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**HEAT AND LUST: DESIRE AND INTIMACY ACROSS
THE (POST)COLONIAL DIVIDE**

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THESIS SUBMITTED FOR THE QUALIFICATION OF D.PHIL

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this thesis has not been, and will not be, submitted in whole or in part to another University for the award of any other degree.

Signature:

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Heat and Lust: desire and intimacy across the (post)colonial divide.

My thesis focuses on a group of novels dealing with Indo-British interracial marriage, written at the turn of the 20th century. The novels belong to the large corpus of popular literature produced at this time about India by male and female Anglo-Indian writers whose purpose in writing was not only entertainment but also, importantly, instruction.¹ This literature has been neglected by the literary critics but repays close attention for it is a valuable archive for the study of female perspectives on British rule in India. There has been work by historians on Anglo-Indian women recently but the womens' own fictional writing has been largely neglected. Using a historical materialist approach, one of my aims in this study is also to examine the differences of perspective on British rule evident in male and female writing on India.

The narrative trajectory is invariably the same: an ignorant British protagonist marries an Indian with whom s/he sets up home, prompted by desires which are gendered. The depiction of intimacy, I argue, is intended to illuminate the hidden space of Indian life (the home) so that marital and domestic practices which were considered to degrade Indian women may be exposed to the British reader. The link made by the British between the treatment of women and the fitness of Indian men for self-rule is important here. The representation of the Indian home as a hidden space about which the British knew very little but imagined much, offers a reading of the anxiety felt by the British about the limits of their control in India, both over the Indians and over themselves.

¹ These writers include Alice Perrin, Maud Diver, Fanny Penny, E.W. Savi, Victoria Cross and Pamela Wynne; several male Anglo-Indian writers and non-Anglo-Indians are included.

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INTRODUCTION

The title of this thesis refers, of course, to Ruth Praver Jhabvala's 1975 novel, *Heat and Dust*. The novel describes the scandal caused in 1923 among the Anglo-Indian community of Satipur by Olivia 'who went away with the Nawab'.¹ This incident becomes 'a forbidden topic', 'something dark and terrible' to members of her husband Douglas's family who refuse for years to mention Olivia.² The story of Olivia is balanced by that told by the narrator, her step-granddaughter, who travels to India in the 1970s to unravel the mystery of the scandal and discover what happened to Olivia after she went away with the Nawab. The novel analyses the ambivalence of the British relationship with India, the fascination and repulsion that India inspires in the British, and the impenetrability of Indian social and cultural life for the British, at two different points in Indian history.

This thesis focuses on 13 novels written around the turn of the 20th century which, like *Heat and Dust*, employ the interracial relationship to interrogate Indo-British relations at a personal as well as a political level. In focusing on novels with a common theme in this way, I depart from the practice of critics of Anglo-Indian fiction who tend to discuss one or two Anglo-Indian novels in connection with specific aspects of colonial rule in India, such as discourses of race and sexuality, miscegenation and interracial sexual desire. Structuring my analysis around a common trope allows me to take a diachronic view on how social and political relations between Britain and India changed over the last years of the 19th and the first years of the 20th centuries as demonstrated by the representations in

¹ Ruth Praver Jhabvala, *Heat and Dust* (London: John Murray, 2003), p.1.

² Jhabvala, pp.1-2.

the novels of the desires which lead the British protagonist into marriage and the discoveries made when living intimately with the Indian Other.

Eleven of the novels were written between 1896 and 1913. The earliest novel I discuss is *Seeta* by Philip Meadows Taylor, written in 1872. I have included it for two reasons: it has become a well-known text due to the work of critics such as Indrani Sen and, more importantly, it is written within an earlier set of discursive formations on the coloniser/colonised relationship in India, and thus is fundamental to demonstrating how the colonial, racial and gender discourses of the period of the novels' production alter over time. The latest novel I examine is Pamela Wynne's *Warning* of 1923 written at a time of increasing Indian agitation for independence. In the 50 years between *Seeta* and *Warning*, it is clear that much has changed in Indo-British relations. In between come *Brenda's Experiment* (1896) by Henry Martineau Greenhow, *Chattel or Wife?* (1899) by Claude Bray, *Anna Lombard* (1901) and *Life of My Heart* (1905) by Victoria Cross, *A Mixed Marriage* (1903) by Fanny Penny, *The Waters of Destruction* (1905) by Alice Perrin, *The Native Wife* (1909) by Henry Bruce, *Lilamani* (1911) by Maud Diver, *The Daughter of Brahma* (1912) by I.A.R. Wylie, *The Englishwoman* (1912) by Alice and Claude Askew and *The Daughter-in-Law* (1913) by E. W. Savi. There is thus a preponderance of female authors in my selection of texts, reflecting the greater proportion of female Anglo-Indian writers. It is also important to note that not all these authors were Anglo-Indians; Wylie and the Askews never went to India so their novels are not informed by direct experience of their subject matter.³ Wylie in her autobiography *My Life with George* says that she wrote her first

³ I use the term 'Anglo-Indian' to mean people of British origin who lived and worked in India during the period of the Raj.

Indian novel from information given to her by an Anglo-Indian school friend.⁴ The fact that non-Anglo-Indians produced novels informed by colonial and racial discourses has implications for the circulation of these discourses in the metropolis as I discuss in chapter 2.

I have chosen novels which represent desire(s) leading to marriage, rather than select from the many novels which simply represent sexual attraction between the races. This is because I am interested in the representation of intimacy between the interracial couple. The novels examined here were written at a time of segregation between the races in India which, initially, makes their relatively large number seem anomalous. This was clearly not a forbidden topic despite the prevalent racial theory which constructed the Indian as the inferior Other.⁵ A central argument of my thesis is that the symbol of the marriage is employed to place the interracial couple in intimate association so as to analyse interracial relations at a personal and domestic as well as, implicitly, at a political level for, as Douglas Kerr observes in *Eastern Figures*,

[i]f all Western writing ... about Eastern places and peoples is understood, and read, at one level as being about the relation between East and West, then every representation has potentially a quasi-allegorical dimension, as a trope in that Western discourse of the East.⁶

Again, Phillip Darby, arguing in *The Fiction of Imperialism* that fiction may be read to advance an understanding of the politics of imperialism, ‘examines the

⁴ I. A. R. Wylie, *My Life with George: An Unconventional Biography* (New York: Random House, 1940), p.129.

⁵ See the section on racial theory in Chapter 2.

⁶ Douglas Kerr, *Eastern Figures: Orient and Empire in British Writing* (Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, 2008), p.60.

personal as a metaphor for the political in fiction depicting the imperial connection between Britain and India'.⁷

Focusing as they do on the marriage of two individuals, on desire and intimacy, in genre terms the novels may be categorised as romances. 'Romance' now usually means the mass-marketed Mills and Boon/Harlequin love story, but romance, as Scott McCracken notes in *Pulp*, is a complex and adaptable genre, distinguished by its 'concern with desire and the prospect of its satisfaction'.⁸ The object of desire might be a person as in a love story, or it might be wealth or adventure as in an adventure or imperial romance such as those written by Rider Haggard, Arthur Conan Doyle, R. L. Stevenson and a number of lesser-known writers at the turn of the 20th century. The desire sets in motion the events of the novel which frustrate, until the denouement, the attainment of the object of desire. Interracial and imperial romances share this basic narrative structure. In addition, a fantasy setting is an important feature of the romance narrative. I argue in Chapter 2 that the novels of interracial marriage have features of both the love story and of the adventure romance for they are often set in India, represented as an exotic but potentially dangerous setting in which the British protagonist struggles to attain his/her desire.

All the novels of interracial marriage analysed in my thesis have a similar plot trajectory with only minor variations. A Briton and an Indian meet, marry and set up home, most often in India. There is often a rejected British suitor, a person with 'knowledge' of India and Indians, who warns the misguided British protagonist,

⁷ Phillip Darby, *The Fiction of Imperialism: Reading between International Relations and Postcolonialism* (London: Cassell, 1998), p.34.

⁸ Scott McCracken, *Pulp : Reading Popular Fiction* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1998), p.76.

always to no avail.⁹ The British spouse comes to regret the marriage, usually because intimacy reveals the Indian to be irretrievably Other, but s/he is freed by the death of the Indian spouse to marry the previously rejected British suitor. The novels thus use the convention of the 'two-suitor plot' as Jean Kennard calls it.¹⁰ This, I argue, in the context of the novels of interracial marriage, works to sanitise the transgressive desire for the interracial Other initially exhibited by the British protagonist by demonstrating that it is based on his/her ignorance of the true nature of India and Indians. The British protagonist, learning that his/her desire is directed to the wrong object, returns it to the correct (British) object. In the process, however, the novels are able to demonstrate the grounds on which the British protagonist's desire for the Indian is misdirected.

One variation in the plot which is of central importance, however, is in the configuration of the partners. Of the 13 novels examined here, only five represent the marriage of an Indian woman to a British man, leaving eight which depict the marriage of a British woman to an Indian man. This is unexpected as, historically, British men entered into sexual relations with Indians more frequently than did British women. The novels depicting the marriage of British women to Indian men were written in the period of High Imperialism when the British produced themselves discursively as racially superior to the Indian, as well as representing British women, as E. M. Collingham writes, 'as the ultimate symbols of western refinement and high culture or as the primary indicators of the civilized state of the West'.¹¹ One of the arguments of my thesis is that the marriage of the British woman to the Indian man is a device which allows the imagined gaze of the

⁹ When speaking of 'knowledge' in the colonial context I refer to discursive formations constructed by the coloniser about the colonised in order to maintain power over them.

¹⁰ Jean E. Kennard, *Victims of Convention* (Hamden, Connecticut: Archon Books, 1978).

¹¹ E. M. Collingham, *Imperial Bodies: The Physical Experience of the Raj, C. 1800-1947* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2001), p.42.

British female protagonist to enter Indian domestic spaces to reveal the abuses which are practised there. Historically, the British woman was allowed access, albeit very limited access, to the hidden spaces of the Indian home which was denied to British men. I discuss the difficulty of British access to the Indian home fully in Chapter 3.

The majority of the novels of interracial marriage were written by Anglo-Indians, men and women whose ‘knowledge’ of India and Indians was formed by contemporary discourses of colonialism, race and gender during their long residence in the country. The male authors, Bray, Bruce, Taylor and Greenhow, had worked in India in administrative or military positions, while the female authors were often, in Mary Procida’s phrase, ‘married to the empire’.¹² In *Imperialism as Diaspora*, Ralph Crane and Radhika Mohanram pose a question which is highly pertinent to this thesis:

[h]ow does living elsewhere, making a home overseas, being powerful and wealthy in another country, belonging to a foreign minority but wielding incredible power and authority over the native majority, living your day-to-day reality in this new space, ... interacting daily in a hierarchically superior position with most people... change you, as well as impact on your writing?¹³

It is one of the central arguments of my thesis that what Crane and Mohanram categorise as the ‘diasporic’ identity of the Anglo-Indians had a significant impact on their writing, imbuing them with an authority on matters Indian in their own eyes and those of the British reading public. In addition, I argue, they wrote with a didactic purpose, defending and justifying the Raj and, implicitly, their role in its

¹² Mary A Procida, *Married to the Empire: Gender, Politics and Imperialism in India, 1883-1947* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2002).

¹³ Ralph J. Crane and Radhika Mohanram, *Imperialism as Diaspora: Race, Sexuality, and History in Anglo-India*, 13 (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), p.1.

functioning to a metropolitan British audience.¹⁴ This is not to suggest that these writers were not also capable of drawing attention to what they saw as misguided government policy in India or to the consequences of Anglo-Indian racism, for example. The texts also demonstrate contradictions and inconsistencies which permit readings against the grain of the narrative. In this way the novels endorse and challenge colonial and racial discourses in both their latent and their manifest content.¹⁵

Another central concern of my thesis is to examine the impact of gender on the writing of the Anglo-Indian author. Sara Mills has argued that Anglo-Indian women, positioned differently in relation to colonial discursive formations and to the imperial enterprise, could not make the 'confident assertions about whole races, nations, countries, that male writers feel empowered to make'.¹⁶ I demonstrate that, while this may be true for the travel narratives of women visiting India that Mills examines, it does not apply equally to the narratives of women living in India, 'belonging to a foreign minority but wielding incredible power and authority'.¹⁷

Finally, the novels of interracial marriage need to be set in context. There is a long history of Anglo-Indian fiction (by which I mean fiction written by or about Anglo-Indians), starting in the late 18th century as Crane and Mohanram observe.¹⁸ The majority of the novels of interracial marriage discussed here, however, were produced around the turn of the 20th century. I believe there are a number of reasons for their appearance at this time, ranging from the particular to the general.

¹⁴ I use the term 'metropolitan British' to refer to the British in the UK as distinct from the Anglo-Indian British.

¹⁵ Edward W Said, *Orientalism* (London: Penguin, 2003), p.206. The terms 'manifest' and 'latent' are borrowed from Said's discussion of Orientalism.

¹⁶ Sara Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism*. (London: Routledge, 2004), p.3.

¹⁷ Crane and Mohanram, p.1.

¹⁸ Crane and Mohanram, p.16.

In particular, this was a period of intense interest in the empire in Britain. John MacKenzie in *Propaganda and Empire* points to the many avenues along which the Empire travelled back into British popular culture. Music hall, cinema, popular fiction for children and adults, even advertisements for soap and biscuits, promoted interest in Britain's empire.¹⁹ In addition, Nupur Chaudhuri highlights the role of women in the 19th century as 'agents of cultural exchange' as memsahibs returning from India introduced 'shawls, jewelry [*sic*], curry and rice' into the British home.²⁰ In addition to this, returning Anglo-Indians, male and female, produced fiction about India. Rudyard Kipling's success during the 1890s undoubtedly contributed to the British interest in India and paved the way for other Anglo-Indian authors who, like him, notes David Gilmour, were 'appalled ... by the apparent ignorance and lack of awareness of imperial issues' among the British public and desired to enlighten them and increase their awareness.²¹ Although Empire was everywhere, Kipling, Gilmour observes, was upset by what he perceived as 'a lack of interest in the health of the Empire... and in the management of the imperial domains'.²²

In general terms, there was a huge amount of fiction published in this period about the British Empire. The best known of the imperial romancers are probably Haggard, R.L. Stevenson and Joseph Conrad who were contemporaries of Kipling and whose work, like Kipling's, is still in print. Less well-known today are, for example, G. A. Henty, A.E.W. Mason, Robert Hichens, W. H. Hudson and A. J. Dawson, who also wrote prolifically about the empire for adults and children.

¹⁹ John M MacKenzie, *Propaganda and Empire : The Manipulation of British Public Opinion, 1880-1960* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1985).

²⁰ Nupur Chaudhuri, 'Shawls, Jewelry, Curry and Rice in Victorian Britain' in *Western Women and Imperialism: Complicity and Resistance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1992), p.232.

²¹ David Gilmour, *The Long Recessional: The Imperial Life of Rudyard Kipling* (London: Pimlico, 2003), p.96.

²² Gilmour, *Recessional*, p.96.

Many female authors also contributed to the literature on empire, writing adventure and romance about India, Africa, Egypt and other exotic and imperial countries. In addition to Cross, Perrin, Penny, Wylie, Diver and Savi, who wrote novels discussed here, there were also Flora Annie Steel, Florence Marryat, Joan Sutherland, Ethel M. Dell and Bithia Croker who wrote about India, Louise Gerard who wrote adventures set in West Africa and other exotic places and Kathlyn Rhodes who produced desert romances set in North Africa, long before E. M. Hull published her bestseller *The Sheik* and unleashed ‘sheik fever’ onto the Western world.²³ The output of many of these authors was prolific. Penny, for example, wrote over 40 novels between 1887 and 1939 while Savi produced almost twice as many, her last being published in the 1950s.

Sexual desire for the racial Other appears in a significant number of texts produced by these authors. Kipling, for example, in *Plain Tales from the Hills*, wrote about interracial desire in ‘Lisbeth’, ‘Yoked with an Unbeliever’, ‘Kidnapped’ and ‘Beyond the Pale’, continuing in *Life’s Handicap*, with ‘Without Benefit of Clergy’. Conrad’s first novel, *Almayer’s Folly*, features an interracial marriage between the eponymous hero, Almayer, and a Malay woman. A.E.W. Mason’s *The Broken Road* (1907), R. L. Stevenson’s *The Beach of Falesá* (1892), and A. J. Dawson’s *African Nights’ Entertainment* (1900) are all concerned with interracial sexual attraction. Robert Young calls attention to

[t]he many colonial novels in English that betray themselves as driven by desire for the cultural other, forsaking their own culture: the novels and travel-writings of Burton, Haggard, Stevenson, Kipling, Allen or Buchan are all concerned with forms

²³ cf. Hsu-Ming Teo, *Desert Passions: Orientalism and Romance Novels* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2012) *The Sheik* is the story of the kidnap and imprisonment of an Englishwoman by an Arab sheik. She is raped repeatedly but falls in love with her abuser who turns out to be ‘the half-English, half-Spanish son of a peer of the British realm.’ [p.87].

of cross-cultural contact, interaction, an active desire, frequently sexual, for the other.²⁴

Young mentions only male authors in his list of those driven by desire for the cultural Other. My thesis demonstrates that female authors too wrote about this desire for the Other, albeit from a different perspective, one which focused on personal and domestic relations rather than on conquest, sexual or military. I demonstrate that, by excluding the large body of literature of empire written by women, an argument such as Young's above is skewed by its partiality (in both senses of the word).

