supporting this policy was the religious fervour in the attempt to gain converts to Christianity. But this exercise was to have dire consequences, for the Indian wives who embraced Christianity were shunned by their fellow Indians, and their children were ostracized.

The Portuguese traders were followed by Jesuit missionaries in 1542 whose initial zeal was overshadowed by disappointment. In a letter to Ignatius Loyola in

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<sup>3</sup>Herbert Alick Stark, Hostages to India. (Calcutta: Star Printing Works, 1936), pp.3-4

1548 Francis Xavier observed that "all these Indian nations are very barbarous, vicious, and without inclination to virtue, no constance of character, no frankness."<sup>4</sup>

With the arrival of the Dutch and the French in the early 17th century, the Portuguese were compelled to leave Goa. To this day linguistic, religious and cultural attitudes distinguish the people of Goa as a community distinct from the rest of India. However, the "Luso-Indians", as the children of mixed Portuguese and Indian marriages were called, soon lost their identity through assimilation and were overwhelmed by the natives. The Goans of today, whose mother tongue is Konkini, are either children converted from Hinduism or the offspring of several intermarriages.

The Dutch and French influence in India was brief, and confined mainly to places like Sri Lanka (previously Ceylon), Southeastern Asia, Pondicherry and Chandernagore. It is generally conceded that racial hybrids emerged from their union with Indian women.

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<sup>4</sup>Stanley Wolpert, A New History of India. 2nd Ed. (New York : Oxford University Press, 1982), p.138

The East India Company first dropped anchor on Indian soil on 24 August 1608 and in 1619 was granted permission by the Mughul Emperor Jehangir to build a factory at the principal port of Surat. The Company established itself in Madras in 1640 to attend to English trading affairs. An Anglo-French conflict in 1761 resulted in victory for the British who then became the imperial rulers of India for over two centuries. With the British firmly entrenched in India, there began to develop a system of government that would affect east-west relations for generations. The remarkable ability of the English occupants to distance themselves from the very people they subdued through imperialist policies and through the creation of literary stereotypes by which they perpetuated an image of the Indian, has since expressed itself in racial attitudes and affected inter-racial harmony:

The 'philosophers' of empire who were to proliferate in the last decades of the queen's reign produced their reasons, of which the most generally accepted (because the most stimulating) was a belief in the superiority of the white man over the coloured.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Michael Edwardes, Bound to Exile : The Victorians in India. (New York : Praeger Publishers, 1969), p.10

An Oriental lives in the Orient, he lives a life of Oriental ease, in a state of Oriental despotism and sensuality, imbued with a feeling of Oriental fatalism. Writers as different as Marx, Disraeli, Burton and Nerval could carry on a lengthy discussion between themselves, as it were, using all these generalities unquestioningly and yet intelligently."<sup>7</sup>

The Evangelical movement in India under the patronage of the Baptist Missionary Society encouraged the establishment of Protestant missions whose members in their missionary zeal judged Indian civilization itself to be wicked and corrupt and they sincerely believed that Christianity was the remedy:

They had a horror of idolatry and India was the land of idolatry par excellence. They had a thirst for souls and here were millions rushing to perdition without a chance of Christian salvation...They believed it their duty to preach the gospel whose light would dissolve the mists of superstition and cruelty enshrouding the Indian people...Their programme was, bring the Christian west to the East, and India will reform herself as a flower turns to the sun."<sup>8</sup>

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<sup>7</sup>Edward Said, Orientalism. (New York : Pantheon Books, 1978), p.102

<sup>8</sup>Percival Spear, A History of India. Vol. Two. (Harmondsworth :Penguin Books, 1965), pp.121-122.

By the 18th century English society had established main settlements at Madras (Fort St. George), Calcutta (Fort St. William), Surat and Bombay and thus began the Imperialist influence. These early English inhabitants of India led insular lives and had very little interest, if any, in their Indian surroundings except to adopt those customs or styles that eased their own existence. When a senior British lady was asked about her knowledge of India and the Indian people, she replied, "Oh nothing, thank goodness. I know nothing at all about them, nor I don't wish to. Really I think the less one knows of them the better."<sup>9</sup> They borrowed words from the local languages to gain a superficial knowledge to conduct trade, they organized an intricate system of meritocracy by which to reward themselves financially and they introduced policies designed to keep the native population subservient to their British masters as will be seen with regard to the Anglo-Indians.

The absence of English women in the early stages of British operation in India created liaisons between the Britisher and the indigenous or Anglo-Indian women

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<sup>9</sup>Denis Kincaid, British Social Life in India 1608-1937. (London : George Routledge and Sons, 1938), p.177.

(designated 'Eurasian' at the time). This situation changed with the opening of the Suez Canal which afforded English women easier access to the Empire. Like the Portuguese administration which encouraged the union of its men with Indian women out of self-interest, the East India Company was also quick to grasp the implications of a mixed race and subsidized marriages between Europeans and Indians. However, changing policies and the erratic behaviour of the British towards these children of mixed race fostered in them the dilemma of conflicting identities.

The period of British domination that was kindest to them was between 1639 to 1791 when :

...there was no discrimination between Briton and Anglo-Indian. The Anglo-Indian sons of British fathers were taken freely into the covenanted ranks of the British services and reached the highest positions of trust and responsibility. Ninety per cent of Britons, including the most highly placed, married Anglo-Indian women. The main contribution during this period was to the military history of India.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>10</sup>Frank Anthony, Britain's Betrayal in India. (New Delhi : Allied Publishers Private Limited, 1969), p.iv.