Critical Work on the Anglo-Indian Novels of Interracial Marriage.

Critical work on Anglo-Indian popular fiction in general has been confined, until recently, to a handful of articles and chapters in texts on colonial literature. Benita Parry is one of the first critics to engage with the female authors of such fiction. In *Delusions and Discoveries* (1972) she devotes a chapter to 'The Lady Romancers: Five Lady Novelists' and another chapter to Flora Annie Steel. The Lady Romancers she discusses are Diver, Penny, Wylie, Perrin and Croker whose output between 1890 and 1920 she categorises as 'light fiction', deploring that '[f]rom their prurient fantasies, from their confusion as to the intricacies of Indian thought and society, came a meretricious account of cultures they could not comprehend'.²⁵ Parry is slightly more sympathetic towards Steel whose 'experience of India was less vicarious' in her opinion than that of the Lady Romancers, although she does admit that Steel's accounts of her relationships with

²⁴ Robert J. C Young, *Colonial Desire : Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (London: Routledge, 1994), p.3.

²⁵ Benita Parry, *Delusions and Discoveries : India in the British Imagination, 1880-1930* (London: Verso, 1998), p.102.

Indians as described in her autobiography should be treated with caution ‘for what kind of intimacy could be given and received by an Englishwoman who ... insisted that all the Indians with whom she associated delighted in her autocracy?’²⁶ It must be recognised, however, that Parry was writing in 1972, 6 years before the publication of Said’s *Orientalism*, and notes herself that *Delusions and Discoveries* was ‘a book that appeared before recent critical practices had devised an alternative narrative of empire’.²⁷ Michael Sprinker writes in the foreword to the 1998 edition that Parry’s analysis concentrates on the ‘material facts and forces’ of the British colonisation of India rather than on discursive constructions of colonialism and her ‘passionate indictment of Anglo-Indians’ delusions about India registers her outrage at the bad faith with which they sought to justify their exploitation of the sub-continent’s indigenous peoples.²⁸

Writing some years later within a critical framework strongly influenced by the work of Said, Homi Bhabha and Gayatri Spivak whose emphasis has been on ‘discursive constructions of colonialism’, other critics have been less dismissive of Anglo-Indian romances and their authors. Jenny Sharpe, for example, devotes a chapter to Steel’s 1896 ‘Mutiny’ novel, *On the Face of the Waters*. Sharpe places Steel’s work within its discursive context, noting that while she ‘set out to write a historical novel which would give poetic expression to a moment of profound social transformation’ she could not ‘break with an imperialist understanding of the rebellion’.²⁹ Sen in *Woman and Empire* also devotes a chapter to Steel, whom

²⁶ Parry, p.104.

²⁷ Parry, p.1.

²⁸ Parry, p. xii.

²⁹ Jenny Sharpe, *Allegories of Empire: The Figure of Woman in the Colonial Text* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), p.87.

she sees as ‘energis[ing] debates on gender in Anglo-India.’³⁰ In fact, Steel’s *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook*, co-authored with Grace Gardiner, which ran to ‘at least ten editions ... published between 1888 and 1921’³¹ was republished in 2010 by Oxford University Press. There are, however, very few texts by other Anglo-Indian writers currently in print.

More recently, Martin Hipsky in *Modernism and The Women’s Popular Romance in Britain, 1885-1925* devotes space to a discussion of Cross’s *Anna Lombard* in his chapter entitled ‘The Imperial Erotic Romance’ in which he also looks at Dell’s *The Way of the Eagle* and Hull’s *The Sheik* which he sees as ‘racial fantasies... [in which] ideologies of race fuelled the combustible discourses of desire’.³² In plots which involve ‘a self-willed British woman and an exoticized man’, the consummation of their desire is not simply transcendence of the quotidian but instead ‘features the safe dissolution of the threatening, nonprotective side of masculine violence - which has been troped as racially Other’.³³ Hipsky’s point is pertinent to my examination of the novels of interracial marriage in chapters 3 and 4. As in *Anna Lombard*, racialised masculine violence is a persistent feature of the novels where Indian husbands are represented as dominating, raping and even attempting to murder their British wives. The dissolution of the ‘threatening, nonprotective’ Indian violence is not effected by their British wives, however, but by the husbands’ violent deaths, which leave their widows free to marry British men whose violence is sanctioned as it is

³⁰ Indrani Sen, *Woman and Empire: Representations in the Writings of British India, 1858-1900* (Hyderabad: Orient Longman, 2008), p.131.

³¹ Flora Annie Steel and Grace Gardiner, *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook*, ed. by Ralph Crane and Anna Johnston (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.xxviii. Crane also published a scholarly edition of Diver’s *Lilamani* in 2004.

³² Martin Hipsky, *Modernism and the Women’s Popular Romance in Britain, 1885-1925* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2011) l. 2101.

³³ Hipsky, l.140-145.

protective of the woman and thus represents a danger only to those who threaten her.

More directly relevant to my project is Nancy Paxton's chapter on 'Mixed Couples' in *Writing under the Raj* where she discusses interracial romances by Perrin, Steel and Cross, claiming that they were made possible by the emergence of the New Woman.³⁴ In Chapter 1 I discuss Paxton's definition of the New Woman which I find problematic. The figure of the New Woman in the novels of interracial marriage is explored further in chapters 2, 3 and 4 of this study. Paxton also makes passing reference to Diver's interracial romance, *Lilamani*, but fails to explore the implications of this interracial romance with a happy ending and an Indian female protagonist who is, I argue, constructed as the idealised antithesis of the New Woman whom Diver deplored. Hsu-Ming Teo in a 2004 essay comes to the same conclusion about Diver's construction of the Indian woman, *Lilamani*. Teo examines several Anglo-Indian novels written between 1890 and 1947, representing sexual desire (but not necessarily intimacy) between Indians and the British and makes an interesting point which has directed my thinking on the purpose of the writers who produced the novels of interracial marriage examined here.³⁵ Following Procida, Teo links the rise of the Anglo-Indian romance with the growing involvement of Anglo-Indian women in politics in India and observes that 'novel writing was a means of conveying their often intensely conservative political opinions about the Raj to a wider British public'.³⁶ That the Anglo-Indian novels examined here had a didactic purpose is a central argument of my thesis. I do not agree, however, with her final judgement that '[u]ltimately, these novels

³⁴ Nancy L. Paxton, *Writing under the Raj: Gender, Race, and Rape in the British Colonial Imagination, 1830-1947* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1999), p.195.

³⁵ Or, indeed, any of the novels which do not feature interracial marriage.

³⁶ Hsu-Ming Teo, 'Romancing the Raj: Interracial Relations in Anglo-Indian Romance Novels', *History of Intellectual Culture*, Vol. 4, No. 1, p.3 [accessed 23 April 2015].

legitimized British imperialism.³⁷ As I show, they also challenged and critiqued various aspects of British imperialism.

Crane and Mohanram's *Imperialism as Diaspora* also includes a discussion of interracial desire and intimacy in two novels which are also examined here: Cross's *Life of My Heart* and Diver's *Lilamani*. Crane and Mohanram are interested in the transgressive nature of interracial intimacy, writing that 'the intimate relationship between a black and a white signified the Victorian version of the love that dared not speak its name'.³⁸ Miscegenation was thus, they observe, 'the sexual taboo of the nineteenth century'.³⁹ Their analysis of the two novels of interracial marriage which feature both interracial sexual desire and the production of mixed race children teases out the 'competing discourses which infuse this topic with ambivalence – as simultaneously inevitable and forbidden'.⁴⁰ My own reading of these two novels, developed by comparing them to other contemporary novels of interracial marriage, is somewhat different, although the discussion in Crane and Mohanram on the intersection of the New Woman with imperialism has influenced my examination of *Life of My Heart* in chapter 3. I do not, for example, place as much emphasis on the transgressive nature of the interracial desire as many of the novels do not feature romantic or sexual love for the Other as the motivation for the marriage and thereby absolve the British protagonist of a forbidden passion.⁴¹

Apart from the work of the critics mentioned above, the lack of critical attention paid to Anglo-Indian fiction as part of the fiction of imperialism is striking. Some critics have noted this critical neglect of women writing about

³⁷ Teo, 'Romancing the Raj', p.15.

³⁸ Crane and Mohanram, p.108.

³⁹ Crane and Mohanram, p.108.

⁴⁰ Crane and Mohanram, p.108.

⁴¹ I examine this point more fully in the course of chapters 2, 3 and 4.

empire as well as to the popular romance. Sen, for example, writes that ‘an enormous body of neglected colonial literature ...exist[s], waiting to be recovered, a recuperation which would help to think the discursive field of colonial writings in nineteenth-century India’.⁴² Hipsky, writing about a broader group of ‘romanciers’ which includes Marie Corelli and Florence Barclay as well as Cross, Dell and Hull, comments that ‘the most successful female romanciers of Britain’s turn into the twentieth century have not yet received the kind of attention that their one-time cultural influence clearly merits’.⁴³ This neglect is in marked contrast to the ‘imperial romances’ of Buchan, Haggard, Kipling and Conrad who have been considered more worthy of attention from the critics.

Sara Mills hypothesises that the neglect of the Lady Romancers stems from a perception that empire is a masculine enterprise, and therefore that, ‘the stereotype of imperial activity has often been epitomised in either the figure of the male adventuring hero or the male administrator as a symbol of state relations’.⁴⁴ As Mills goes on to argue, however, women as well as men were active agents in the production of knowledge about empire. Rather than being a totally male-dominated space,

imperialism can instead be seen to consist of a myriad number of activities that took place in both the public and the private sphere and that played a role in producing knowledges and spatial frameworks that affirmed, naturalised and modified the imperial presence.⁴⁵

A central argument of my thesis is that the novels of interracial marriage, whose events took place in the private sphere of the home, worked to affirm, naturalise and modify the understanding of the imperial presence to a greater extent than, for

⁴² Sen, *Woman and Empire*, p.ix.

⁴³ Hipsky 1.43.

⁴⁴ Sara Mills, *Gender and Colonial Space* (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 2009), p.14.

⁴⁵ Mills, *Gender*, p.16.

example, the adventure fiction of Haggard, Henty *et al* because they were grounded in the domestic realities of the Anglo-Indian world.

Another reason for the lack of critical attention paid to the enormous body of work on Anglo-India and India written at the turn of the 20th century is conceivably that it has been regarded in the academy as popular fiction and therefore not worth serious study. One definition of popular fiction is that it is read by large numbers of people who possess, as Bob Ashley puts it, ‘little capacity for literary discrimination’.⁴⁶ Another is that popular fiction is what is left out of the ‘canon of English literature’, that it is trivial and ephemeral and not worth studying. Ashley observes that there is still resistance to the study of popular fiction within universities. My own view is that popular literature is highly responsive to the temporal and geographic conditions of its production. I would further argue that the popularity of these novels meant that the novels had ‘cultural influence,’ that they were active in forming metropolitan attitudes to matters Indian.⁴⁷ Perrin, for example, although largely forgotten today, was compared favourably with Kipling and certainly sold as well. The same is true of Steel who was, according to her autobiography, a very popular and distinguished author.⁴⁸ Cross, largely out of print now, was particularly well-known: Desmond Flower in his pamphlet *A Century of Best Sellers 1830-1930* notes that *Anna Lombard* was the best-selling novel of 1901, the year *Kim* was published.⁴⁹ Cross wrote a number of bestselling novels, some of which are set in India, which gained

⁴⁶ Bob Ashley, *The Study of Popular Fiction: A Source Book* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1989), p.2.

⁴⁷ I return to this point in the Conclusion where I problematise the reception of the novels by the metropolitan British reading public and their potential cultural influence.

⁴⁸ Cf. Flora Annie Steel, *The Garden of Fidelity: Being the Autobiography of Flora Annie Steel* (London: Macmillan, 1929).

⁴⁹ Desmond Flower, *A Century of Best Sellers, 1830-1930* (London: National Book Council, 1934) Flower notes that ‘The publishers [of *Anna Lombard*] are at present advertising the fact that they have sold over five million copies of the book.’

notoriety in the early 20th century for their frank representations of female sexual desire. Katherine Mansfield's short story 'The Tiredness of Rosabel', published in 1908, uses *Anna Lombard* to highlight the dreariness of her eponymous protagonist's life. Travelling home on a bus from her job in a millinery shop on a wet evening, Rosabel sits next to a young woman who is reading *Anna Lombard*. Rosabel catches sight of some lines of the book the girl is reading – 'it was something about a hot, voluptuous night, a band playing, a girl with lovely, white shoulders.... Rosabel stirred suddenly and unfastened the top two buttons of her coat... she felt almost stifled.'⁵⁰ In 1908 Mansfield was confident that her readers would be familiar with *Anna Lombard* and would understand why Rosabel felt stifled at the contrast between her repressed life and that of the fictional Anna Lombard.

Critical Approach

In this thesis, I adopt a broadly historical materialist approach to inform close readings of the texts. I agree with John Brannigan's argument in *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism* that literature is

an active agent of a particular historical moment... the object of study not the text and its context, not literature and its history, but rather literature *in* history. This is to see literature as a constitutive and inseparable part of history in the making, and therefore rife with the creative forces, disruptions and contradictions of history.⁵¹

I place the novels of interracial marriage in dialogue, not only with their 'particular historical moment' but also with their particular historical space, that is, with India under the Raj in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

⁵⁰ Katherine Mansfield, *The Collected Stories of Katherine Mansfield* (London: Wordsworth Classics, 2006), p.433.

⁵¹ John Brannigan, *New Historicism and Cultural Materialism* (Basingstoke: Macmillan Press, 1998), pp.3-4.

One of the criticisms of a historical materialist or, more specifically, New Historicist approach, must be addressed before I continue. Brannigan notes that New Historicism has been accused of not paying sufficient attention to the status – the literariness – of the literary text, treating it as simply another piece of ‘material documentation’ which represents ‘the beliefs, values and forms of power circulating in a society at a given time in specific circumstances’.⁵² Further, it places ‘literary texts in an unprivileged exchange with the historical forces in the time of their production’.⁵³ Brannigan writes that this is not true of all New Historicist criticism, observing that some critics ‘recognise that a literary text may have a more complex form or structure than other texts’.⁵⁴ This is an important point and I will not be putting these novels into an ‘unprivileged exchange’ with other texts, although I use early-20th-century non-fiction work on, for example, empire, women’s issues and race, to demonstrate how the discourses of race, gender and colonialism circulate in fact and fiction. Literature is not simply mimetic but uses various conventions to shape narrative. The novels under discussion belong within the romance genre and the romance story has a particular shape which informs its interaction with the discourses in which the novels participate.⁵⁵

More specifically, I use colonial discourse theory to interrogate the novels of interracial marriage for their representation of relationships between British and Indians. Williams and Chrisman propose that ‘Said’s *Orientalism*, published in 1978, single-handedly inaugurated [this] area of academic enquiry’, and many

⁵² Brannigan, p.132.

⁵³ Brannigan, p.12.

⁵⁴ Brannigan, p.136.

⁵⁵ I examine this interaction in Chapter 2 on Formalities.

have, of course, built on his work since then.⁵⁶ According to Said, Orientalism may be described as

the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, teaching it, settling it, ruling over it; in short Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.⁵⁷

Colonial discourse is, thus, generated by the coloniser. It is a system of statements based on a set of rules which include or exclude certain statements about the colonial relationship based on ‘the assumption of the superiority of the coloniser’s culture, history, language, art, political structures, social conventions, and the assertion of the need for the colonised to be “raised up” through colonial contact’.⁵⁸ Economic exploitation and the political and cultural disempowerment of the colonised are masked by statements about their inferiority as a race, their backwardness, their depravity, and their debased cultures. In the process of creating an identity for the colonised, an identity is produced for the coloniser based on his/her difference to the colonised.

There is, however, a critical gap in Said’s concept of Orientalism. Said’s work does not pay much attention to the Western female gaze on the East, claiming that ‘the Orient was an ‘exclusively male province’.⁵⁹ Orientalism produces, in Reina Lewis’s words, a ‘homogeneous discourse enunciated by a colonial subject that is unified, intentional and irredeemably male’.⁶⁰ Said largely ignores women as producers and consumers of Orientalist discourse. When they are mentioned they are assumed to regard the East in the same way as men, from the same position of

⁵⁶ *Colonial Discourse and Post-Colonial Theory: A Reader*, ed. by Patrick Williams and Laura Chrisman (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2011), p. 5.

⁵⁷ Said, p.3.

⁵⁸ Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin, *Post-Colonial Studies : The Key Concepts* (London: Routledge, 2000), p.41.

⁵⁹ Said, p.188.

⁶⁰ Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.17.

a 'will to power'. Thus, for example, Said states that: 'Each – Wilfred Scawen Blunt, Doughty, Lawrence, [*Gertude*] Bell, Hogarth, Philby, Sykes, Storrs – believed his [*sic*] vision of things Oriental was individual, self-created out of some intensely personal encounter with the Orient.'⁶¹ Even more problematically he observes that: 'the Orient was a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe. Virtually no European writer who wrote or travelled to the Orient in the period after 1800 exempted himself *or herself* from this quest' (my italics).⁶² He lists a number of writers who went on one of these sexual quests, including Flaubert, Nerval, Burton, Gide, Conrad and Maugham. Clearly, there are no women among these writers. This is one of the few places where Said registers that there were female travellers but he still appears to be making the unconvincing claim that they were also looking for the sort of 'sexual experience unobtainable in Europe'. It should be added that the Orient was not the only Eastern space where sexual experience was to be found more easily. Ronald Hyam, for example, in *Empire and Sexuality*, has written of 'the easy range of sexual opportunities which imperial systems provided' for men and devotes a chapter to 'The Sexual Life of the Raj.'⁶³

As mentioned above, a central aim of my thesis is to examine the different nature of the 'desire for the cultural other' which informs the work of female authors who lived and travelled in the 'exclusively male provinces' of the empire. Recent work by historians has done much to reinstate women to an active place in the life and work of the empire in India: for example, Procida's *Married to the Empire*, Margaret MacMillan's *Women of the Raj* and Anne De Courcy's *The*

⁶¹ Said, p.237.

⁶² Said, p.190.

⁶³ Ronald Hyam, *Empire and Sexuality: The British Experience* (Manchester: Manchester Univ. Press, 1991).

Fishing Fleet. As I argued above, however, critical work on the fiction of Anglo-India has not kept pace.

The Structure of this Study.

The purpose of the first chapter is to provide, in keeping with my historical materialist approach, an overview of the historical moment in Britain and in British India at the turn of the 20th century in order to link literature to history. I have devoted a chapter to the historical situation because the events and discursive formations discussed are pertinent to all the novels of interracial marriage and may thus be contained in one chapter. I am aware that this structure, in a sense, distinguishes the literature from the history and may be considered to undermine my belief that the two are inseparable. I have chosen to structure the chapters in this way, however, so that it is necessary only to refer back to appropriate features of the historical moment, obviating the need to repeat similar material in the close readings of the texts.

I begin the chapter with an examination of the position of the Anglo-Indian at the turn of the 20th century as I argue throughout this thesis that this is pertinent to the production of the novels as well as to their form and theme. Following this I turn to the historical situation in Britain and British India, examining briefly the politics of the Indo-British relationship at the turn of the 20th century and colonial discourses of race and gender. My understanding of these discursive formations is derived, as will be obvious, from recent historical work on British India and the relationship between metropolis and colony, informed by colonial discourse theory. I have also looked at accounts of British India and its governance, political

and social life, which were written contemporaneously with the novels of interracial marriage.

In Chapter 2, prompted by the understanding that fiction is not simply mimetic but shapes a story according to certain conventions, I move on to the formal properties of the novels of interracial marriage, examining genre, narrative voice and characterisation. In the first section I look at the romance genre, focusing on the romance as love story between two people but noting that this overlaps with the adventure or quest romance in the novels of interracial marriage. I argue that the form of the romance novel employed in the novels of interracial marriage – the two-suitor plot – works to place the British protagonist in intimacy with the Indian temporarily, allowing the text to represent the horrors of Indian marriage and other domestic practices, before restoring him/her to the British suitor when the work of exposure is done. The potentially transgressive union is thus undercut by the use of the two-suitor romance plot.

The second section turns to the narrative voice, referring back to the examination of the Anglo-Indian in Chapter 1. My argument is that authority on matters Indian was attributed to Anglo-Indian authors by reviewers and, by extension, the reading public. The novels of interracial marriage have a didactic purpose, I argue, grounded in this authorial authority. Not only do the novels contain material of the ‘manners and customs’ type more common to travel literature, but, using Mikhail Bakhtin’s theory of the polyphonic novel, I argue that the authors create characters as objects under their ‘finalizing artistic vision’ in Bakhtin’s phrase.⁶⁴ In this way dialogue is closed down and the narrative voice becomes monologic, presenting an unchallenged Anglo-Indian perspective.

⁶⁴ Mikhail Bakhtin, *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics*, trans. by Caryl Emerson (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1999), p.5.

The final section of the chapter examines the ‘objects’, the stereotypical characters of the novels of interracial marriage. The stereotype as an important concept in postcolonial theory is discussed in Chapter 1. Chapter 2 builds on the concept to examine the appearance and function of stereotypes in the novels.

In chapters 3 and 4 I examine the texts in terms of their treatment of the interracial union. I have chosen to structure these chapters according to the plots of the novels which follow the same trajectory with only minor variations, as noted before. Chapter 3 therefore looks at the meeting of the protagonists and the desires which prompt them to marry, focusing on the gendered representation of those desires. As I argued previously, it was not only male authors who were ‘concerned with forms of cross-cultural contact’ in Young’s phrase, and chapter 3 examines the non-sexual desires which female authors represented as prompting the marriage, demonstrating that India attracted in ways other than the sexual. Chapter 4 examines the consequences of the marriage to the Indian Other. In this chapter I develop my argument that the didactically-inclined Anglo-Indian authors, by imaginatively placing their British protagonists in intimacy with an Indian partner in an Indian home, work to prove the unfeasibility of close contact between the races. The depiction of the Indian home has political consequences too, as I demonstrate. The two chapters focus on the interplay of the tropes of distance and proximity or intimacy, ignorance and knowledge in the representation of the union to highlight the ‘multi-valence and indeterminability of these fictions’.⁶⁵

The Conclusion focuses more explicitly on political readings of the texts in the first section. The personal relationship across racial boundaries in these novels is a metaphor, I argue, for the political relationship between the two countries. As

⁶⁵ Lisa Lowe, *Critical Terrains : French and British Orientalisms* (Ithaca; London: Cornell University Press, 1991), p.x.

Darby observes, '[m]ost of the narratives of British India are intensely political' and 'seldom split the private from the public', the personal from the political.⁶⁶ I then discuss the interesting but unresolvable issue of how much influence these didactically-inclined novels had on their readers. Finally I explore the reasons for the disappearance of so much Anglo-Indian fiction from popular and critical attention before ending with the negative consequences to critical work on the 19th- and 20th-century literature on the Raj which flow from neglecting Anglo-Indian fiction.

⁶⁶ Darby, pp.79–80.

CHAPTER 1 HISTORICAL SITUATION OF THE NOVELS.

Introduction.

My critical approach being historical materialist, I am interested to see how the novels of interracial marriage may, in Brannigan's words, be viewed as 'a constitutive and inseparable part of history in the making.'¹ I therefore investigate the historical events of the period of their production and the discourses in which they participate. Lisa Lowe, discussing Foucault's concept of discourse, emphasises 'that neither the conditions of discursive formation nor the objects of knowledge are identical, static, or continuous through time.'² Thus the novels, again in Brannigan's words, are 'rife with the creative forces, disruptions and contradictions of history.'³ My thesis demonstrates the ways in which these novels participate in, reinforce and/or challenge the developing discourses of colonialism, race and gender of the second half of the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The authors of the texts were themselves products of a specific historical situation, participators in contemporary discourses of colonialism, race and gender. Many of the authors had lived for long periods in India, their views of India and Indians constituted by colonial and racial discourses which, by the late 19th century, commonly constructed the Indians as racially inferior to the British, possessed of a backward culture and incapable of self-government.⁴ This construction of the racially inferior Indian had not always been as marked as it became towards the turn of the 20th century, however. Taylor (1808-1876), the earliest author discussed here, lived in India from the age of 15 years and worked for the Nizam of Hyderabad. His writing demonstrates the more liberal attitudes

¹ Brannigan, pp.3-4.

² Lowe, p.6.

³ Brannigan, p.4.

⁴ I discuss this construction in a section of this chapter on 'Racial Theory.'

towards India and Indians which characterise the pre-‘Mutiny’ period. The other male authors examined here worked in post-‘Mutiny’ India under the Raj and participated in altered colonial, racial and gender discourses. Bray entered the Indian army in 1878 and served in Afghanistan and India; Greenhow (1829-1912) retired as a Surgeon-Major in the Bengal Medical Service in 1876, having survived the siege of Lucknow. Bruce’s career remains a mystery (to me) but his novels suggest a detailed knowledge of India, in particular of the state of Maharashtra. Of the female authors, Cross (1868-1952), Perrin (1867-1934), Diver (1867-1945) and Savi (1865-1954) were born and grew up in India under the British Raj. Perrin, Diver and Savi married men who worked in India as did Penny (1847-1939) who married a missionary, and Wynne (1879-1959) whose husband worked in Bombay. All of these authors knew the Anglo-Indian community and its ways intimately. They were what Said characterises as the ‘White Man’ which, in India, meant ‘speaking in a certain way, behaving according to a code of regulations, and even feeling certain things and not others. It meant specific judgments, evaluations, gestures.’⁵ The only authors who had never been to India were Wylie and the Askews but, as I demonstrate, they had learnt from textual sources the knowledge of ‘the White Man.’

The Anglo-Indian authors were able to position themselves as authorities on India based on their experience in the administration of the subcontinent. Diver, for example, asserts her knowledge of Indian opinion in her Author’s Note to *The Singer Passes*:

I wish to make it clear that not only all events, but all Indian episodes – even the least – are based on actual fact; all opinions expressed by Indians, about

⁵ Said, p.227.

themselves and the English, or about Indian affairs, are based on their actual opinions written or spoken.⁶

Reviews of the novels often stressed the author's familiarity with things Indian. Reviewers of Bruce's novels, for example, mention his knowledge and insight into Indian issues. A review in *The Scotsman* of Bruce's novel, *The Eurasian* (1913), praises it as '[a] study of Anglo-Indian life which bears many traces of being the work of one intimately acquainted with conditions in our vast dependency'.⁷ Similarly, reviews of Steel's novels invariably compare her to Kipling and speak of the 'intimacy of the author's knowledge'⁸ while Perrin was compared to Kipling as well as Steel and, according to a *Guardian* review of *The Stronger Claim*, 'writes of what she knows.'⁹

Considering themselves to have acquired a great deal of 'knowledge' about the character of the Indian, Indian cultural practices and so on, many of the Indian Civil Service (ICS) and Indian army men and their wives retired to England to live on small pensions in Anglo-Indian enclaves like Ealing and South Kensington in west London, where they constituted a distinct type.¹⁰ Gilmour comments that they were prone to being seen as old bores, talking endlessly of their work in India,

⁶ Maud Diver, *The Singer Passes: An Indian Tapestry* (London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1934).

⁷ Quoted in the front papers of Henry Bruce, *The Residency* (London: John Long Limited, 1914).

⁸ *Spectator* review of 21 July 1894 on 'Mrs Steel's Latest Fiction'.

⁹ Review from the end papers of *The Anglo-Indians* of books by the same author.

¹⁰ David Gilmour, *The Ruling Caste: Imperial Lives in the Victorian Raj* (London: John Murray, 2005), p.324. The pension for an ICS officer who served for more than 5 years was £150pa but £20 for every year of service in excess of 5 years, as long as the pension did not exceed £450. In the late 1890s this would not have allowed the retired Civilian to live in the lavish style to which he had been accustomed in India. A. L. Bowley in his *Wages in the United Kingdom in the 19th century* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1900) gives figures for the cost of living of a 'professional man': £100 for rent and taxes, £42 for two maids, £104 for food and cleaning materials for 4 people, £56 for laundry, heating, light and £50 for dress would not have allowed a Civilian, even on the highest possible pension of £450, much surplus cash. Many Civilians were of course on much smaller pensions and must have found themselves living in much less comfortable circumstances. In Alice Perrin's *The Anglo-Indians* the Fleetwoods, returning from India, take a large house in South Kensington at 8 guineas a week, a sum considerably in excess of Bowley's £100 p.a. for rent and taxes.

while Edward Thompson in his novel, *An Indian Day*, suggests that retired Civilians became either 'stagnant pastures of fat contentment or volcanoes of spouting impotence'.¹¹ A more sympathetic view of the retired Anglo-Indian official is offered by Walter Lawrence in *The India We Served*:

These splendid men working like slaves, their wives encouraging them, telling them it was the greatest of England's missions and endeavours, well worth the exile, the separation from children, and the certainty of the scrap-heap at an age when many are at their best - what must they feel in this strange new world, when they are told they were all wrong and sinners against the new-world Rousseau [Woodrow Wilson] and his law of self-determination.¹²

Mr Fleetwood in *The Anglo-Indians* by Perrin is a retired Anglo-Indian who cannot find his place in the strange new world he returns to in England. As many ex-colonial officials actually did, the fictional Mr. Fleetwood thinks of writing a book in order to offer advice based on his experience and to supplement his meagre income:

"Shall I write a book?" suggested Mr. Fleetwood in cynical spirit. "*Crams by a Commissioner; or the way to govern India, by John Fleetwood, Bengal Civil Service, retired.*" Anything you like."

"Yes, I know the kind of thing," said Mrs. Bullen. "Twelve and sixpence net, illustrated with photographs that haven't much to do with the letterpress."¹³

Mr. Fleetwood, deprived of 'the freedom, the power, the responsibility that had been to him as second nature throughout his adult years', dies, dreaming of India, believing that his expertise and experience have little meaning.¹⁴ Gilmour suggests that 'it is easy to understand the bewilderment of men who, recruited to do a particular job, saw their work and their significance repeatedly altered and reduced in the course of their career... they could not comprehend how ... they were ending up derided for their intentions and consigned by history to the role of

¹¹ Edward Thompson, *An Indian Day* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1940), p.208.

¹² Walter Lawrence, *The India We Served* (London: Cassell and Company, Ltd., 1927), p.122.

¹³ Alice Perrin, *The Anglo-Indians* (London: Methuen & Co.Ltd., 1912), pp.183-4.

¹⁴ Perrin, *Anglo-Indians*, p.227.

oppressors'.¹⁵ Gilmour is referring to the changes in the administration of India between 1883 (the Ilbert Bill controversy) and the mid-1910s when dyarchy - power-sharing with Indians in government - was proposed. Kipling, in his autobiography, *Something of Myself*, comments on what he regards as the hypocrisy of those who condemn the British oppression of 'the Native.'

Likewise, in my wanderings beyond Villiers Street, I had met several men and an occasional woman, whom I by no means loved. ...They derided my poor little Gods of the East, and asserted that the British in India spent violent lives 'oppressing' the Native. (This in a land where white girls of sixteen, at twelve or fourteen pounds per annum, hauled thirty and forty pounds weight of bath-water at a time up four flights of stairs!)¹⁶

It was not just male Anglo-Indians, suffering from reduced status, lower living standards and a sense of loss or grievance, who went into print on the subject of India. Female Anglo-Indians like Cross, Diver, Perrin, Penny, Steel and Savi wrote novels which not only supplemented the family income, but also gave them a chance to air their knowledge about India and to advertise the importance of the work of the ICS and other administrative organisations in the subcontinent.¹⁷ In this they were helped by the great interest in the colonies at the turn of the 19th century as noted in the Introduction.

The rest of this chapter outlines the historical situation in which these Anglo-Indian authors acquired their 'knowledge' of India and produced their novels. I start with the growth of the nationalist movement in India and the British response, based on colonial and racial discourses and their material effects on colonial relationships in India.

¹⁵ Gilmour, p.327.

¹⁶ Rudyard Kipling, *Something of Myself* (Kindle: Kypros Press, 2015), 1.836.

¹⁷ According to the British Census reports all of these female authors, most of whom had been born in India, were resident in England at the turn of the 20th century, their husbands having retired to the UK.

India at the turn of the Twentieth Century.

The India that most of the Anglo-Indian authors knew was, in Harold Fielding-Hall's phrase, 'awake or waking' after being 'nearly dead or sleeping for long' by the turn of the 20th century.¹⁸ Fielding-Hall in *The Passing of Empire* (1913) described the problem of imperial overstretch and the potential failure of the British hold on India:

[Y]ou cannot hold India by force alone. Force has its place, but it cannot stand alone. We conquered and have governed India by the consent of the people. In fact, she conquered herself and gave herself to us. ... Given any superiority you like to assume of Englishman over Indian, could a handful of English officials and seventy thousand or less British troops conquer and rule three hundred-and-fifty millions of people, living in a climate suitable to them but deadly to us, against their will? It is impossible, incredible, absurd. There has been always a tacit and generally an active consent.¹⁹

But, he continued, that consent was disappearing and Britain's position in India was being challenged by Indians (often English-educated) who were keen to take a share in the government of their country. I devote some space to the state of Indian society and events at the turn of the 20th century as this is the historical situation in which the novels of interracial marriage are set and on which they comment.

Through the use of the narratives of modern histories of this period in Indian history and the narratives produced by contemporary commentators one may gain an insight into the concerns and complacencies of the British under the Raj.

Not all of India was under direct British rule at the turn of the 20th century. As Thomas and Barbara Metcalf point out, 'about one-third of the people of India, were, until the end of the Raj, to remain under the "indirect rule" of some 500

¹⁸ H. Fielding-Hall, *The Passing of Empire* (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1913), p.v.