Anglo-Indians, as they were then called, found employment in the East India Company as intermediaries between the company and the natives where knowledge of the vernacular and of the customs and habits of the native Indians proved invaluable. Anglo-Indian children of officers were sent to England for their education and upon return were granted covenanted or commissioned posts within the company. There were a few who attained distinction in this period like James Kyd who became Master Shipbuilder in the East India Company and whose family is credited with establishing the Kyderpore docks in Calcutta, West Bengal.

From about 1791 till the Indian Mutiny of 1857, the situation was to change with an increase of British fear and distrust of the community, who had by then acquired formidable status.

In view of the respect and even deference with which they were regarded by the Indian population, and their unquestionable influence with them, they began to be looked upon as an element of potential danger.<sup>11</sup>

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<sup>11</sup>Herbert Alick Stark, Hostages to India. (Calcutta: Star Printing Works, 1936), pp.51-52.

The East Indian Company passed a series of orders that were to prove reprehensible and seriously damaging to the community. In 1786 it was forbidden to send Anglo-Indian children abroad for higher education. In 1791 restrictions were placed on the hiring of Anglo-Indians in the Civil and military services and finally in 1795 Anglo-Indians were excluded from the commissioned ranks of the European and native armies. The only positions available to them were those of drummers, fifers and musicians, and the highest rank that could be awarded was that of Corporal. One of the reasons for this turn of events is that the presence of the British in India as traders engendered a system of patronage within the East India Company; it also afforded an opportunity for its administrators and influential politicians to provide employment for their own members.

Nepotism was rampant; and more often than not any legitimate or illegitimate brother or half brother of 'somebody' was landing from England and had to be appointed to a higher post on the basis of the orders he brought, to the utter dismay of the Company's servants already working in India.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> P.N. Mathur, The Civil Service of India (1731-1894). (Jodhpur : Prabhaskh Prakashan, 1977), p.13

Economic interest in this new world spawned a curious and well-intentioned group of people who were to wield influence over India and create a cultural hegemony that would dominate the western imagination for centuries. These were the Orientalists, the Evangelicals and the Imperialists.

William Jones came to India in 1783 as a brilliant scholar and with a desire to be as well-informed on India as any European could be. His philological studies led him to establish the Asiatic Society of Bengal in 1784 whose dual goals as described in the Centenary Volume of the Royal Asiatic Society were to investigate "the sciences and the arts of Asia, with the hope of facilitating ameliorations there and of advancing knowledge and improving the arts at home."<sup>6</sup> Orientalists conducted a school of thought that distinguished between the Orient and the Occident and whose ideas engendered intriguing theories from poets, novelists, philosophers, political analysts, economists and bureaucrats concerning the "mind" of the colonized people. Orientalism may be termed an "academic discipline" and the Orientalist impressions of the east summed up as follows :

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<sup>6</sup>Frederick Eden Partiger, ed. Centenary Volume of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland 1823-1923. (London : Royal Asiatic Society, 1923), p.viii.

The other most damaging reason was the fear and distrust the British developed of the Anglo-Indian community as it increased in number. They were perceived as a potential threat following the mulatto uprising in haiti in 1791, and this sentiment was heightened by the comments made by Viscount Valentia in his travels of the East India Company territory :

The most rapidly accumulating evil of Bengal is the increase of half-caste children. They are forming the first step to colonization, by creating a link of union between the English and the natives. In every country where this intermediate caste has been permitted to rise, it has ultimately tended to the ruin of that country. Spanish America and St. Domingo are examples of this fact. Their increase in India is beyond calculation; and though possibly there may be nothing to fear from the sloth of the Hindoos, and the rapidly declining consequence of the Mussulmans, yet it may justly be apprehended that this tribe may hereafter become too powerful for control. Although they are not permitted to hold offices under the Company; yet they act as clerks in almost every mercantile house, and many of them are annually sent to England to receive the benefit of an European education. With numbers in their favour, with a close relationship to the natives, and without an equal proportion of that pusillanimity and indolence which is natural to them, what may not in time be dreaded from them. I have no hesitation in saying that the evil ought to be stopt; and I know no other way of effecting this object; than by obliging every father of half-caste children, to send them to Europe, prohibiting their return in any capacity whatsoever...<sup>13</sup>

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<sup>13</sup>Viscount George Valentia, Voyages and Travels in Ceylon, The Red Sea, Abyssinia and Egypt in the years 1802, 1804, 1805 and 1806. 3 vols. (London : William Miller, 1809), Vol.I, pp.241-242.

The attitude and policy of the first Governor-General to India under the India Act of 1784 did nothing to ameliorate the situation; instead, the Cornwallis Code entrenched British supremacy and enhanced its fear of the Anglo-Indian community :

...characterized by all the vices and gross prejudices of the natives, by all the faults and failings of the European character, without its candour, sincerity or probity; a heterogeneous set; some by Hindoo, others by Mahometan and Malay mothers...what is not in time to be apprehended from the union of so large and discontented a body? A body who have neither riches, honour, nor any advantage to sacrifice must ever pant for a revolution.<sup>14</sup>

Following these repressive measures, the Anglo-Indians had no recourse but to offer their services to the Indian princes. History records the achievements of Lt. Col. James Skinner and Col. William Linnaeus Gardner who raised regiments noted for their bravery and courage : Skinner's Horse and Gardner's Horse, both of which exist today, are India's finest units.

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<sup>14</sup>Quoted in "Calcutta in Olden Times Its People," The Calcutta Review, Sept.- Dec. 1860, Chapter XXXV, pp.218-219..