¹⁹ Fielding-Hall, p.6.

princes'.²⁰ Schools were established in India for these future rulers to turn them into a governing class who would be loyal to the Raj and govern their lands with due care and attention. Many were also sent to England to Eton, followed by Oxford or Cambridge. These English-educated princes, nawabs and rajahs, feature in the novels of interracial marriage as (initially) acceptable husbands for British women because of their high rank. Their promise fades, however, the fictional princes perhaps taking as their models some of the historical princes. Maria Misra describes the career of the Maharajah Bhupinder Singh of Patiala,

He had been sent to Aitchison College [one of the Indian schools set up to educate the young Indian gentleman] for four years, and had also been trained in the principles of modern administration. However, he turned out to be an incorrigible rake who neglected the rigours of sound administration for a life of hunting, wrestling, poker and protracted trips to Europe.²¹

Hsu-Ming Teo observes that Bhupinder Singh's intention to marry a 'working-class English woman caused considerable consternation because all sorts of boundaries were being transgressed: class, caste, racial, and social'.²² No doubt there were effective Indian princely rulers but the Maharajah of Patiala was the type who caught the attention.

The Government of India Act of 1858 promised Indians participation in the administration of their country, 'in accordance with their "education, ability and integrity"'.²³ The pace of this change was, however, 'so slow to be realised that by 1880 there were a mere 16 Indians among the 900 members of the ICS' according to Burton Stein.²⁴ Few Indians were able to gain entrance to the ICS as the

²⁰ Barbara Daly Metcalf and Thomas R Metcalf, *A Concise History of Modern India* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012) loc.2000-7.

²¹ Maria Misra, *Vishnu's Crowded Temple: India since the Great Rebellion* (London: New York: Allen Lane, 2007), p.15.

²² Teo, 'Romancing the Raj', p.9.

²³ Burton Stein, *A History of India* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1998), p.250.

²⁴ Stein, p.250.

obstacles to taking the examination and to promotion within the Service if entrance were gained were formidable.²⁵ A Western-educated Indian elite, partially created by Macaulay's Minute of 1835 and increasingly, towards the end of the 19th century, educated in Britain, had been persuaded that the British had much to offer in terms of progress. In Misra's estimation, they 'were keen to help manage the promotion of India's hidebound culture into the premier division of world civilization' but grew disillusioned with the pace of change under the Raj.²⁶ Associations of Indians agitating for greater Indian involvement in municipal government appeared in growing numbers. Misra argues that the underlying cause of the growth in political organisation was 'the egregious racism of the Raj, which had, by the early 1880s, become impossible for even the most stoical to ignore'.²⁷

It was the controversy in 1883 about the Ilbert Bill which was, in Misra's phrase, 'the straw that broke the *babu*'s back'.²⁸ Europeans were outraged at the suggestion that those in the *mofussil* should be tried by Indian judges as they were in the cities. Images, associated with the 'Mutiny', of white women at the mercy of brown men, were summoned up and mass meetings held throughout India in opposition to the Bill. The government had to offer a compromise. In the meantime European outrage at the Bill had incensed Indian opinion. It was, as Misra notes, 'impossible not to conclude from this episode that British claims to colour-blind justice were a sham'.²⁹ She continues, '[t]he race issue poisoned

²⁵ Misra cites the case of Anand Mohan Bose who gained a first at Cambridge and passed all the ICS entrance examinations with flying colours. He did not, however, do well at horse-riding and was therefore failed. This is perhaps the model for Bruce's Yeshwant Khamsikar in *The Native Wife* whose failure at the ICS riding test so embitters him that he turns to anti-British terrorism.

²⁶ Misra, p.49.

²⁷ Misra, p.54.

²⁸ Misra, p.55. '[W]ell-educated and westernized Indians were lampooned as babus, originally an honorific title but in British mouths meant to suggest a pretentious "jumped-up native" trying to imitate a western gentleman.'

²⁹ Misra, p.56.

relations irremediably and brought about the crystallization of nationalist group activity that had been gathering in Indian cities throughout the 1870s'.³⁰

In 1885 the Indian National Congress (INC) held its first meeting in Bombay. Metcalf and Metcalf note that, '[t]he key to Congress's initial cohesion [...] were the shared interests and common experiences of a cohort of Indians from across the country, many of whom had shared formative experiences in London while studying for the bar or the civil service.'³¹ Its members were drawn from the professions – law, education, medicine, journalism. The first years of the INC were unremarkable. They lobbied for greater Indian involvement in government, but did not question the continuance of British rule. It was Lord Curzon, the Viceroy of India between 1897 and 1905, whom Misra describes as '[t]he external irritant that quickened the pearl of nationalist unity' in India who 'succeeded where all Indian politicians had failed and united the nationalists'.³² Curzon's partition of Bengal galvanized the INC into action. A contemporary British commentator, Valentine Chirol, acknowledged the role of Curzon in fomenting discontent in his book *Indian Unrest* (1910), but maintained that 'its main spring is a deep-rooted antagonism to all the principles on which Western society, especially in a democratic country like England, has been built up.'³³ This antagonism, according to Chirol, had been whipped up by the native press and the outcome was that

we are at the present moment confronted with a murderous conspiracy, whose aim it is to subvert the Government of the country and to make British rule impossible by establishing general terrorism. Their organization is effective and far-reaching; their numbers are believed to be considerable; ...The method they favour at present is political assassination; the method of Mazzini

³⁰ Misra, p.56.

³¹ Metcalf and Metcalf, 1.2448.

³² Misra, p.75.

³³ Valentine Chirol, *Indian Unrest* (London: Macmillan & Co., 1910), p.4.

in his worst moods. Already they have a long score of murders or attempted murders to their account.³⁴

It is this perspective on early 20th century Indian unrest that is generally to be found in the novels of interracial marriage.³⁵

The Indian demand for greater participation in government features in eight of the novels of interracial marriage. Subversive British-educated lawyers feature in Greenhow's *Brenda's Experiment*, Bray's *Chattel or Wife*, Savi's *The Daughter-in-Law* and Wynne's *Warning* as the Indian husband of a British wife. He is often engaged in anti-British activities and meets his death as a result. There seems to have existed in the minds of the British (certainly in the minds of the authors of these novels) a connection between studying for the Bar and insurrectionary tendencies. This is perhaps not surprising considering the number of Indian lawyers who were members of the political and cultural reform groups in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, a fact that the Anglo-Indian authors clearly knew. Taylor's *Seeta*, Wylie's *The Daughter of Brahma* and Bruce's *The Native Wife* all represent Indian nationalist agitation while Diver's *Lilamani* features a conversation between the Indian Sir Lakshman Singh and the Anglo-Indian Mrs Despard on 'this our day of agitation and transition'.³⁶ Sir Lakshman refers to 'Bengal agitators or inflammatory news-writers', people who, like himself, are

³⁴ Chirol, p.336.

³⁵ There were, of course, other perspectives expressed on the nationalist movement in India. Writing in *The Labour Monthly* in March, 1922, Benjamin Horniman castigated Chirol as 'the supreme example of the constitutional inability of the Britisher to understand and appreciate [the Indians] in a sympathetic spirit... the virtue of British rule and the crime of "Indian unrest," ... occupied more of his attention as an investigator than the larger question of its causes.' [p.232] Horniman had been editor of the *Bombay Chronicle* before he was deported from India in 1919 following his exposure of the Jallianwala Bagh massacre in the British press. Accessed on 23rd February 2016 at https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/sections/britain/periodicals/labour_monthly/1922/03/x02.htm.

³⁶ Bruce's novel features a fictionalised account of the attempted murder of a magistrate called Kingsford. A bomb thrown into the carriage in which he was thought to be travelling killed the wife and daughter of a barrister who were the carriage's occupants. In Bruce's account the magistrate was called Kingsbury and it was his wife and daughter who were killed.

passionate about the welfare of India but are wrong in their belief that the British Raj must go.³⁷

It is obvious that many of the Anglo-Indian authors were aware of the increasing unrest in India, especially after Curzon's partition of Bengal in 1905. This was partly responsible for the *Swadeshi* movement as well as for violence aimed at the British. After 1905 the British Raj began to look increasingly insecure. Against the backdrop of the threat of violence, the Anglo-Indian community had also to deal with social changes; Mannsaker observes that '[t]he wife of a British army officer, [...] accustomed to considering Indians only as servants, now found herself expected to give precedence to a native civilian at official functions'.³⁸ In addition, Denis Judd suggests, many of the Anglo-Indian community 'felt that the Indian advancement threatened their high-salaried jobs [...] quite apart from the foundations of the Empire in India'.³⁹ It was, indeed, a time of 'agitation and transition' and, I argue, Anglo-Indian authors turned to novel-writing in an attempt to show their metropolitan readers some of the problems facing not only their own world but the Empire itself.

Colonial Aims in India.

Robert Johnson proposes that a factor in the Anglo-Indian response to Indian nationalism was 'the genuine belief for the overwhelming majority of imperial

³⁷ Maud Diver, *Lilamani: A Study in Possibilities*, ed. by Ralph J. Crane (New Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 2004), p.83.

³⁸ Frances Mannsaker, 'East and West: Anglo-Indian Racial Attitudes as Reflected in Popular Fiction, 1890-1914', *Victorian Studies*, 24.1 (1980), 33-51 (p. 33).

³⁹ Denis Judd, *The Lion and the Tiger: The Rise and Fall of the British Raj, 1600-1947* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2005), p.105.

administrators' in 'the benevolent mission'.⁴⁰ The benevolent or civilising mission was framed as a moral duty on the British in their colonies to raise the indigenous peoples whom they governed to their own level of civilisation. As such it became a justification of imperialism, masking what Young describes as 'the real aim of the nineteenth century imperial system' which was 'domestic political and economic stability'.⁴¹

The civilising mission had a long history by the end of the 19th century. Thomas Metcalf describes the creation of a 'distinctive ideology of imperial governance' in the first part of the century inspired by the ideals of liberalism.⁴² Liberalism promulgated the idea that human nature was 'intrinsically the same everywhere, and that it could be totally and completely transformed... by the workings of law, education and free trade'.⁴³

James Mill in his *History of British India* (1818) theorised about how the British might set India on the road to civilisation. John Stuart Mill, adapting his father's work, devised a plan to bring this about. Behind his plan lay, as Metcalf observes, 'a hierarchical classification of all societies' in which the British occupied the top rank by virtue of their progress towards civilisation.⁴⁴ In *On Representative Government* J. S. Mill argued that representative government could only be allowed to those peoples who were capable of benefiting from it. Otherwise improvement would have to be imposed from outside by a 'government of leading-strings', for, Mill wrote, that

⁴⁰ Robert Johnson, *British Imperialism* (Houndmills, Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003), p.3
As I will demonstrate in this study, belief in the civilising mission was possibly less of a 'genuine belief' than Johnson believes. .

⁴¹ Robert J. C Young, *Postcolonialism: An Historical Introduction* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001), pp. 30–31.

⁴² Thomas R Metcalf, *Ideologies of the Raj* (Cambridge: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1994), p.29.

⁴³ Metcalf, p.29.

⁴⁴ Metcalf, p.31.

seems to be the one required to carry such a people the most rapidly through the next necessary step in social progress. ... I need scarcely remark that leading-strings are only admissible as a means of gradually training the people to walk alone.⁴⁵

For Mill, the 'government of leading-strings' was temporary.

There were obviously contradictions within the theory of the civilising mission as it developed over the 19th century. The hierarchy of societies presupposed that Western or British civilisation was at the apex and that all others were inferior. At first, as Metcalf argues, '[w]ith neither racial nor environmental theories to sustain it, culture alone remained to distinguish Europeans from those overseas'.⁴⁶ Thus, it was necessary to disparage the cultures of non-Europeans to maintain British superiority and right to rule while leaving open the possibility that Indians might be led towards civilisation. The development of racial theory in the second half of the 19th century undermined the civilising mission by linking cultural and racial characteristics inextricably with an essentialist concept of race held responsible for cultural practices.⁴⁷ This weakened the notion that Indians might be turned into Englishmen as their unchanging racial characteristics would preclude this. Fielding-Hall's argument for not including Indians in the ICS demonstrates some of the contradictions: he affirms a common humanity between the British and Indians while maintaining their racial difference made them unfit for government:

that in essence all humanity is one I am never tired of affirming. But there are differences of race, real differences, important differences, differences that the Indian himself should be the last to try to ignore. Every nation is given by nature the qualities peculiar to it and which it is its duty to cultivate for the world's sake.⁴⁸

⁴⁵ John Stuart Mill, *Utilitarianism: Liberty; Representative Government* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, Ltd., 1960), p.199.

⁴⁶ Metcalf, p.34.

⁴⁷ I develop this point in the next section on racial theory.

⁴⁸ Fielding-Hall, p.187.

The civilising mission by the end of the 19th century had turned into the self-sacrificing ‘white man’s burden’, the moral duty to serve ‘[y]our new-caught sullen peoples,/Half devil and half child’.⁴⁹ Young suggests that, by the late 19th century, ‘the racist assumption that the native was incapable of education up to the level of the European’ implied that they would always need colonial rule.⁵⁰

The shifting discourses of the civilising mission or the white man’s burden are reflected in the novels of interracial marriage. In the earliest, Taylor’s *Seeta*, the Anglicisation of the female protagonist, Seeta, is almost accomplished at the time of her death, thus supporting the liberal belief, noted above, that education could reform and modernise the colonised peoples. Many of the Indian characters in this novel endorse British rule: Narendra, Seeta’s grandfather, acknowledges that the Company might be ‘wiser’ in their dealings but maintains that ‘we...who live and thrive under their protection’ should not speak against them.⁵¹ The colonial and racial discourses of the later novels demonstrate the erosion of the British belief in the civilising mission. An education at Eton and Oxford cannot reform the intrinsically ‘savage’ natures of the Indian prince in *The Englishwoman*, nor the lawyers in *Brenda’s Experiment*, *The Daughter-in-Law* or *Warning*. These characters plot against the British for reasons which are left vague in the novels and there is no sense that, had the British been ‘wiser’ in their dealings with their Indian subjects, the subversion might not have happened. Blame for the subversive activities of the Indian protagonist is placed instead on their failure to recognise the benefits of British rule.

⁴⁹ Rudyard Kipling, *The Works of Rudyard Kipling*, Reprinted 1994 (Ware: Wordsworth, 1994), pp.262–3.

⁵⁰ Young, *Postcolonialism*, p.32.

⁵¹ Philip Meadows Taylor, *Seeta* (New Delhi: Asian Education Services, 1989), p.30.

Nineteenth Century Racial Theory

That human character, individual and national, is traceable solely to the nature of that race to which the individual or nation belongs, is a statement which I know must meet with the severest opposition. ... it is simply a fact, the most remarkable, the most comprehensive, which philosophy has announced. *Race is everything: literature, science, art, in a word, civilization, depend on it* (my italics).⁵²

In the early years of British rule in India under the East India Company (EIC) in the late 18th and early 19th centuries closer relations existed between the British and their new Indian subjects than was the case 100 years later when the novels of interracial marriage were written.⁵³ The ‘Indian Mutiny’ of 1857, as Thomas Metcalf notes, ‘opened up ... a gulf between Briton and Indian that could not easily be closed again after the restoration of order’.⁵⁴ The period 1870-1914 in which the majority of the novels were written has been described as ‘the Golden Age of Racism’.⁵⁵ The purpose of this section is to outline the racial discourse of the late 19th century in which the novels participate.

Charles Darwin’s *The Origin of Species* (1859), had a profound impact on the racial theory which was developing in the mid-century, epitomised by the passage from Robert Knox quoted above. In *Origin of Species*, Darwin explained how racial differences might arise over very long periods of time among animals and humans with common ancestors. Twelve years later, in 1871, Darwin published *The Descent of Man*. Michael Banton writes that

by the time he came to write *The Descent*, Darwin was willing to follow Francis Galton [his cousin]... in underlining the importance of natural selection as a process affecting the civilised nations and in calling for eugenic measures.⁵⁶

⁵² Robert Knox, *The Races of Men; a Fragment* (Philadelphia: Lea & Blanchard, 1850), p.7.

⁵³ Cf. William Dalrymple, *White Mughals: Love and Betrayal in Eighteenth-Century India* (London: HarperCollins, 2002).

⁵⁴ Metcalf, p.43.

⁵⁵ Alana Lentin, *Racism: A Beginner’s Guide* (Richmond: Oneworld, 2008), p.5.

⁵⁶ Michael Banton, *Racial Theories*, 2nd ed (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.87.

In *The Descent*, for example, Darwin attributed the character of the people of the United States to natural selection – ‘for the more energetic, restless and courageous men from parts of Europe have emigrated... and have there succeeded best’.⁵⁷ He also wrote about the ‘declining fertility and likely extinction of savage races – with their smaller brains – unable to change their habits when brought into contact with civilised races’.⁵⁸ The argument that ‘savage races’ were ‘unable to change their habits’ suggests that Darwin subscribed to what David Theo Goldberg has called ‘racial naturalism’. Goldberg distinguishes this from ‘racial historicism’ or ‘racial progressivism’. Racial naturalism rested on ‘the claim of inherent racial inferiority’ while ‘the historicist or progressivist commitment concern[ed] itself with contrasting claims of historical immaturity’.⁵⁹

The British in India before the ‘Mutiny’, had accepted ‘racial historicism’, believing that racial differences were a matter of culture and development and that those lower down the scale of progress could be helped up by those higher. As noted above, on this theory rested the justification for the civilising mission. By the end of the 19th century this had been replaced by a widespread belief in racial naturalism. Thus, in the novels of interracial marriage, the Western-educated princes and lawyers are represented within a paradigm of racial naturalism. This Indian husband may be educated and Anglicised, demonstrating his apparent ability to ‘progress’ in racial terms, but once back in his native country he reverts to what he always was, an Indian, thus showing that his racially naturalised character can never change. Arthur de Gobineau, in *An Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races* of 1853-5, ‘explains’ this inability: ‘Imitation does not necessarily imply a serious breach with hereditary instincts; but no one has a real

⁵⁷ Charles Darwin, *The Descent of Man* (D. Appleton and Co., 1871), p.172.

⁵⁸ Darwin, p.193.

⁵⁹ David Theo Goldberg, *The Racial State* (Malden, Mass: Blackwell Publishers, 2002), p.74.

part in any civilization until he is able to make progress by himself, without direction from others'.⁶⁰

This theory makes an appearance in the novels. In *Brenda's Experiment*, for example, Dr. Barton warns that, in the Indian, 'there is a want of originality, of striking out new lines of inquiry, of doing more than follow... the most intricate reasoning'.⁶¹ The inability of the Indian to make progress by himself was thus a justification for continued British rule.

Another important feature of racial theory at the turn of the 20th century was that race and culture were inseparable. Metcalf (see above) comments on the fact that in the first half of the 19th century, culture alone distinguished the coloniser from the colonised. Later, racial theory was brought in to bolster the argument for the inferiority of the colonised. Christine Bolt writes:

Both cultural characteristics, such as language, and physical features were used to classify the different divisions of man. Ultimately the two became confused, so that something called 'race' came to be seen as the prime determinant of all the important traits of body and soul, character and personality, of human beings and nations. In other words, race became far more than a biological concept: race and culture were dangerously linked.⁶²

Implicit in this is also confusion between 'race' and 'nation' at the end of the 19th century. Neil MacMaster argues that the terms 'race' and 'nation' had become interchangeable and the 'nation was viewed, quite literally, as a distinct biological group.... one that carried essential characteristics in the germ-plasm or "blood"'.⁶³

The confusion between culture and race is evident in the majority of the novels as is the concept of the inherent racial inferiority of the Indian. For example, Lucy

⁶⁰ Arthur de Gobineau, *The Inequality of Human Races*, trans. by Adrian Collins (London: William Heinemann), p.74.

⁶¹ Henry Martineau Greenhow, *Brenda's Experiment* (London: Jarrold and Sons, 1896), p.9.

⁶² Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1971), p.7.

⁶³ Neil MacMaster, *Racism in Europe, 1870-2000* (Hampshire ; New York: Palgrave, 2001), p.56.

Travers in *The Englishwoman* demands of her rejected suitor Hugh Seymour why her prospective husband, Prince Jotindra,

should be treated as a sort of inferior person because his skin happens to be a shade darker than your skin.... What right have you to speak of him disparagingly ... and to consider yourself so superior because you happen to be an Englishman.⁶⁴

Hugh's reply shows the confusion between race and culture: 'We [the British] take pride in telling the truth: we despise liars. But the Eastern mind sees no harm in a lie.'⁶⁵ Thus, Indians lie because they are Indians.

The Englishwoman, along with all the other novels examined in this thesis, represents racial (and other) difference through the use of stereotypes, an important concept in postcolonial theory. Stuart Hall describes stereotypes thus: 'Stereotypes get hold of the few "simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized" characteristics about a person, reduce everything about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development to eternity'.⁶⁶ One of the stereotypes of the Indian, as the quote from *The Englishwoman* demonstrates, is that of an inherently deceitful nature. The colonised is thus stripped of his/her own identity and reduced to a representation of deceitfulness.

According to Hall, stereotyping 'deploys a strategy of splitting'.⁶⁷ It divides 'Us', the 'normal', from 'Them', the 'strange'. In this way it acts as a 'mechanism of boundary maintenance', boundaries between 'Us' and 'Them' requiring to be clearly demarcated within colonial discourse.⁶⁸ It can also function to bind

⁶⁴ Alice & Claude Askew, *The Englishwoman* (London: Cassell and Company, Ltd., 1912), p.45.

⁶⁵ Askew, p.45.

⁶⁶ Stuart Hall, *Representation : Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices.*, ed. by Stuart Hall (London: Sage, 2002), p.258.

⁶⁷ Hall, p.258.

⁶⁸ Hall, p.258.

together 'Us' into one community for 'We' are also stereotyped in the process of stereotyping the Other as 'Our' opposite. If the stereotypical attributes of the Indian are laziness, deceitfulness, decadence, effeminacy, for example, those of the Englishman are industriousness, honesty, self-discipline and masculinity. In other words, in racialising the Other, the European racialised him/herself. Again the passage from *The Englishwoman* demonstrates this: a stereotypical attribute of the Englishman, in opposition to the deceitful Indian, is truthfulness. Stereotypes of the Indian and the British attributes are repeated endlessly in the novels of interracial marriage. I have deliberately chosen a passage from a novel by two authors who had never been to India to demonstrate the power and ubiquity of these stereotypes of 'Us' and 'Them' circulated in colonial discourse.

Finally, Hall argues, stereotyping occurs in situations where there are 'gross inequalities of power', such as the colonial situation. The coloniser exercises symbolic power by the fact that s/he is able to represent the colonised in certain ways within a regime of representation. 'Stereotyping', says Hall, 'is a key element in this exercise of symbolic violence.'⁶⁹

Bhabha, in his essay 'The Other Question', notes the dependence of colonial discourse on the apparently stable foundations provided by stereotypes to justify colonial rule. The fixed inferiority of the colonised serves as justification for the colonial conquest and the civilising mission. He goes on to argue, however, that the stereotype is only *apparently* fixed. The fact that it requires constant repetition to prove it to be true demonstrates its instability. Thus the stereotype is a

form of knowledge and identification that vacillates between what is always 'in place', already known and something that must be anxiously repeated... as if the essential duplicity of the Asiatic, or the bestial sexual licence of the African that needs no proof, can never really, in discourse, be proved.⁷⁰

⁶⁹ Hall, p.259.

⁷⁰ Homi K Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2004), p.95.

Stereotypes, being an important practice in the colonial exercise of power, however, can change in their definitions of the colonised, depending on the political and cultural needs of the colonisers. For example, as Ania Loomba observes, the “mild Hindoo” gave way to an image of the Hindu rapist after the 1857 “Mutiny”.⁷¹ Similarly, the novels of interracial marriage represent contradictory stereotypes of Indian women who, on the one hand, ‘express unlimited sensuality; they are more or less stupid, and above all they are willing’ and, on the other, the ‘Sita’ type who is devoted, submissive and chaste.⁷² Bhabha writes that, given the fluidity of stereotypes, they are ‘always demanding a specific and strategic calculation of their effects’.⁷³ I calculate the effects of the use of different stereotypes of the Indian woman later in this study.

The Effects of Racial Theory in India

Growing separation between coloniser and colonised

In the early days of British rule in India liaisons between British men and Indian women were common. EIC officials were posted for years at a time with little hope of home leave when travel back to Britain took months. There were also few European women in India – Thomas Williamson in his *East India Vade-Mecum* estimated that there were only 250 European women in India in 1810. He described the practice which had grown up among the European men in India of taking a ‘native mistress.’ He regarded the practice as suited to the circumstances and noted ‘that matrimony is not so practicable in India as in Europe; and that ... it is impossible for the generality of European inhabitants to act in exact conformity

⁷¹ Ania Loomba, *Colonialism/postcolonialism* (London: Routledge, 2005), p. 85.

⁷² Said, p.207.

⁷³ Bhabha, p.96.

with those excellent doctrines, which teach us to avoid “fornication, and all other deadly sins”.⁷⁴ Vyvyen Brendon in *Children of the Raj* devotes a chapter to some prominent EIC officials who kept Indian women, either as wives or as concubines: for example, Sir David Ochterlony, the British Resident of Delhi who had 13 wives, Captain Hercules Skinner whose Eurasian son, James, formed the famous ‘Skinner’s Horse’, and William Palmer, whose granddaughter, Mary, was the wife of Taylor. Brendon’s research shows that the practice of taking an Indian wife or concubine was common among all ranks in India: the baptismal records of St John’s Church in Calcutta show that more than 50% of the children ‘baptised between 1767 and 1782 were Eurasian and illegitimate’.⁷⁵ She adds that ‘[h]istorians estimate that about ninety percent of the British men in India by the mid-18th century had married (officially or unofficially) Indian or Eurasian women’.⁷⁶ The estimate is taken from Hyam’s *Empire and Sexuality* who, however, notes that ‘there is a great deal of uncertainty about this’.⁷⁷

Collingham observes that British men were thus brought into contact with the Indian women’s families and domestic practices; she quotes Richard Burton who wrote that ‘the mistress... taught her companion not only Hindi but also the syntaxes of native life’.⁷⁸ Taylor in *Seeta* makes a similar point when he represents the protagonist, Cyril Brandon, musing on the benefits of marrying a ‘native’ woman: ‘what a hold it [would give] him of the country and its affections’.⁷⁹ These men tended also to live in Indianised fashion as the wife or concubine often lived in purdah.

⁷⁴ Quoted in Collingham, p.73.

⁷⁵ Vyvyen Brendon, *Children of the Raj* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 2005), p.43.

⁷⁶ Brendon, p.43.

⁷⁷ Hyam, p.116.

⁷⁸ Quoted in Collingham, p.8.

⁷⁹ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.87.

This ‘indianisation’ of the British did not last, however. Collingham notes the difference between attitudes to the practice of interracial marriage exhibited by Thomas Williamson in 1810 and J.C. Stocqueler in *The Handbook of India* of 1844. She writes:

[Stocqueler’s] only mention of the system was in a footnote on the origin of the Eurasian community: “We should here explain that by the ‘original source’ is meant the illicit connections between Europeans and native females, a sort of connection that is happily falling into desuetude.” In the 1854 edition of Stocqueler’s handbook no mention was made of these illicit connections.⁸⁰

Collingham regards this omission as indicating that ‘illicit connections’ had ceased. I think this an overstatement but certainly the practice of keeping Indian wives or concubines was no longer as common or as acceptable as it had been at the beginning of the 19th century.

Despite the desirability of separation from a British perspective, however, it was not possible to keep the races completely segregated, physically or culturally. The next two sections discuss some of the hybrid creations of British colonial rule in India.

Mimic Men

I mentioned above the Western-educated Indians who grew disillusioned with the pace of reform under the Raj. ‘Mimic men’ is the term coined by Bhabha to describe this class of Westernised Indians who had been created to assist the British in governing India but were nevertheless regarded with ambivalence by them. In his essay ‘Of Mimicry and Man’, Bhabha explores the concept of the ‘mimic man’, using Thomas Macaulay’s (in)famous Minute of 1835 as a starting-

⁸⁰ Collingham, p.74. Collingham is quoting from J. H. Stocqueler, *The Hand-Book of India, a Guide to the Stranger and the Traveller, and a Companion to the Resident* (London : W.H. Allen & Co., 1844), p.49.

point. In this Minute Macaulay spoke of the need to educate Indians to act as intermediaries between the British administration and the colonised population. They were to constitute ‘a class of interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern – a class of persons Indian in blood and colour, but English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect’.⁸¹ This process of educating the natives produced ‘the mimic man’.⁸² As Radhika Mohanram notes in *Imperial White*, ‘the logic of copies determines that the purity of the original can never be achieved:... the copy always already carries a debasement and a contamination within it’.⁸³ The mimic men were generally disliked and distrusted by the British who had created them. Judd quotes Lord Lytton who described them in 1877: ‘The only political representatives of native opinion are the Babus, whom we have educated to write semi-seditious articles in the native Press, and who really represent nothing but the social anomaly of their own position.’⁸⁴ Bhabha writes of the ‘double vision’ of mimicry that it was menacing for ‘in disclosing the ambivalence of colonial discourse [it] also disrupts its authority.’⁸⁵ The coloniser’s authority, based on the moral justification of the civilising mission, is disrupted by the ‘inauthenticity’ of the mimic man who can never be civilised.⁸⁶

Bhabha never mentions ‘the mimic woman’, the highly Anglicised Indian woman who appears in Taylor’s *Seeta*. Indian mimic women would be much rarer in British India, of course. The novels of interracial marriage feature, however, many mimic men who deceive British women into marrying them with their surface Anglicisation.

⁸¹ Quoted in Bhabha, pp.124–5.

⁸² Judd, p.103.

⁸³ Radhika Mohanram, *Imperial White: Race, Diaspora, and the British Empire* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2007), p.13.

⁸⁴ Judd, p.103.

⁸⁵ Bhabha, p.126.

⁸⁶ Patrick Brantlinger, *Victorian Literature and Postcolonial Studies* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2009), p.82.

Going Native

As mentioned, the early years of British rule in India under the EIC saw many men in the administration and the military become thoroughly acculturated. Collingham argues that, in this early period, the British were open to Indian influences and incorporated many aspects of Indian life: smoking hookahs, wearing Indian dress, eating Indian food, enjoying Indian entertainments like the nautch and speaking the local languages fluently, often with an Indian wife to help them to learn the 'syntaxes of native life'.⁸⁷ They were, in effect, British 'mimic men' although the phrase most often used to describe this transformation is 'going native.'

Collingham suggests that process of indianisation or 'going native' on the part of early Company officials was, in part, a response to the need to find ways to govern the territory which they had recently acquired. She argues that the new British administrators 'saw themselves as a new Indian nobility and extended the legitimization of rule in an Indian idiom to the individual by adopting a range of Indian practices'.⁸⁸ It was also justified on the grounds that the adoption of Indian customs helped the British to survive in the very different Indian climate.

Collingham quotes from Williamson's 1810 *East India Vade-Mecum*:

We ... must coincide with the habits of the natives, to a certain extent, if we mean to retain health, or to acquire comfort. ... I do not mean to say that we should imitate, much less adopt, without discrimination, all we see; but it may be considered an axiom, that, by taking the general outline of indigenous customs for our guide, if we err, it will be on the safe side.⁸⁹

⁸⁷ Quoted in Collingham, p.8.

⁸⁸ Collingham, p.15.

⁸⁹ Collingham, pp.23–4.

Linda Colley suggests, 'flexibility in the face of enforced exposure to alien surroundings' and a 'markedly chameleon tendency' among the British was a useful quality which helped them 'to attempt empire on the scale they did'.⁹⁰

There is a hint in the passage from Williamson that the adoption of Indian practices had always occasioned some uneasiness on the part of the British, however. He draws back from advocating total immersion in Indian cultural practices. And, as Brantlinger notes, 'going native' came to suggest, over the course of the 19th century, a regression from civilisation and civilised values for the European. Writing of Tennyson's poem 'Locksley Hall', in which the narrator imagines taking a 'savage woman, [who] will rear my dusky race', Brantlinger notes the narrator, 'horrified at the thought of betraying progress, civilization and the white race,' immediately recoils from this vision.⁹¹ Collingham makes a strong case for the rejection of Indian influences on the British body and cultural habits in the second half of the 19th century as the British established themselves more firmly as the rulers of India. Better communications allowed greater interaction between the colony and the metropole so that metropolitan influence on the colonisers increased. A new middle class code of morals and manners meant, according to Collingham, that '[t]he open body of the nabob was made obsolete as the boundaries delineating how far India and Indians might encroach upon the British body were defined', culminating in the 'peculiar, parochial habits' for which the British became (in)famous. David Spurr suggests that 'going native' is a particularly abhorrent state to the British for it is an 'in-between state, where the colonial subject threatens to become neither one thing nor the other, neither

⁹⁰ Linda Colley, *Captives* (New York: Pantheon Books, 2002), p.360.

⁹¹ Brantlinger, *Victorian Literature*, p.89.

civilized or savage, but strangely without definition'.⁹² It is also an abject state because of 'the failure to mark the necessary bounds of exclusion', exclusion from/of the Indian in this case.⁹³ Robert Young, however, suggests that, rather than rejecting the influence of the Other, the English were always attracted by it:

the fixity of identity for which Englishness developed such a reputation arose because it was in fact continually being contested, and was rather designed to mask its uncertainty, its sense of being estranged from itself, sick with desire for the other.⁹⁴

The narrator of 'Locksley Hall' is an excellent example of this estrangement from self. If the 'fixity of identity' of the British was a response to uncertainty about that identity, the threat of interracial marriage is that the Indian spouse, the racial Other, might have the power to make the British partner lose his/her identity and become 'other' in the throes of romantic love or under coercion. The possibility of 'going native' highlights the instability of the construction of the superiority of the British race/character by showing how easy it was for a Briton to cross the racial boundaries. The novels of interracial marriage deal with the possibility of 'going native' often by constructing British protagonists whose racial identity is fixed in its stereotypical attributes and there is only one novel, Bruce's *The Native Wife*, which represents an Englishman 'going native'. I discuss the stereotypical attributes of the British protagonists in chapter 2.

Britain at the turn of the 20th century.

The country to which retiring Anglo-Indian families returned was, as Ledger and Luckhurst write, going through 'a time fraught with anxiety and with an exciting

⁹² David Spurr, *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1993), p.84.

⁹³ Spurr, p.84.