James Skinner was born in 1778 to a Scotsman, Lt. Col. Hercules Skinner and the daughter of a Rajput Zamindar. Under Commanders-in-Chief, General de Boigne and Perron in Madhoji Scindia's armies, the young Skinner rose to the rank of Captain and displayed his courage in several battles. The Maharattas were a constant thorn in the side of the British and as the hostilities between the two groups increased, Wellesley declared war and recalled all British and Anglo-Indians serving under the Maharattas. Skinner reluctantly agreed to serve under the British who allowed him to raise his own troop of horse but 'Sikander Sahib' (Sikander being a corruption of Alexander) as he was known remained loyal to his Maharatta friends and refused to fight against Scindia or Perron. He did fight heroically for the British and won several battles which earned him their admiration. At the end of the Maharatta campaigns in 1806, only Skinner was allowed to retain his regiment until Cornwallis' death. Sir George Barlow ordered its disbandment and Skinner was given a yearly Jagir of Rs. 20,000/- until a decision was taken forbidding British subjects from holding land. Skinner was not happy. There soon followed trouble with the Sikhs and again the British asked Skinner for help who as always complied. His comment on British policy is revealing:

I was, however, still at the head of 1200 horse: and in 1822 I went to Calcutta, where I was very kindly greeted by Lord Hastings. He promised that he would not lessen my command by a single man; but no sooner had he left the Country than my Corps was at once reduced to 800 men. Rapid, indeed, has been my fall. In the Maharatta service from 1796 to 1803, I had always a well-grounded hope of rising in rank and fortune; no question was ever raised as to my birth there. When I entered the British service, I believed that I had found a field in which the fruits of zeal and fidelity would be matured and reaped in perfection; and no exertions on my part were spared to forward this object. I imagined myself to be serving a people who had no prejudices against caste or colour. But I found myself mistaken. All I desired was justice. If I was not to share in all the privileges of a British subject, let me be regarded as a native and treated as such. If I was to be regarded as a British subject, did the hard labour and ready service of twenty years merit no more than a pension of 300 rupees per month; without either rank or station and after the distinct and repeated promises of the permanent maintenance of my Corps, was it fair that I should be left liable to be commanded by the youngest subaltern in the army, deprived of the hope which I had so fondly entertained of passing my old age tranquilly in the service to which my better years had been devoted? But I thank my Creator that there remains one source of satisfaction - one consolation under every disappointment; and it is this - that I have ever discharged my duty as a soldier, with honour and credit; that during the space of twenty years, in which I have served with Europeans, no one can ever upbraid me with dishonouring 'the steel' or being 'faithless to my salt': that, finally, though I have failed in gaining what I desired and deserved - that is rank - I have proved to the world that I was worthy of it.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>15</sup>Quoted in Frank Anthony, Britain's Betrayal in India. (New Delhi : Allied Publishers Private Limited, 1969), pp.27-28

Other Anglo-Indians had illustrious careers serving the armies of the Princely States; Gardner, as mentioned earlier, raised a famous regiment in his name; and there were Major Hyder Young Harsey, Col. Hessing, Michael Filose, Col. Henry Forster, C.B. and Col. Sutherland, to name a few, whose heroic actions are recorded in history.

Although the period following the Maharatta wars was one in which the Anglo-Indians, despite their loyalty and valour, found themselves abandoned by the British it would seem that this unhappy situation proved to be the catalyst that united the community. The name of John William Ricketts, founder of Doveton College, is worthy of mention. Born in 1791 he rose to be a leader of the community and established the first Anglo-Indian school in 1823, followed in 1828 by the Commercial and Patriotic Association that trained Anglo-Indians in agriculture, trade and commerce, and a Marine School that trained Anglo-Indians for the Merchant Navy. These endeavours were adversely affected by an unsteady economic climate. Finally in November 1825 a Committee was formed in Calcutta to petition the British Parliament. Its members included John Ricketts, H. Derozio, C.F. Byrn, Wale Byrn, William Byrn, Willoughby Dacosta, P. Mello, G.R. Gardener,



J.J.L. Hoff, H. Martindell, C. Pote and W. Sturmer.

Ricketts was appointed representative of the East Indian Club and arrived in London on 27 December, 1829. The petition outlined the grievances under the British, foremost among them being the irregular legal status of the Anglo-Indian who were sometimes regarded as Europeans and sometimes as natives depending on the whim of the administration. This in turn generated difficulties with the application of the Civil Law of which there were three separate categories, one for the Hindus, one for the Muslims and one for the British. The Anglo-Indian shared the same legal protection as the British within Calcutta but if he resided in the mofussil or district he had no status.

A further problem in the British administration was the hiring practices of the Civil and Military services. The Anglo-Indian was not welcomed into the Company's armies because he was considered 'not European'; yet, he was forbidden to serve the Indian princes because he was considered 'European'. The same anomaly applied to positions in the civil service where the Anglo-Indian was denied a covenanted position because he was 'not European'; yet, neither did he qualify for a civil position which was reserved for the natives.

The petition also discussed the unfair educational policy which denied Anglo-Indian children an education in England; yet no financial assistance was extended to schools set up by the community itself to educate its children.

Although Ricketts' petition was heard in both Houses of Parliament, the uncertain political and economic climate in England resulted in a less favourable reaction than expected. However, since the reform movement had begun, it is quite possible that this bold move by the East Indian community helped focus attention to its plight - the Charter Act of 1833 stated that all persons regardless of birth or colour were eligible for the Civil and Military Services of the Government.