⁹⁴ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.2.

sense of possibility' as the Victorian age gave way to the Modern.⁹⁵ It was a time of endings as the century drew to a close but also a time when 'Britain's cultural and political landscape was being lit up by a constellation of new formations: the new woman, the new imperialism....'.⁹⁶ It was a period not only of technological and intellectual advance but also of political reform. The Third Reform Act of 1884 gave another 6 million men the vote but still excluded women and about 40% of men who did not comply with the criteria as a householder or a £10 lodger. Two years earlier, however, the Married Women's Property Act had given women the right to own and control their own property and to a separate legal identity.⁹⁷ Since the franchise still depended on a property qualification, this removed an important obstacle to female enfranchisement. Most important for my thesis, however, were the advent of the 'New Imperialism', the increased interest in the new 'sciences' of race and eugenics, and the New Woman in the last decades of the 19th century.

The New Imperialism

In the last decades of the 19th century Britain's empire expanded enormously. In 1883 John Seeley described the Empire as consisting of 'four great groups of territory, inhabited either chiefly or to a large extent by Englishmen and subject to the Crown, and a fifth great territory also subject to the Crown and ruled by

⁹⁵ *The Fin de Siècle: A Reader in Cultural History, c.1880-1900*, ed. by Sally Ledger and Roger Luckhurst (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), p.xiii.

⁹⁶ Ledger and Luckhurst, p.xiii.

⁹⁷ Previously a wife was defined under law as a 'feme covert', which subsumed a woman's legal identity under that of her husband. A feme covert could not hold property or make contracts in her own name. The Act of 1882 made the married woman a 'feme sole' under law in the same way as spinsters and widows.

English officials, but inhabited by a completely foreign race'.⁹⁸ The four great groups were Canada, the West Indies, South Africa and Australia; the fifth territory was India. The Empire in Seeley's view was composed of people 'of our own blood' and thus had 'some of the fundamental conditions of stability' while India, 'bound to us only by the tie of conquest... vastly increases our dangers and responsibilities'.⁹⁹

Within a few years of the publication of *The Expansion of England*, the Empire had changed its character. New colonies were added in Asia and Africa until by the beginning of the 20th century as Norman McCord and Melissa Purdue write, 'Queen Victoria reigned over about 400 million people, inhabiting more than one-fifth of the globe'.¹⁰⁰ They note that 'three-quarters of the empire's population lived in India, while the self-governing "white" colonies held only a small proportion of the total'.¹⁰¹ Joseph Chamberlain in 1897, in a speech entitled 'The True Conception of Empire', reflects the change which had appeared in British evaluation of the Empire. The self-governing colonies are to be regarded 'as part of ourselves' while 'a much greater area, a much more numerous population in tropical climes... where the native population must always vastly outnumber the white inhabitants' has been added to the empire and has changed 'the Imperial idea'.¹⁰² The British, Chamberlain claimed, now felt 'a sense of obligation' towards the newly acquired colonies and he calls on the civilising mission to justify British rule:

⁹⁸ J.R. Seeley, *The Expansion of England: Two Courses of Lectures* (London: Macmillan & Co. Ltd., 1904), pp.11-12.

⁹⁹ Seeley, p.13.

¹⁰⁰ Norman McCord and Bill Purdue, *British History, 1815-1914* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), p.477 <<http://site.ebrary.com/id/10212257>> [accessed 26 November 2014].

¹⁰¹ McCord and Purdue, p.477.

¹⁰² Quoted in Ledger and Luckhurst, p.139.

We feel now that our rule over these territories can only be justified if we can show that it adds to the happiness and prosperity of the people... In carrying out this work of civilisation we are fulfilling what I believe to be our national mission, and we are finding scope for the exercise of those faculties and qualities which have made of us a great governing race.¹⁰³

The novels of interracial marriage endorse this picture of the British as a people whose racial character placed on them a moral duty to spread civilisation and to govern. In *The Englishwoman*, for example, Hugh declares himself to be ‘one of the East’s conquerors; ...a young member of the ruling race’.¹⁰⁴ This quote reminds one, however, that the civilising mission was only possible because Britain had subjugated India and other territories by military force.¹⁰⁵ Despite the confidence of Chamberlain in Britain as ‘a great governing race’ and the jingoistic sentiments of the late 19th century, the expansion of the empire in such a short time was not unproblematic. It has been suggested that the ‘forward policy’ was driven by Britain’s awareness of increased competition from other European powers which were also acquiring new colonies in Asia and Africa and challenging her position. Britain needed to protect her commercial interests and find new markets and sources of raw materials. In the process, however, the problem of imperial overstretch and its concomitant worries grew even greater. Colley argues in *Captives* that ‘the scale of the disparity between Britain’s massive imperial pretensions on the one hand and its modest domestic size and resources on the other was remarkable’.¹⁰⁶ She suggests that this ‘imperial overstretch’ was a constant source of worry and that,

alongside routine declarations of Britain’s political, religious, economic, and

¹⁰³ Quoted in Ledger and Luckhurst, p.139.

¹⁰⁴ Askew and Askew, Claude, p.44.

¹⁰⁵ The phrase ‘ruling race’ appears in other novels of interracial marriage. See, for example, Victoria Cross, *Life of My Heart*, 6th edn (London: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd.,1905), p.273 where Frances Wilson is described as ‘a daughter of the ruling race.’

¹⁰⁶ Colley, *Captives*, pp.5–6.

ultimately racial superiority, there were always other voices, sometimes very powerful ones, pointing out that its varieties of domestic smallness were bound to make sustaining a large overseas territorial empire a challenging and chancing business.¹⁰⁷

Fielding-Hall, quoted above, was one of these 'other voices', cautioning that India could not be held without the consent of its people. Similarly, Colley observes that a consequence of British lack of manpower was that it had always to rely on local help in order to govern effectively. Without Indian troops, Britain would never have been able to maintain its rule in South Asia.¹⁰⁸

Another anxiety, this time from a cultural perspective, as Eric Hobsbawm describes, was that Chamberlain's 'great governing race' would lose their 'willingness to wage the Darwinian struggle for the survival of the fittest' and succumb to 'the wealth and luxury which power and enterprise had brought' which would 'weaken the fibres of those muscles whose constant efforts were necessary to maintain it. Did not empire lead to parasitism at the centre and the eventual triumph of the barbarians?'¹⁰⁹ History showed that empires rose and fell.

Racial Degeneration

Hobsbawm mentions the Darwinian struggle for the survival of the fittest which the British might lose if Britain became a rentier state. As discussed previously, Darwin's theory of evolution and Galton's theory of the survival of the fittest were highly influential at the end of the 19th century, fostering the idea of a hierarchy of races, at the bottom of which were the primitive or 'savage' races who, Darwin predicted, would be wiped out by their failure to manage their contact with the

¹⁰⁷ Colley, *Captives*, p.10.

¹⁰⁸ Colley, *Captives*, p.372.

¹⁰⁹ Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Empires: 1875- 1914* (London: Phoenix Press, 1987), p.83.

‘civilised races’.¹¹⁰ The British ranked themselves as holding the highest place in this hierarchy.¹¹¹ Darwin’s theory of evolution, however, as Ledger and Luckhurst point out, also ‘provided the basis for notions of racial and cultural degeneration’.¹¹² If a species could progress, it could also regress under certain conditions. Edwin Lankester in his 1880 work, *Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism*, argues that ‘the set of forces which we sum up under the heading “natural selection”’ could ‘act on the structure of an organism’, not just to ‘increase the complexity of its structure’ but also to ‘diminish the complexity’.¹¹³ The latter option he termed ‘degeneration’ and applied it to ‘ourselves, the white races of Europe’, questioning whether the British had really progressed physically and intellectually from the ancient Greeks.¹¹⁴

The concerns expressed by Lankester were exacerbated at the turn of the century by the failure of British troops in the Boer War of 1899-1902, a failure which, as Antoinette Burton notes, ‘was attributed to the fact that the troops recruited for the Boer war had been of inferior racial stock’.¹¹⁵ Robert Rentoul in *Race Culture; or, Race Suicide?* (1906) describes the ‘physical deterioration’ of men who were recruited for the war:

Reference to the Annual Report of the Surgeon-General of the British Army for 1902 shows that in that year 87,609 recruits were examined, and of this number, 26,913 were rejected as unfit for service, and 60,696 as fit. But of the fit, 1,597 had to be discharged from the Army within three months after enlisting. During the year, in the home army, 4,598 men had to be discharged as unfit; while from the whole army, home and foreign, 8,869 were discharged as unfit for further service....¹¹⁶

¹¹⁰ Banton, p.87.

¹¹¹ See above, p.38.

¹¹² Ledger and Luckhurst, p.1.

¹¹³ E. Ray (Edwin Ray) Lankester, *Degeneration: A Chapter in Darwinism* (London: Macmillan and Co., 1880), p.29.

¹¹⁴ Lankester, pp.59–60.

¹¹⁵ Antoinette M. Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Woman and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994), p.49.

¹¹⁶ Robert Rentoul, *Race Culture; Or, Race Suicide? (A Plea for the Unborn)* (London and Felling-on-Tyne: The Walter Scott Publishing Co., Ltd., 1906), p.19.

Many of those found unfit to fight were drawn from the British working and lower-middle classes – categorised by Rentoul as ‘labourers, servants and husbandmen’, ‘artisans’, ‘mechanics’, ‘shopmen and clerks’.¹¹⁷ Rentoul also cites, however, figures for the number of men of ‘professional occupations’ who were rejected for active service – 236 per 1000.¹¹⁸ Assuming that those in ‘professional occupations’ enjoyed higher wages and a healthier life style than the other categories, it is noticeable that the rejection rate, while lower than for the other categories, is still quite high. And these men would be those from whom the administrators of Empire were drawn.

It is surprising that, in this climate of concern over racial degeneration, the Anglo-Indian authors were writing about what would have been a very obvious cause of racial degeneration – marriage to a member of an ‘inferior’ race. I discuss in Chapters 2 and 3 how the novels manage this concern. One strategy, however, applies to most of the marriages. The Indian spouse holds a high social and caste position as does his/her partner so that, in the words of Nevil Sinclair, the protagonist of *Lilamani*, ‘[a] marriage like ours would be quite another affair’ from the ‘wrong kind of crossing’ of low-caste Indian women and lower-class British men.¹¹⁹ This implies a fluidity in the construction of the hierarchy of races where Indians (if princes) may rank above lower-class Englishmen.

The Changing Role of Women.

The third discursive formation that must be addressed is that of gender, specifically discourses of femininity, at the end of the 19th century. I demonstrate

¹¹⁷ Rentoul, p. 20.

¹¹⁸ Rentoul, p. 20.

¹¹⁹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.118.

that the discourse of femininity, where it intersects with colonial and racial discourses, produces a different representation of the British woman in India as well as of the Indian woman.

The representations of British and Indian women found in the novels of interracial marriage are grounded in material changes in the social and economic position of women in Britain and in the debates over competing discourses of femininity which circulated at the end of the 19th century. The struggle of the Angel in the House against the New Woman is reflected in the novels, as I show, in the very different representations of the identities and roles of British women, ranging from the valorisation of the dependent Joan Mansfield in *Warning* to Cross's sexually liberated Frances Wilson in *Life of My Heart*. The representations of Indian women are especially conflicted for, as she did in the debate over the abolition of *sati*, the Indian woman again becomes 'the ground for a complex and competing set of struggles' due to the 'wrongs' from which she suffered.¹²⁰ Her 'degradation' was used by the British in an argument which went back to James Mill who wrote in his 1818 *History of British India* that the treatment of women was an index of a nation's progress towards civilisation. The 'habitual contempt' in which the Hindu was perceived to hold women was regarded by the British at the end of the 19th century as evidence of their unfitness for self-government.¹²¹ Similarly British feminists used the 'degradation' of Indian women to argue for the vote and thus a voice in national and imperial issues.¹²²

¹²⁰ Lata Mani, *Contentious Traditions: The Debate on Sati in Colonial India* (New Delhi; New York: Oxford University Press, 1998), p.2.

¹²¹ James Mill, *The History of British India* (Dodo Press, 2008), I, pp. 364–366.

¹²² Cf. Burton.

The Angel in the House versus the New Woman

The term ‘Angel in the House’, used to describe the Victorian ideal of womanhood, is derived from Coventry Patmore’s poem written between 1854-63. It was a feature of mid-Victorian thinking on gender roles that men and women, by virtue of their essential qualities, belonged in separate spheres. Men belonged in the public sphere – the world of business, commerce and politics – while women were naturally fitted for the private sphere, centred on domestic duties and the family.¹²³ The Angel in the House, because of her qualities of affection, sympathy, self-sacrifice and innocence, was regarded as morally and spiritually superior to her husband, although intellectually and physically inferior. Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall describe the relationship of the mid-Victorian husband and wife:

A good marriage rested on the man and woman bringing to it their complementary characteristics. The man would be the ‘lofty pine’, the woman ‘the slender vine’, the man would take responsibility for the stormy world of business and politics, the woman would cast her sunbeams over the murky clouds he had to contend with.¹²⁴

How far this discourse of ideal womanhood reflected social practice is questionable. Elizabeth Langland argues in *Nobody’s Angels*, that ‘the house and its mistress served as a significant adjunct to a man’s commercial endeavours’.¹²⁵ The money that the husband earned was managed by the wife and went ‘toward the acquisition of social and political status’.¹²⁶

¹²³ Cf. John Tosh, *A Man’s Place : Masculinity and the Middle-Class Home in Victorian England* (New Haven, Conn.; London: Yale University Press, 2007), p.77 As Tosh points out, however, ‘the doctrine of separate spheres...has been dogmatically asserted by modern scholars than it ever was by the Victorians themselves.’ While women remained in the private sphere, men had access to both the private and the public.

¹²⁴ Leonore Davidoff and Catherine Hall, *Family Fortunes: Men and Women of the English Middle Class 1780-1850* (London: Routledge, 2002), p.179.

¹²⁵ Elizabeth Langland, *Nobody’s Angels: Middle-Class Women and Domestic Ideology in Victorian Culture* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1995), p.8.

¹²⁶ Langland, p.8.

The Angel in the House derived her moral and spiritual superiority in part from her modesty, her supposed lack of sexual feeling. The discourse of male sexual desire in the late 19th century legitimated, to a certain extent, more frequent sexual encounters for men. According to Dr William Acton in his popular 1857 book on *The Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs*: [i]n ‘a healthy continent [male] adult’, ‘the sex-passion... is very powerful... [W]hen a man is physically in the fittest state to procreate his species... he instinctively seeks the society of women’.¹²⁷ In contrast, according to Acton: ‘As a general rule, a modest woman seldom desires any sexual gratification for herself. She submits to her husband's embraces, but principally to gratify him; and, were it not for the desire of maternity, would far rather be relieved from his attentions’.¹²⁸ John Tosh writes that it was partly through Acton, whose work was frequently cited, that ‘the passionless woman... [became] firmly established in respectable middle-class culture’.¹²⁹ The notion of female sexual unresponsiveness remained influential even as the discourse of the New Woman was challenging its ‘truth’.

An important part of the Angel’s role was her charitable and philanthropic work outside the home. Women’s essential nurturing qualities having been developed by their domestic and familial role, they were thought to have a mission to ‘work towards a moral transformation and regeneration of society’.¹³⁰ The involvement in charitable and philanthropic work could lead women into overtly political campaigns, however, as June Purvis shows in her discussion of female involvement in the anti-slavery campaigns of the mid-Victorian period. While

¹²⁷ William Acton, *The Functions and Disorders of the Reproductive Organs in Childhood, Youth, Adult Age, and Advanced Life: Considered in Their Physiological, Social, and Moral Relations*. (London: J. & A. Churchill, 1875), pp.72–3.

¹²⁸ Acton, p.213.

¹²⁹ Tosh, *A Man’s Place*, p.44.

¹³⁰ June Purvis, *Women’s History: Britain, 1850-1945. An Introduction* (London: Routledge, 2000), p.221.

stressing that ‘their activities were an extension of their domestic and religious duties,’ these women were paradoxically involved in ‘the leading reform movement of the period, one that pioneered methods of extra-Parliamentary agitation in order to bring about legislative change’.¹³¹ A wife still occupied a subordinate position to her husband, however, as a *feme covert*, while educational opportunities for all women were limited as were career opportunities for the ‘odd’ or ‘surplus’ women.¹³²

A competing discourse of femininity to the Angel in the House emerged during the course of the 19th century as women campaigned against their subordinate position in social, legal and political contexts.¹³³ The debate over the status of women came to prominence in the last two decades of the century and was fought over in the media of the *fin de siècle*, producing a range of fictional New Women with very different characteristics, sitting, as Richardson and Willis note, ‘on the cusp... between fiction and fact’.¹³⁴ It is impossible to describe the definitive New Woman as she took so many forms. Her only consistent attribute is that she functioned as a challenge to contemporary gender roles and relations.

The term ‘New Woman’ as a sign of a new and different type of femininity was popularised by Sarah Grand in an essay of 1895 published in the *North American Review*, entitled ‘The New Aspect of the Woman Question.’ Grand’s essay focuses on the ways in which men have subjugated women over the centuries. Now, she claims, the ‘suffering sex’ is ‘awaking from their long apathy’ and women will

¹³¹ Purvis, p.221.

¹³² The 1851 census had revealed that there were more adult women than men in the population. These were women who would in many cases have to earn their own living as their chance of marrying was reduced.

¹³³ Cf. Chapter 9 by June Hannam on ‘Women and Politics’ which describes womens’ engagement in campaigns aimed at social and political reform of womens’ subordinate position. Purvis, pp.217–246.

¹³⁴ *The New Woman in Fiction and Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms*, ed. by Angelique Richardson and Chris Willis (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002), p.1.

take on work in the public sphere for which they are fitted by their natural caring and maternal instincts.¹³⁵ They will ‘set the human household in order, to see to it that all is clean and sweet and comfortable for the men who are fit to help us make home in it’.¹³⁶ Grand thus appears as an early difference feminist. Believing that men and women were equal as persons, she argued that men and women had different abilities which should be valued and utilised as appropriate.

There were over 100 New Woman novels published between 1883 and 1900 by authors other than Grand.¹³⁷ These novels feature women characters who repudiate the role of the Angel for independence and access to a wider cultural world. Focusing on the experience of women, New Woman novels dealt with female dissatisfaction with the conventional Victorian marriage, raising issues of marital rape, male cruelty and violence and the double standard of morality. In doing so, they called for a reconfiguring of gender relations which allowed women greater social and sexual freedom.

This is the New Woman according to her supporters. Opponents of women’s social and sexual emancipation, according to Ledger and Luckhurst, described the New Woman in less positive terms: she was ‘a “mannish”, overeducated bore (frequently a “Girton girl”’, a bad mother (if not an embittered spinster), and ... lacking in all the attributes usually associated with ideal Victorian womanhood...’¹³⁸ ‘She has tried to prove that woman’s mission is something higher than the bearing of children and the bringing them up. But she has

¹³⁵ Sarah Grand, ‘The New Aspect of the Woman Question’, *The North American Review*, 158.448 (1894), 270–76 (p.271).

¹³⁶ Grand, p.276.

¹³⁷ Richardson and Willis, p.1. For example, Olive Schreiner, Mona Caird and George Egerton.

¹³⁸ Ledger and Luckhurst, p.76.

failed.¹³⁹ Diver's *Lilamani* has a New Woman character who, having qualified as a doctor, becomes dissatisfied with her New Woman beliefs and jealous of the submissive, self-sacrificing Indian woman, Lilamani, for possessing the qualities which alone help a woman to fulfilment. I discuss this representation of the New Woman in Diver's novel in Chapter 3.

Further complicating the term, another 'New Woman' is described by Chris Willis. This is the New Woman of 'commercialized popular literature' and she is 'a far cry from her sensitive, suffering sisters' in the fiction of the New Women novelists described above.¹⁴⁰ These novels 'portrayed attractive, independent, highly intelligent young women entering a range of professions before ... falling in love'.¹⁴¹ This New Woman shares the aspirations and expectations of the female characters of Grand and other novelists mentioned above while sharing the attributes of the romantic heroine. As Willis notes, this New Woman is 'largely depoliticized in the process'.¹⁴² Her marriage at the end of the novel removes any threat her challenge to gender roles might raise. Many of the heroines of the Anglo-Indian interracial romances have attributes of the New Woman heroine discussed by Willis. They are attractive, intelligent, desirous of something more for themselves than marriage and motherhood and this desire precipitates the action of the novel.

In her discussion of cross-racial marriage in *Writing under the Raj*, Paxton argues that 'the emergence of the New Woman as a popular figure in romances of

¹³⁹ From 'Character Note: The New Woman', published in Cornhill Magazine in 1894. Excerpted in Ledger and Luckhurst, p.83.

¹⁴⁰ Chris Willis, "'Heaven Defend Me from Political or Highly-Educated Women!': Packaging the New Woman for Mass Consumption', in *The New Woman in Fiction and Fact: Fin-de-Siècle Feminisms*, p.53.

¹⁴¹ Willis, p.53.

¹⁴² Willis, p.64.

the 1890s' made 'these cross-racial romances possible'.¹⁴³ Paxton is basing this assertion on the three novels of interracial romance which she discusses, two of which, Cross's *Life of My Heart* and Perrin's *Waters of Destruction*, I analyse in this thesis. She further argues that '[a]ll the New Women who appear in these cross-racial romances can be seen as productions of the changes in the social and sexual contract in the historical real of British metropolitan culture in the 1880s' and that they 'frankly express[ed] female erotic desires and often ... assert[ed] their sexual independence.'¹⁴⁴ Applied to Cross's novel, this narrow definition of the New Woman is undoubtedly true: Frances Wilson is represented as an independent, highly intelligent woman who asserts her sexual independence by cohabiting with a working-class Muslim man. The novel does, in Paxton's words, 'open up new configurations of social and erotic desire' which I explore in chapter 4.¹⁴⁵ *Life of My Heart* is radical in its portrayal of a sexually-liberated New Woman heroine, however. In contradiction of Paxton's theory, other cross-racial romances studied in this thesis feature British heroines more like the New Women described by Willis as packaged for mass consumption while yet other cross-racial romances here represent heroines who are best described as Angels in the House. Whatever their type of femininity, these British heroines almost invariably find themselves the victims of repressive Indian domestic and marital practices and this, I suggest, is the point of these novels – to offer a view into a space normally hidden from the British gaze, the Indian home, and reveal its cultural backwardness.

¹⁴³ Paxton, pp.195-196.

¹⁴⁴ Paxton, p.196. I do not agree with Paxton that Lou Larken in Perrin's *Waters of Destruction* is a New Woman. Although Lou is British, she is 'country-born', meaning that she has lived her whole life in India. I read her not as a New Woman but as a Eurasian. She is vulgar and outspoken and unaware of the niceties of British social interaction. .

¹⁴⁵ Paxton, p.196.

British Representations of the Indian woman and Indian domestic life.

As Barbara Caine writes, British feminism in the late 19th century was influenced by imperial concerns which, I have shown, were widely discussed during this period. Many feminists, Caine explains, ‘devoutly supported imperial ambitions, employed imperial rhetoric, and saw their own struggle as gaining greater significance because of the special position British women occupied in relation to other women in the empire’.¹⁴⁶ British women, extending their philanthropic activities to the sphere of empire, argued that they had a role to play in working for the emancipation of women of the empire, their suffering Indian sisters among them. The feminist argument, Burton states, was that ‘without female emancipation, Britain’s special mission to the world was in peril’¹⁴⁷ and she explains that feminist periodicals of the period

routinely discussed Indian women’s social and economic conditions in terms of the new medical, educational, and other reform activities being taken up on their behalf by English women: they publicized the need for British women’s professional services at a historical moment when women were becoming professionalized at a rapid rate.¹⁴⁸

Women teachers and doctors could now go to India to work for Indian women, as well as to practise their skills. Burton, however, makes the essential point that ‘[w]hat the reading public viewed was nothing like the contemporary Indian woman, but rather a set of very particular constructions of colonial womanhood that British feminist interpreters created’.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁶ Barbara Caine, *English Feminism, 1780-1980* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p.168.

¹⁴⁷ Burton, p.207.

¹⁴⁸ Burton, pp.101–2.

¹⁴⁹ Burton, p.101.

Missionaries in India whose work was informed by a different agenda nevertheless produced very similar constructions of Indian womanhood. The Indian woman was perceived to live in a degraded condition but this could be remedied by her conversion to Christianity. For example, according to the Preface to Irene Barnes's 1898 book on the work of the Church of England Zenana Missionary Society, *Behind the Pardah*, the text reveals

the mission of the daughters of a ruling race in using the national hold we possess as an opportunity to bring the new cruse of the Gospel to bear... upon India's woes, and thus silently but surely... to transform from within, to conquer at its centre, the secret of all India's future — its degraded home life — uplifting it to new ideals and bright and holy realities.¹⁵⁰

The feminist and missionary constructions of this degraded home life were both agreed on the need to combat a range of Indian domestic practices including polygamy, child marriage, enforced widowhood, and particularly the practice of *pardah*. This need was based on a theory, mentioned above, with a long history: the treatment of women was an index of the civilisation of a nation. James Mill articulated this theory in his *History*:

The condition of the women is one of the most remarkable circumstances in the manners of nations. Among rude people, the women are generally degraded; among civilized people they are exalted... Nothing can exceed the habitual contempt which the Hindus entertain for their women.¹⁵¹

The construction of Indian domestic and marital practices as uncivilised had political overtones. Self-government could only be allowed to a people capable of benefitting from it; until such time as Indians could demonstrate evidence of social progress, particularly in the reform of domestic practices and the treatment of women, the British Raj must remain.

¹⁵⁰ Irene H. Barnes, *Behind the Pardah: The Story of C.E.Z.M.S Work in India* (London: Marshall Brothers, 1898), pp.v-vi.

¹⁵¹ Mill, I, pp.364-366.

This social reform was, however, difficult to promote among Indians. Partha Chatterjee describes the resistance to British attempts at reform of domestic practices initiated by the Indian nationalist movement. In a construction of the female gender role which seems similar to that of the Angel in the House, Indian women were represented as the guardians of 'Indianness', and particularly of Indian spirituality which was a part of the culture which was superior to that of the West and must remain so.¹⁵² Another problem with female reform was, as the journalist Mary Frances Billington argued in *Woman in India* in 1895, that factual information about life in the Indian home was hard to come by:

Of its women especially, in their inner life and thought, only the most superficial knowledge exists. Few, very few, of the thousands of English women who go to the East have cared or tried to penetrate the mysteries which lie beyond the purdah. *Few of the very few who have done so have seen it without prejudice.*¹⁵³ (my italics).

Billington, for one, seems to have recognised that much of the 'knowledge' about Indian women in the West was constructed, based on a few ill-conceived notions of Indian women's lives.

It was a common complaint among Anglo-Indians that, while their womenfolk were available to the gaze of the Indian man, Indian women were not to be seen by British men. Billington observes that Anglo-Indians have

a funny little cant excuse which they repeat till one first grows weary of it, and afterwards laughs at. It is always said quite gravely, and as they think is crushingly convincing. "They don't let us know their wives. And until they do that we really must, you know, decline to admit them to society."¹⁵⁴

It is a 'funny little cant excuse' which appears in the novels of interracial marriage.

Alan Archdale in *A Mixed Marriage* offers it: if St. George Carlyon visited his

¹⁵² Partha Chatterjee, 'Colonialism, Nationalism, and Colonialized Women: The Contest in India', *American Ethnologist*, 16.4 (1989), pp.622–33.

¹⁵³ Mary Frances Billington, *Woman in India* (London: Chapman & Hall Ltd., 1895), p.xvi.

¹⁵⁴ Billington, p.285.

friend Mir Yacoob, he 'might live half a lifetime with [him], and he would know no more of his inner domestic life than he knows now'.¹⁵⁵

Janaki Nair in her essay, 'Uncovering the Zenana' notes that British men

had been unable to penetrate (and the copulative metaphor is intended here) ... the dark, enclosed spaces of the zenanas. ... The private domain of the zenana, which Indian men had so jealously guarded, comprised an absence in the constitution of colonial discourse.¹⁵⁶

The zenana thus offered a space 'from which Englishwomen could produce new "knowledge" of the colonized'¹⁵⁷ for they had access to this space while British men did not. The novels of interracial marriage which describe a British woman's life in the zenana are thus, along with feminist and missionary literature of the same period, producing 'new knowledge' about this uncolonised space. It is possible that some of the Anglo-Indian female authors of the texts had been inside a zenana; beginning in the late 19th century 'purdah parties' at which Anglo-Indian women and upper-caste Indian women could meet were arranged although it is questionable how much information might be derived from these parties about Indian domestic life.

The representations of the zenana and its inhabitants in the novels of interracial marriage are thus based on colonial discourses about Indian women, perhaps on feminist and missionary literature. Once the British protagonist, male or female, has been placed within the Indian home, however, there is great variety in what s/he finds there. Very different constructions of the Indian woman emerge, from the Sita-type of devoted and submissive wife to be found in *Lilamani* by Diver and *The Daughter of Brahma* by Wylie to the sexually available and alluring

¹⁵⁵ Mrs Frank Penny, *A Mixed Marriage* (London: Methuen & Co.Ltd., 1903), p.37.

¹⁵⁶ Janaki Nair, 'Uncovering the Zenana: Visions of Indian Womanhood in Englishwomen's Writings, 1813-1940', *Journal of Women's History*, 2.1 (1990), 8-34 (p.1).

¹⁵⁷ Nair, p.11.

woman to be found in *The Englishwoman* by the Askews or *Brenda's Experiment* by Greenhow with a range of positions between these two opposites. Several British heroines go to India with the express purpose of working for the social reform of Indian women, only to find their efforts thwarted by Indian women who wield a great deal of power despite their seclusion and who have no wish to be emancipated. In fact, the British female protagonist often finds her life endangered by the Indian women of the zenana who resent her intrusive presence. Having opened up the hidden area of the Indian home to the gaze of the British reading public, the novels close down any possibility of reform within this space, removing the British protagonist from Indian domestic life at the end of the story. In other words, the novels imply that the civilising mission cannot be effective within this crucial space. I expand on this point in Chapter 4 which deals with the representation of the intimacy of the British and Indian couple within the space of the Indian home.

Conclusion

Having described the historical situation and contemporary discourses of colonialism, race and gender in which these novels participate and begun to explain how they reveal the 'disruptions and contradictions' of those discourses, I turn in the next chapter to examine the formal properties of the novels themselves. I noted in the Introduction that I do not believe literary texts should be placed in an 'unprivileged exchange' with other types of texts of the same period. These novels are romances and thus work within the literary conventions of that genre in their relationship to the discourses of colonialism, race and gender.

CHAPTER 2 FORMALITIES: GENRE, VOICE AND CHARACTER.

Introduction

I take the view that literature is ‘an active agent of a particular historical moment...’¹ as noted previously, but it is equally important to be aware that fiction is not simply mimetic but uses various conventions to shape its versions of reality. These conventions thus have the possibility of impacting on the historical situation in which they occur. I examine three formal properties of the novels of interracial marriage which have a particular relevance to the representation of relations between the British and their colonial subjects in India at the turn of the 20th century: genre, narrative voice and characterisation.

The novels of interracial marriage fall into the genre of romance; they are stories about affective relationships between two people. Within the framework of colonial discourse, however, the love-story across racial boundaries has ‘potentially a quasi-allegorical dimension’², representing in the personal relationship of a Briton and an Indian the relationship between Britain and India. This ‘quasi-allegorical dimension’ in the novels, I argue, is consciously produced by their authors. The plot trajectory of the romance is therefore significant in the representation of this relationship on a personal as well as a political level as I demonstrate.

In terms of narrative voice, I mentioned previously that the Anglo-Indian authors positioned themselves as authorities on India, in which light they were also regarded by reviewers and possibly readers of their novels. I argued that the writing of novels gave the Anglo-Indian authors the opportunity to defend their life’s work in India from the ignorance of the metropolitan British who, as Kipling

¹ Brannigan, p.8.

² Kerr, p.60.

wrote, ‘asserted that the British in India spent violent lives “oppressing” the Native.’³ In this chapter, I develop this line of argument to show that the voice of the narrator is closely identified with that of the author and that the novels are not simply apologias for the Raj but also have a didactic purpose. In this examination of voice, I discuss Mills’s assertion that ‘[t]he writing which they [women] produced tended to be more tentative than male writing, less able to assert the “truths” of British rule without qualification’.⁴ I propose that this is not the case in the novels studied here.

Finally, I discuss the characterisation of the British and Indian protagonists as these are frequently drawn from racial stereotypes (discussed in chapter 1). This is particularly true of the Indian male protagonists whose construction from contemporary stereotypes has the effect of challenging the justification of the ‘civilising mission’. The British female protagonists are more varied in the representations as they are often produced out of a conflict of discourses, in this case those of colonialism, race, femininity and feminism while the British male protagonists tend to be stereotypically the binary opposite of the stereotypical Indian. Most interesting are the representations of Indian women in the novels as noted in the previous chapter.

The Romance Genre

As Barbara Fuchs explains in *Romance*, the genre of romance has gone through many transformations in its history. A medieval romance, in Fuchs’s definition, is ‘concerned with aristocratic characters such as kings and queens, knights and ladies, and their chivalric pursuits. They are often organized around a quest,

³ Kipling, *Something of Myself*, 1. 929.

⁴ Mills, *Discourses*, p.3.

whether for love or adventure, and involve a variety of marvellous elements'.⁵ The medieval romances of King Arthur, for example, demonstrate these elements.

Fuchs notes that another aspect of the romance is its 'persistent nostalgia for some other time (or ... place) that undermines the social ideals of the here and now'.⁶

The late-19th-century imperial romances of Haggard, Conan Doyle, Kipling, Stevenson and others, mentioned in the Introduction, reveal not only the quest for adventure, but also the nostalgia for another place. These romances often use a colonial setting, where, as Allan Quatermain says in *Allan Quatermain*, adventure can be found more easily than in well-regulated England.⁷ As Martin Green argues, imperial or adventure romances

mean a series of events, partly ... in settings remote from the domestic and probably from the civilized (at least in the psychological sense of remote), which constitute a challenge to the central character. In meeting this challenge, he/she performs a series of exploits which make him/her a hero, eminent in virtues such as courage, fortitude, cunning, strength, leadership and persistence.⁸

The other common form of the romance is the love-story and this is the category into which the novels of interracial marriage fall as they depict, in John Cawelti's words, 'the development of a love relationship, ... between a man and a woman.... The moral fantasy of the romance is that of love triumphant and permanent, overcoming all obstacles and difficulties.'⁹ Cawelti does not suggest that the central protagonist of the love story should be female as other writers on

⁵ Barbara Fuchs, *Romance* (New York: Routledge, 2004), p.4.