The name of Henry Louis Vivian Derozio is recalled with pride as "the first national bard of modern India". He was born in Calcutta on 18 April 1809 of a father who was of mixed Portuguese and Indian ancestry and an English mother. He was educated at the Dhurumtollah Academy of David Drummond who was from Scotland and highly respected by all Indians. Drummond is credited with having influenced Derozio, both scholastically and poetically.

Derozio's philosophy was influenced by the knowledge of his mixed background and its peculiar position in British-dominated India. At 16 he was to express these feelings in a work entitled "To India - My Native Land" :

My country! in thy day of glory past  
A beauteous halo circled round thy brow,  
And worshipped as a deity thou wast.  
Where is that glory, where that reverence now ?  
Thy eagle pinion is chained down at last,  
And grovelling in the lowly dust art thou :  
Thy minstrel hath no wreath to weave for thee  
Save the sad story of thy misery!  
Well - let me dive into the depths of time,  
And bring from out the ages that have rolled  
A few small fragments of those wrecks sublime,  
Which human eye may never more behold;  
And let the guerdon of my labour be  
My fallen country! one kind wish from thee!<sup>16</sup>

At 18 Derozio was recognized by the intellectual members of Calcutta as a poet and writer of great ability and is acclaimed as the first national bard of modern India. In his profession as teacher at the Hindu College in Calcutta he was very popular and loved by his students. The Hindu College was one of the first modern institutions founded by people like Ram Mohan Roy, Dwarka Nath Tagore and David Hare with the objective of introducing the youth of India to a modern and more western style of education.

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<sup>16</sup>Henry Louis Vivian Derozio. Poems of Henry Louis Vivian Derozio - A Forgotten Anglo-Indian Poet. Intro. by F.B. Bradley-Birt. Calcutta : (Oxford University Press, 1980), p.2.

It is in this period of Bengal Renaissance that Derozio soon became known for his enthusiasm, fine wit and intellectual capacity, not only at the Hindu College but amongst the circle of intellectuals and ardent pupils that met at his home on Lower Circular Road. Soon an organization called the Academic Association was formed to encourage freedom of knowledge and thought in students without the inhibitions of creed and caste. These meetings were attended by many prominent men like Sir Edward Ryan, Dr. Mill, Principal of Bishop's College, David Hare, Capt. Byrne, A.D.C. to the Governor General, Ram Mohan Roy, Mohes Chandra Ghose, Dakhinaranjan Mukherjee and K.M. Bannerjee. Derozio's energy and enthusiasm was the magnet that drew them together but it was on his pupils that he exerted the most influence. Bradley-Birt quotes Mohan Chatterjee who commented a few years later about Derozio :

...he fostered their taste in literature, taught the evil effects of idolatry and superstition : and so far formed their moral conceptions and feelings as to make them completely above the antiquated ideas and aspirations of the age. Such was the force of his instructions that the conduct of the students out of the college was most exemplary and gained them the applause of the outside world, not only in a literary and scientific point of view, but what was of still greater importance, they were all considered men of truth.<sup>17</sup>

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<sup>17</sup>Ibid, pp.xxxiii-xxxiv.

The liberal teachings of Derozio soon drew adverse criticism from the parents of the students who grew alarmed at the unorthodox behaviour of their children who ignored caste and religious distinctions and mingled freely with fellow-students. Pressure was brought on the administrators of Hindu College who after much internal conflict and debate decided to terminate the services of Derozio rather than run the risk of jeopardizing the institution. Derozio found comfort by returning to journalism, a profession that he had enjoyed before becoming a teacher and which provided him greater freedom for his energy and talent. He provided the Anglo-Indian community with its first newspaper called The East Indian but also found time to contribute to the numerous other papers that circulated in India. But fate dealt the community a fatal blow when on 17 December 1831, Derozio was struck by cholera, and on 26 December he died at the age of 23. He is generally considered to be the first Indian to write English poetry and to have infused the youth of India with a fierce spirit of nationalism :

Some of his poems breathe the spirit of patriotism and may be regarded as an important landmark in the history of patriotic poetry in India.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>18</sup>Henry Derozio, Poems. Selected by P. Lal. Intro. by Susobhan Sarkar. (Calcutta : Writers Workshop, 1972), p.xix.

Again in 1849, the Anglo-Indian community petitioned Parliament concerning the lack of positions of importance or responsibility. This was also the significant period when work had begun on railway construction.

The Community's services were welcomed but welcomed only in a subordinate capacity. Here, again self-interest perhaps was at least an equally important motive with the British Administration. Without the selfless services of the Anglo-Indians the Railways, the Posts & Telegraphs, the Customs, the Police, the Marine services could never have been built. In a hundred years, India was covered with a network of railways and a telegraph system to which comparatively little has been added since. And during those 100 years the outstanding part in building these key services was played by the Anglo-Indians. Penetrating inhospitable jungle terrain which was riddled with every form of danger and deadly disease, Anglo-Indian men, separated from their families and homes for many years, built what are today India's greatest national assets.<sup>19</sup>

It is interesting to note that the native Indians were not enthusiastic about the government's networking project as they believed that it ran counter to their caste and religion. The important point is that while the Anglo-Indian was thus gainfully employed, his Indian counterpart was educating himself following the liberal Education reforms.

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<sup>19</sup>Frank Anthony, Britain's Betrayal in India. (New Delhi : Allied Publishers Private Limited, 1969), pp.vi-viii.

The post-Mutiny period, while favourable to the community, created a wider gulf between the Anglo-Indian and the Indian native. Once again in 1857, as in the Maharatta wars, the Anglo-Indians were summoned to help defend their British fathers against the rebellious Indians. Many fought and died valiantly and accounts of their military prowess is to be found in Mutiny records. The names of George Brendish, Crabbe, Hyde, Campagnac, McGrennen, Hill, Forgett and Harsey are but a few on the Anglo-Indian rollcall.

The period of 1920 to 1942 are considered to be the 'Gidney years' and refer to the strenuous efforts of Lt. Col. Sir Henry Gidney on behalf of the community. Born in 1873 at Igatpuri to John Gidney, an Irish man and a woman of Spanish descent, Henry was exceptionally brilliant, being barely 16 years old when he joined the Calcutta Medical College in 1890. He then obtained the F.R.C.S. (Edinburgh) and D.P.H. (Cantab), and by the end of 1906 was serving as a Civil Surgeon in the new Province of Eastern Bengal and Assam. He was the youngest man at that time to be elected Fellow of the Royal Society (England) in 1911. His valuable research work in Ophthalmology at Oxford led to post-graduate lecturership

at the University for 18 months during which time he was also on the staff of eye hospitals of Oxford and London. On his return to India he joined the Indian Medical Service as an officer where "throughout his career in the I.M.S. Gidney came up, repeatedly, against race and colour discrimination."<sup>20</sup> Upon his retirement from the I.M.S., Gidney had a successful private practice in Bombay. He was President of the Bombay branch of the Anglo-Indian Empire League which had been founded in 1908 by Charles Palmer of the well-established family of Hyderabad that had founded the Palmer Bank in Calcutta. Under Gidney's initiative, the Anglo-Indian and Domiciled European Association was officially registered in 1926. With the introduction of the Central Legislative Assembly under the Montague-Chelmsford Reforms, Gidney represented the Community and was awarded a seat in the House in 1921. His efforts at the Round Table Conferences resulted in constitutional safeguards for the Anglo-Indians in the areas of education and employment in the India Act of 1935. Unfortunately the progress of the Community was obstructed by the divisive elements within the organization and much of Gidney's efforts went in trying to encourage unity among the members.

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<sup>20</sup>Ibid, p.89.



The years leading to the Independence of India, particularly from 1942 to 1947, were most important and crucial for the community. The growing conflict between the Hindus and the Muslims in India detracted from the concerns of the other minorities in India. The Anglo-Indian has often been criticized for identifying with the British side of his ancestry rather than the Indian but given the tragic circumstances of his birth and the harsh rejection by the Indians, is it inconceivable that he was attracted to the parent with the dominant culture, i.e. his British father, and thereby adopted the English pattern in matters of dress, food and lifestyle? As illustrated earlier the gulf between the Indian and the Anglo-Indian was further widened by the constant loyalty that the Anglo-Indian community displayed toward the British. Also of significance was the creation of the Auxiliary Force by the British for the Europeans and Anglo-Indians. Designed as a means of national security, British policy excluded Indians from its service and made its membership mandatory for Anglo-Indians who were railway employees. This Force was often called into service to suppress local uprisings and disturbances and this provoked resentment and hostility in the Indians who saw the Anglo-Indian as a traitor.

So intense were some of the feelings against the community that vituperative verbal attacks were not uncommon in the years leading to Indian Independence :

The "products of British adultery" are once again in the news. The worm that was content to sidle behind the rears of burra sahibs and lick the boots of uncouth British tommies has not (sic) turned, and it appears it is no longer in the mood to do the "dirty work" of an "ungrateful administration."

...No, we do not want them. We never did and we never shall. India has fought alone and India shall continue to fight alone. Their high sounding platitudes now must not deceive us. The very fact that they are now willing to change allegiance and come over to the other camp should be enough to betray them for what they really are - a freak section of humanity, opportunists of the first water and traitors to the very core of their halfcaste hearts.<sup>21</sup>

Schemes to settle the Community in places like McCluskieganj and the Andamans and Nicobar islands did not materialize because of the prevailing disunity amongst the Anglo-Indians. In the wake of Independence Anglo-Indians obtained constitutional safeguards through the energetic efforts of their current leader, Frank Anthony, who argues

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<sup>21</sup>Quoted in Noel P. Gist and Roy Dean Wright, Marginality and Identity : Anglo-Indians as a Racially-Mixed Minority in India. (Leiden : E.J. Brill, 1973), p.44

that they are "a Community based on language and a way of life which give us our distinctiveness and distinctive recognition."<sup>22</sup> It is through the intelligence and hard work of Anthony that the Anglo-Indians continue to exist as a politically recognized group whose elected representatives in the Lok Sabha (House of the People) are Frank Anthony and A.E.T. Barrow. Whether the community continues to flourish will depend on the goodwill of the Indian government to continue to extend constitutional guarantees to them. More importantly, their survival depends on the determination of the Anglo-Indians themselves to preserve their identity through the English language and their schools.

If, as has often been observed, the Anglo-Indian problem is a heavy legacy of the British in India, the positive impact of this inheritance can be appreciated by the high esteem with which Anglo-Indian education is regarded in India today. Enrollment in Anglo-Indian institutions is uncommonly high and may be attributed to the fact that "Anglo-Indian schools deliberately eschew provincialism and regionalism; they promote among the

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<sup>22</sup>Frank Anthony, Britain's Betrayal in India. (New Delhi : Allied Publishers, 1969), p.264.

diversity of their students from all castes, creeds and communities, socio-economic strata of society, cultural background and places of domicile, an Indian-ness as opposed to a regional outlook, making them realize that they are Indians first and Hindus, Muslims, Parsis, Sikhs and Anglo-Indians or Bengalees, Kashmiris or Madrasis, second."<sup>23</sup> There are Anglo-Indians in far corners of the globe who keep the spirit of the community alive by clinging tenaciously to their identity and culture.

Renewed interest in their past and concern for the future have led members of the community in India and other countries to organize support groups for the purpose of extending financial help to Anglo-Indian projects like Sister Marisa's Child Care and Education Development Programme. This Anglo-Indian Carmelite nun operates in the Ripon Street/Elliot Road areas of Calcutta with the assistance of Anglo-Indian volunteers who administer to the health and education of the community's children. The challenge to the Anglo-Indian people in India and elsewhere is the preservation of their heritage, culture and traditions. The process of "recreating broken moulds"

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<sup>23</sup>Austin A. D'Souza, Anglo-Indian Education : A Study of its Origins and Growth in Bengal up to 1960. (Delhi : Oxford University Press, 1976), p.324.

is a universal process and the Anglo-Indian who embraces worlds of both east and west has evolved from being marginal to visionary, for inter-marriage once considered evil and undesirable, is now fashionable and gaining in popularity as western influence continues to flourish in the east. The presence of a hybrid culture within India can be neither denied nor ignored.

In conclusion, it is worthwhile to recall the words of Peter Spvker, MP, Minister for Ethnic Affairs Victoria, Australia who acknowledges the presence of the community in a Foreword to The Lotus and the Rose, an autobiographical account of several generations of Anglo-Indians :

The family whose vicissitudes are presented in this book exemplifies the Anglo Indian community as a whole, with its dual cultural composition, the European and the Indian, and with its varied blend of religious creeds and imaginative lifestyles. And the book shows convincingly that such a synthesis can take place in a creative and complex manner. Indeed the history of the Anglo Indian community demonstrates that multiculturalism is a precise and exciting possibility, and that only adverse political circumstances can lead to tensions, traumas and difficulties...Just like families, countries without memories do not have a soul; the preservation of one's past is the necessary condition for finding identity and purpose.<sup>24</sup>

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<sup>24</sup>Gloria Jean Moore, The Lotus and the Rose : An Anglo Indian Story. (Melbourne : River Seine Publications, 1986), p.6

Throughout history, examples of peoples with mixed "racial" heritage provide scholars with cross-cultural research as in the case of the Metis in Canada and the Mesoamericans in Northern New Spain. The reality of the Anglo-Indians is entrenched in history and is comparable to the contemporary American controversy over the Amerasians i.e., those children of American men and Vietnamese women born during the American involvement in that country. Only time and history measure the strength of a nation by its tolerance towards its distinct entities.

Appendix II

Memories of a Migrant Past

The old Muhammadan books and the tone of their writings do not teach the followers of Islam independence of thought, perspicacity and simplicity; nor do they enable them to arrive at the truth of matters in general; on the contrary, they deceive and teach men to veil their meaning, to embellish their speech with fine words, to describe things wrongly and in irrelevant terms, to flatter with false praise...to puff themselves up with pride, haughtiness, vanity and self-conceit, to hate their fellow creatures, to have no sympathy with them, to speak with exaggeration, to leave the history of the past uncertain and to relate facts like tales and stories.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan,  
Speech at Patna, 26 May 1873

When individuals come unstuck from their native land, they are called migrants. When nations do the same thing ... the act is called secession. What is the best thing about migrant peoples and seceded nations? I think it is their hopefulness...And what's the worst thing? It is the emptiness of one's luggage...we have come unstuck from more than one land. We have floated upwards from history, from memory, from Time.

Salman Rushdie, Shame

The Islamisation of India really began with Subuktigan in 421 A.D. and was strengthened by his son, Mahmud. A good administrator and lover of the arts, Mahmud of Ghazni is considered to be a great Islamic hero. The Ghaznavids were succeeded by the Ghurids who extended their rule to most of Bengal. These individuals excelled in leadership and had an unquenchable thirst for territorial conquests.



As one dynasty replaced another, the Islamic faith spread south to India and reached its zenith with the Mughul invasion from Kalul through the Khyber Pass and into the Punjab by Babur in the 15th century. For nearly 300 years the Mughul Empire exerted an influence on the sub-continent and its legacy is evident today in architecture and art. Some works demonstrate a distinct European influence when by the time of Akbar's reign in 1561, foreign dignitaries, ambassadors, poets, scholars, musicians and men of other talents paid homage to the Emperor. This golden age of Islamic accomplishment instilled in the Muslim people a great pride and sense of identity but did not last long as Muslim rulers were soon replaced by Western powers. Economic pressures, internecine hostilities and a parasitic political structure all served to bring the Mughul Empire to its downfall.

Once the British were firmly ensconced in India they conducted a paternalistic form of government. The Muslims and Hindus made up the greater part of the Indian population and part of British strategy was concerned with maintaining peace between these two factions which proved

to be difficult. This reversal in fortunes made the Muslim acutely aware of his diminished role and inferior status in the predominantly Hindu society. The Indian Mutiny of 1857 proved a turning point. Wrongly accused of being responsible for the rebellion, the Muslim community came close to being ostracized by the British rulers. Morale of the Muslim community in India was at its lowest ebb and the community felt the need for establishing a sense of identity. This search for self resulted in the emergence of a prominent Muslim personality - Syed Ahmed Khan, who with his wisdom and vision, fostered an understanding and tolerance between the English masters and the Muslim minority. In his writings, Khan laboured to rekindle Muslim pride and encouraged his people to aspire to lofty heights of civilisation and thereby command the respect of other societies. Sir Syed is rightly credited with instilling a national awareness among the Muslims of India, but it should be clearly understood that his theories and policies were not the basis for the creation of a Muslim state. His three major contributions to Islamic thinking were that of cooperation with the ruling government, unity among the Muslim people and appreciation of education. A brief look at what is Pakistan today might suggest the fragility of Sir Syed's

attempts to impart his message to the people.

In the post-Sir Syed period, the Muslim League which had been founded in 1906 to represent the Muslims of India, manifested its concern at being a minority group by forming the "Pakistan Resolution" in 1940 at Lahore which essentially espoused the two-nation theory and led to the breakup of India and the creation of East and West Pakistan in 1947. Two leading modernists of Pakistan were Dr. Muhammad Iqbal (1877-1938) and Quaid-e-Azam Ali Jinnah (1876-1948), the founder of Pakistan. History has since proved that Jinnah's "functional secularism" has not been successful. In the words of one observer : "all Pakistanis subscribe to a 'nationalist-modernist basic cluster...the essential expectations (of which) are as follows :

1. 'Muslims, arise, cast off medievalism, be dynamic.'
2. 'True Islamic values will guarantee success.'
3. 'The Qur'an is a code for the whole of life.'
4. 'Muslim consensus will determine what is right.'<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup>Sheila McDonough, The Feeling of Muslim Peoplehood and the Cluster of Nationalist-Modernist Expectations as Expressed in the Speeches and Writings of the Founders of the Nation and of Later Pakistanis. (Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia : University of Malaya, 1968), p.4

Since Independence in 1947, political power has remained either with the elite or seized by the Army. The situation has encouraged the proliferation of fundamentalist groups and political parties like the Jamat-i Islami, Jami'at'ulama-i Islam, and its rival, Jami'at ulama-i Pakistan. The recent election of a woman as the first head of an Islamic state in Pakistan raises the promise of a return to democracy but history in the making provides no premise for comment.

The new State of Pakistan found the British constitutional reforms of 1935 useful for the purpose of government until a new Constitution was introduced in 1956 which was considered to be quite an achievement but which lasted only 18 months and 15 days. This Constitution had declared that the country would now be called the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, the president had to be a Muslim and there could be no legislation that would contradict the Qur'an and Sunnah. With the military takeover by Ayub Khan in 1958, there followed a third Constitution in 1962 which named Pakistan simply a republic. After the loss of East Pakistan in 1971 (now Bangladesh), a fourth Constitution was introduced in 1973, a selective

abrogation of the earlier Constitution was enacted and the fundamentalist interpretations of the Jamat-i Islami and Jami'at'ulama-i Islam prevailed. Because of its predominantly Muslim population, Pakistan is a country that figures prominently in the Islamic world. The militancy of some Islamic States has created an impression in the Western mind that all followers of Islam are religious fanatics and threat to world peace :

"...the extreme and often violent Muslim groups that crop up in the world's trouble spots give an incorrect impression of Islam to the West. They worry the majority of traditional Muslims just as much."<sup>2</sup>

The mise en scène of post-colonial Pakistan provides Salman Rushdie, the author of Shame, with adequate material for a satirical look at Jinnah's poorly conceived 'secular' state. Although the novel chronicles the political destinies of two families, it is more correctly an assessment of the condition of the people of Pakistan whose existence has been so strongly influenced by the volatile fusion of religion and politics. There is little doubt that the carnivalistic framework of Shame is

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<sup>2</sup>"The Other Side of Islam", The Economist.  
February 15, 1986.

a thinly-veiled reconstruction of the incongruity of politics in Pakistan involving key players. The characters of Hyder and Harappa are based on Zia-ul-Haq, the former President of Pakistan and the slain ex-leader, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, whose daughter now heads the Pakistani government. At the time of the release of Shame in 1983, another long-time political analyst was peering through the peering through the telescope at the land of the pure. In posing the direct question, "Can Pakistan Survive ?" in his book, Tariq Ali scathingly comments on the role of the Army :

It has attempted to utilize Islam in order to institutionalize a brutal dictatorship. On the external front, the army has mortgaged the country to the United States once again. In return, it has willingly agreed to help service and police the Gulf states. Everything is for sale in Pakistan : Its labour force, its army, its women, its doctors and teachers are all leased to the oil-rich oligarchies in the Arab Gulf. Pakistan's uniformed mercenaries in Saudi Arabia are, in fact, strong enough to mount a coup in that country, should the need ever arise. Inside Pakistan itself, misery reigns supreme. The sense of demoralization and despair can be gauged by the fact that many people look eagerly to India and even the Soviet Union for salvation from this regime. In reality, relief will come only from within. The length of this third period of military rule is directly correlated with the level of mass struggle in the country. If there is a renewal of urban unrest, this regime will fall.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup>Tariq Ali, Can Pakistan Survive ? The Death of a State. (Harmondsworth : Penguin Books, 1983), p.9.

How does the Army in Pakistan respond ? The question of identity is not without its disciples. In an address at a Peshawar Public Meeting on the importance of the Islamic System of Government, the President's opening remarks dwelt on this subject :

Many short-sighted and ungrateful people ask, what is there in Pakistan ? I want to ask them what is that Pakistan has not brought for us ? Pakistan has given us freedom and self-respect. Pakistan has given us individuality and identity. Pakistan has given us honour, safety and dignity.<sup>4</sup>

The Army has been in power for most of Pakistan's existence where rhetoric has done much to explain away the country's ills as in sentiments which justify the disintegration of Pakistan and the creation of Bangladesh in 1971 :

The soldiery had been told the Bengalis were an inferior race, short, dark, weak (unlike the 'martial races' of the Punjab) and still infected with Hinduism. Junior and senior officers alike had spoken of seeking, in the course of their campaign, to improve the genes of the Bengali people. Fascist talk of this character gave the green light for the mass rapes suffered by Bengali women regardless of class or creed. The generals

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<sup>4</sup>President General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, Islamic System of Government, Nine-Point Manifesto Announced. Peshawar Public Meeting Address : March 12, 1984.

and their favourite politicians, however, had in reality made a terrible mistake. They had destroyed the only political force that could have contained the mass movement - the Awami League. Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto's first reported comment on the butchery unleashed in Bengal was : 'Thank God! Pakistan has been saved.' Rarely has a politician been guilty of such a profound misjudgement. The army had scored easy successes, but it had also signed and sealed the death warrant of Pakistan as a state.<sup>5</sup>

In Pakistan the full horror of the Bangladesh killings was shamelessly concealed and the process of distorting the truth continued. This extract from a Presidential speech is especially revealing :

Since today's parade is primarily an Armed Forces Parade I will make certain observations specially meant for the Pakistan Armed Forces. They will recall that after we achieved independence on August 14, 1947, in accordance with the Pakistan Resolution of March 23 there was a qualitative change in the nature of the responsibilities and duties of our Armed Forces. The change was that they were not only the guardians of our geographical frontiers but one of the foremost duties thus devolving on them as the guardians of an Islamic state was the protection of the Islamic ideology as well. It gives me great pleasure to state and as a soldier I take pride in the fact that in discharging these responsibilities our Armed Forces have all along displayed unparalleled patriotism, professional competence and a spirit of service. And by the grace of God they have invariably emerged successful in every test.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup>Ibid, p.92

<sup>6</sup>President General Mohammad Zia-ul-Haq, Pakistan Day 1984 Joint Services Parade. Rawalpindi Meeting Address : March 23, 1984.



The anguish of a nation is best expressed through the voice of its people :

When I was a young man I was told that my country was Hindustan and that it was the finest country in the world. The poet Mohammed Iqbal told me that. Then one day in the 1930s I was told that my country was no longer Hindustan and the people I had thought of as my brothers were my enemies. Then I was told that my country was Pakistan. Then I found that country had shrunk. Now I can feel it shrinking again.<sup>7</sup>

And so while rhetoric and distortion of truth continues, writers like Rushdie dare to expose the arrogance of dictators and the oppressive societies they build. In Shame it becomes painfully apparent that the burden of shame is borne not by the leaders of Pakistan but by its people. The horror of events in the book are indicative of the fragile nature of the symbiosis between shame and identity. Rushdie accurately describes a society that is yoked by an Islamic vision which cannot be crystallized because, in Maulana Dawood's eloquent words, "they are covering it with shit." (Shame, p.206)

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<sup>7</sup>Quoted by V.S. Naipaul, Among the Believers - An Islamic Journey. (Harmondsworth : Penguin Books, 1981), p.119

The survival of a people as an entity depends to a large extent on its perception of self-worth. The Muslim community of Pakistan and those of its citizens who have settled in other parts of the world have had to seriously renew their concerns on the question of identity as expressed at the time of Independence by Faiz Ahmed Faiz, an internationally acclaimed Pakistani poet :

This leprous daybreak, dawn night's fangs have mangled-  
This is not that long-looked-for break of day,  
Not that clear dawn in quest of which those comrades  
Set out, believing that in heaven's wide void  
Somewhere must be the star's last halting-place,  
Somewhere the verge of night's slow-washing tide,  
Somewhere an anchorage for the ship of heartache.  
But now, word goes, the birth of day from darkness  
Is finished, wandering feet stand at their goal;  
Our leaders' ways are altering, festive looks  
Are all the fashion, discontent reprov'd;  
And yet this physic still on unslaked eye  
Or heart fevered by severance works no cure.  
Where did that fine breeze, that the wayside lamp  
Had not once felt, blow from - where has it fled?  
Night's heaviness is unlesened still, the hour  
Of mind and spirit's ransom has not struck;  
Let us go on, our goal is not reached yet.<sup>8</sup>

Subh-e-Azadi, August 1947

The 'dawn of freedom' envisaged by Jinnah and celebrated in song by the poet remains elusive to the state of Pakistan.

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<sup>8</sup>Ed. Krishan Kant. Waraq-Waraq. (Amritsar : Azadpur Depot, 1975), p.83

## GLOSSARY

Babu, Baboo	Term of respect used with disparagement during the British Raj.
Begum Hardum Taza	A woman endowed with charm and effervescence (Anglo-Indian expression).
Bhungi	Class of Untouchables.
Boosa	The common food for cattle in India composed of husks and straw of various kinds of corn.
Burrah sahibs	Big shots, or 'Masters'.
Chumars	Class of Untouchables.
Chutnee Mary	Homely woman (Anglo-Indian expression).
Feringhee	Stranger, foreigner.
Jagir	Pers., lit. 'place-holding'. A hereditary assignment of land and of its rent as annuity.
Lok Sabha	House of the People.
Mama ko Pucho	Lit. "Go ask Mama"; a woman who lacks social grace (Anglo-Indian expression).
Mantram	Hymn or religious song.
Massala chai	Spiced tea.
Metharanees	Class of Untouchables.
Mlechha	Outcaste
Punkah	Fan
Ressaldar	Honorific title to overseer of post-horses or stables.
Sharam	Shame
Sola topees	Sun hats.
Swaraj	Freedom
Subjantawalla	'Know-it-all' (Anglo-Indian expression).

Tonga	Light, small two-wheeled vehicle pulled by oxen or ponies.
Ulema	Expert on the Islamic faith.
Wog	Westernized Oriental Gentleman.
Zabar	Peculiar to the Urdu script.