⁶ Fuchs, p.6.

⁷ H. Rider Haggard, *Allan Quatermain* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1899), p.4. '[N]o man who has for forty years lived the life I have, can with impunity go coop himself in this prim English country, with its trim hedgerows and cultivated fields, its stiff formal manners, and its well-dressed crowds. He begins to long—ah, how he longs!—for the keen breath of the desert air; he dreams of the sight of Zulu impi breaking on their foes like surf upon the rocks, and his heart rises up in rebellion against the strict limits of the civilized life.'

⁸ Martin Green, *Dreams of Adventure, Deeds of Empire* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1980), p.23.

⁹ John G Cawelti, *Adventure, Mystery and Romance : Formula Stories as Art and Popular Culture* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1976), pp.41-2.

romance have done; several of the novels of interracial marriage feature a central male protagonist of the love story.¹⁰

The novels of interracial marriage share some features with the imperial romances of Haggard, Kipling *et al.* Both these subgenres of romance, while involving a quest for love or for adventure, are also embedded in discourses of colonialism, race and gender. For example, although most of the novels of interracial marriage have Indian domestic settings rather than being situated in the wide-open spaces of Kukuanaaland or a lost world, the domestic setting is none the less figured as uncivilised, unexplored and potentially dangerous to the British protagonist who penetrates this unknown space. I discuss this in more detail in chapter 4 on the representation of intimacy between the spouses. Another shared feature is the virtues which the British protagonist demonstrates in the entry into the unknown colonial space. Since it is the British wife of an Indian who finds herself in physical danger in the Indian home, she must demonstrate the virtues ascribed by Green above to the *heroes* of the imperial romance. Thus these romances often privilege what were considered British racial characteristics over gendered ones. Again I deal with this more fully in Chapter 4.

The love-story plot, as many critics have noted, has an established sequence of events.¹¹ In Pamela Regis's formulation in *A Natural History of the Romance Novel*, the following events are essential in a love-plot:

In one or more scenes, romance novels always depict the following: the initial state of society in which heroine and hero must court, the meeting between heroine and hero, the barrier to the union of heroine and hero, the attraction between the heroine and hero, the declaration of love between heroine and hero,

¹⁰ For example, Janice A Radway, *Reading the Romance: Women, Patriarchy, and Popular Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1991) describes how the Smithsonian readers whom she studied identified with the heroines of romantic fiction. .

¹¹ Cf. Radway; Joseph Allen Boone, *Tradition Counter Tradition: Love and the Form of Fiction* (Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 1989).

the point of ritual death, the recognition by heroine and hero of the means to overcome the barrier, and the betrothal. These elements are essential.¹²

This is the comedic version of the love-plot. In the tragic version, the narrative ends with the separation of the lovers, often in death, as in the stories of Tristan and Isolde and Romeo and Juliet. Most of the novels of interracial marriage employ the comedic version of the love plot where hero and heroine overcome the barrier to their union. More specifically, most of the novels employ what Jean Kennard has termed the two-suitor plot.

In *Victims of Convention*, Kennard explores the use of the convention of the two-suitor plot in 19th-century British fiction. She describes the plot thus: ‘a young girl learns to abandon a view of the world based on fantasy and adjust herself to reality’.¹³ There is an ‘unscrupulous, weak or generally unsatisfactory “wrong” suitor and [an] exemplary or “right” suitor, as touchstones of [the] heroine’s progress towards maturity’.¹⁴ Kennard notes that the heroine does not necessarily have to *marry* the wrong suitor; she achieves maturity by learning to value the qualities embodied in the right suitor over the often attractive qualities embodied in the wrong suitor. As Kennard writes, ‘[maturity] is seen to consist of adjusting oneself to the real world which is synonymous with becoming like the right suitor. The attainment of maturity wins the great reward, marriage to the right suitor, which provides a conclusion to the novel.’¹⁵

Kennard argues that there is a problem for feminist criticism with the two-suitor plot if the maturing of the heroine is the focus of the novel for the convention subordinates her to the right suitor whom she marries at the

¹² Regis, p.11.

¹³ Kennard, p. 11.

¹⁴ Kennard, p.11.

¹⁵ Kennard, p.12.

conclusion. Her maturity consists in accepting the values embodied in the right suitor and abandoning her progress towards independence and individuality.

Kennard argues that '[t]he structure is, thus, inherently sexist'.¹⁶ The two-suitor plot does not always focus exclusively on the moral development of the heroine, however. The plot, according to Kennard, may also represent the right and the wrong suitor as embodying *different ways of life* between which the heroine must choose. In this version of the two-suitor plot, the focus is less on the maturing of the heroine than on representations of the ways of life which she learns to value. Thus, in the course of her marriage to the wrong suitor, her Indian spouse, the British heroine learns to value, not only her British identity, but also the British way of life and the values implicit within it. Her development in the course of the novel demonstrates her growing understanding of the 'inferiority' of the Indian way of life and its values. This is the form of the two-suitor plot which is used in the novels of interracial marriage where it works also with a male central protagonist.

The construction of the right and wrong suitors in the novels of interracial marriage is based on race. Later in this chapter I discuss the construction of the suitors within late-19th-century discourses of race as well as of masculinity and femininity. The representation of the right and the wrong suitors is also underpinned, however, by the late-19th-century discourse of marriage for the marriage to the right suitor brings closure to the events of the love-story plot. The right suitor is the character who can achieve a companionate marriage with the protagonist as wife or husband. As Tosh describes, this is a marriage, 'based on love, common values and shared interests'.¹⁷ Companionate marriage, according

¹⁶ Kennard, p.14.

¹⁷ Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p.7.

to Tosh, 'stood at the heart of the Victorian ideal of domesticity', 'premised on a belief in the the supreme importance of ... familial affections.'¹⁸ Marriage, as Joseph Allen Boone argues, was also sentimentally conceived in the 19th-century novel as 'the everlasting completion and summit of "happiness,"' involving several 'age-old verities...[that] each desiring subject is destined to meet the one perfect love-object "made" for him or her; the perfect end of love is everlasting union with that individual; ... emotions are more valuable than reason in matters of the heart'.¹⁹ This union, the novels of interracial marriage suggest, can never be achieved with an Other. And despite its novelistic construction as a private experience involving two individuals, marriage also, Boone argues, has a 'public function as part of the ideological apparatus ensuring social stability... the marital ideal serves as a metonymy for proper social order'.²⁰

The first mistaken marriage to the Indian forms Regis's 'barrier to the union of [British] heroine and hero'.²¹ Regis contends that the 'barrier can raise virtually any issue the writer chooses,' one issue in these texts being, of course, the possibility of desire and lasting intimacy between partners of different races.²² The transgressive potential of this in a period of pervasive racial theory, I suggest, is undercut by the reader's understanding of the conventions of the two-suitor plot. The British protagonist chooses the wrong Indian suitor, despite advice to the contrary by an experienced Anglo-Indian, for reasons which often have little to do with love. This is the first indication that the marriage has been contracted with the wrong suitor as the novelistic conventions Boone describes to ensure the perfect companionate marriage have been disrupted. The British protagonist then finds

¹⁸ Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p.27.

¹⁹ Boone, pp.6-7.

²⁰ Boone, p.7.

²¹ Regis, p.14.

²² Regis, p.14.

him/herself immersed in an Indian way of life, married to an Indian partner with whom s/he shares no interests or common values. The Indian often demonstrates his/her inadequacy as the partner of a British spouse by the (re)appearance after marriage of Indian racial characteristics. From this marriage the British protagonist narrowly escapes to find the right British suitor waiting. All the texts, however, devote most space to the representation of the Indian marriage in comparison to the British marriage, leading to the inevitable conclusion that it is the Indian marriage which is of more interest to these novelists. The two-suitor plot allows the hero(ine) to enter Indian domestic spaces but removes him/her when the work of representation is done and shows him/her finally settled with the correct British suitor in the proper social order in England.

An example of the two-suitor plot is to be found in *The Englishwoman* by the Askews. Lucy Travers chooses to marry Prince Jotindra rather than her solid English lover Hugh Seymour. Hugh is 'tall and dark, very powerfully built, with a strong decided face. He looked like a man born to rule over men.'²³ The powerful physique of the British suitor is contrasted with the less powerful Indian suitor who is represented as a 'slight, olive-skinned young man'²⁴ with 'dark inscrutable Eastern eyes'.²⁵ Jotindra is unreadable and unknown whereas Hugh is an open and straightforward character. From the start, the stereotypical unknowability of the Indian is intimated and with it his wrongness as a suitor. Lucy chooses the Indian prince, of course, who woos her with fantasies of an India drawn from the *Arabian Nights Tales* and a promise that she can work with her husband for the emancipation of Indian women. She believes herself to be in love and to be loved by the prince, but as I show in Chapter 3, the type of love experienced –

²³ Askew, p.6.

²⁴ Askew, p.1.

²⁵ Askew, p.3.

enthralment – is not the right kind of love in the context of the romance genre. The novel represents how this mistaken choice works out. Jotindra, the wrong suitor, having proved himself unworthy of an Englishwoman whose values he cannot share, dies and a wiser Lucy returns to England to marry Hugh, the right suitor.

It is also possible to have a hero who makes the wrong choice between suitors. Thus in *The Waters of Destruction* by Perrin, Stephen Dare, isolated from European society, and unable to return home for years as he believes, is induced to marry Sunia, an Indian girl widow. Stephen pines for an English woman, Georgie Dallison (the right suitor) but the devoted Sunia exerts an attraction over him, almost against his will. ‘Dozing, he dreamed of the beauty of the native woman; waking, he fought hard to wring his thoughts clean of her image.’²⁶ There is a suggestion of impurity about the attraction to the Indian which is acknowledged by the British protagonist as being exerted against his/her will. Having married Sunia, Stephen is exposed to Indian cultural practices which he finds unpleasant because ‘[I]t was all so essentially native; the badly-lighted, untidy room, the musky atmosphere, the woman seated on the bed, looking like an illustration from a Hindu story-book.’²⁷ It is clear that Sunia will never be a companion to Stephen. Meeting Georgie again he knows ‘that she was the one woman he had always loved, that she was the one woman he should love till the end of his life’.²⁸ But being British, ‘his ethical sense was strong, and he felt that to ignore the unprovable rite [the marriage ceremony with Sunia performed by the delirious and dying missionary] would be equally culpable whether it had lawfully bound him to Sunia or possessed no legal value’.²⁹ Eventually Sunia is drowned in the Waters of

²⁶ Alice Perrin, *The Waters of Destruction* (London: Chatto & Windus, 1905), p.89.

²⁷ Perrin, *Waters*, p.155.

²⁸ Perrin, *Waters*, p.249.

²⁹ Perrin, *Waters*, p.261.

Destruction, the river Kali Nadi, leaving Stephen free to return to England, marry Georgie, enter the companionate marriage and manage the estate he has inherited. In most of the novels the marriage to the right suitor returns the protagonist to England and the novel closes with the reestablishment of the proper (British) social order.

There are three novels in my selection, however, where the two-suitor plot is used to problematise the issue of interracial desire and to open up the possibility of companionate marriage with a racial Other. The first is Cross's *Anna Lombard* which complicates the issue of interracial desire in a two-suitor plot with multiple transgressions, racial and sexual. The British heroine, the eponymous Anna, not only feels sexual desire but feels it for her Indian lover. She is unable to choose between her two suitors: the Indian Gaida Khan for whom she feels 'intense passion' and British Gerald Ethridge for whom she has different though no less intense feelings.³⁰ The two-suitor plot here allows Cross to juxtapose two different experiences of love felt by the New Woman, Anna; her inability to choose between them is solved by her Indian lover's death from cholera after which she marries the New Man, Gerald. Anna's inability to choose between Gaida Khan and sexual passion or Gerald and romantic and companionate love questions the dominant Victorian discourse on femininity that did not recognise sexual desire in 'normal' women. After the death of Gaida Khan, Anna gives birth and experiences another kind of love. She feels 'insensate idolatry, the passionate absorption of maternity' for her child but kills it so that nothing stands between herself and Gerald.³¹ Finally companionate love triumphs and a proper social order is restored but at the cost of Anna becoming a murderer. There is another interracial sexual

³⁰ Victoria Cross, *Anna Lombard*, ed. by Gail Cunningham (London: Continuum, 2006).

³¹ Cross, *Lombard*, p.127.

relationship in this novel – that of the British administrator in Burma and his Burmese wife. This is represented as an exploitative relationship – on both sides. The text debates different ways of loving and relating on the part of men as well as women across racial and sexual boundaries.

The second text is the only novel of interracial marriage which falls into the category of tragic romance in that closure is achieved by the death of the protagonists rather than a happy-ever-after marriage. This is Cross's *Life of My Heart*, a novel as transgressive in many ways as her *Anna Lombard*. In this novel, however, the choice between the suitors is very clear. The right suitor for the British woman, Frances Wilson, is the Pathan, Hamakhan, who is built like a Greek statue, while the wrong suitor is the British George Thompson, who is represented as unattractive, physically and mentally: 'tall but somewhat heavy', his hair sticks up in 'an obstinate little tuft' and he is losing his teeth.³² He is also responsible for beating to death his Indian servant, an act which is treated with contempt in the text. The novel in general represents the British in India negatively while valorising many of the Indian characters. Sexual desire motivates the two protagonists to elope but the novel also demonstrates the growth of shared interests and, to a certain extent, common values between the martial Pathan and the courageous British woman. The novel describes the domestic life of the protagonists as one in which the sharing of interests is enabled by their love and respect for each other. Frances Wilson lives with Hamakhan as a Muslim wife, submitting to seclusion but happy to do so, not only because she recognises its rationale but because this is what Hamakhan wants. Hamakhan, in turn, not only learns to read and write from Frances but also learns from her the British ideal of

³² Cross, *Life*, pp.113–4.

companionate marriage. *Life of My Heart* in fact is a fantasy of crossing into the culture of the Other, a transmigration which, says Robert Young, is 'the form taken by colonial desire... many colonial novels in English betray themselves as driven by desire for the cultural other, for forsaking their own culture'.³³ This is what happens in *Life of my Heart* but the end of this fantasy of crossing is the death of both protagonists in Cross's novel, indicating that a happy ending is not possible for those who transgress so completely.

Diver's *Lilamani* is the only novel which ends happily with the mixed marriage clearly a success. As in *Life of My Heart*, the Indian is constructed as the right suitor. Nevil Sinclair falls in love with the Indian woman, Lilamani, although there is an English woman who is the more obvious wife for him. The British woman thus becomes the wrong suitor. In this novel, which is as much concerned with gender roles as it is with race, Lilamani is constructed as the stereotypical self-sacrificing and submissive Indian woman while her rival for Nevil's affections is Audrey Hammond, an independent feminist doctor. I discuss these characters later in this chapter. Lilamani is the right suitor, the woman whose qualities of self-abnegation and submissiveness are valorised in the novel by the reward of the hero's love and marriage to him. Her qualities are those of the Angel in the House stereotype of British middle-class womanhood as well as those of the Sita stereotype of Indian women current in the period: contemporary discourses, Indian and British, constructed women in similar ways. Thus, woman's proper place in both Indian and British discourse was the private sphere, the home, where she provided for her family's comfort, both materially and spiritually. Lilamani is constructed in this text as the universal and essential feminine, her femininity

³³ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.3.

taking precedence over her race. She is also Nevil's inspiration as a painter, both in terms of giving him a subject from Indian mythology and by serving as his model for the character of Sita in his paintings of the *Ramayana*, with which he achieves artistic success.

In a number of the novels, as described above, it is made plain that the British protagonist is not truly in love with the Indian. Some novels of interracial marriage attribute the marriage to the Indian not to mutual or romantic love, but to a protagonist's desire for an opportunity to experience a wider world or to escape a stifling environment. This conventionally raises the readerly expectation that the marriage to the Indian will not last and that the British protagonist will return to the British suitor whom s/he has rejected or been unable to marry previously. This undercuts the transgressive potential of the mixed race marriage in these novels, the possibility of racial degeneration in terms both of the British partner 'going native' as well as the problem of miscegenation. The reader, versed in novelistic convention, understands that the marriage to the Indian is only a barrier to the right marriage of the British heroine to the British hero. This allows the representation of the marriage to the Indian, which is the main focus of the text, to be explored in detail while the reader is secure in the knowledge that racial discourse will not be challenged, racial purity will remain intact. It is therefore texts like Cross's novels or Diver's *Lilamani* which present more interest for they openly or implicitly challenge racial discourse by valorising the Indian suitor. I explore this challenge further in the next chapters.

Narrative Voice

The Authority of the Author.

In Chapter 1 on the historical situation of the novels of interracial marriage I briefly described the Anglo-Indian careers of the novels' authors. Reviews of the novels often referred to the author's knowledge and understanding of Indian matters, emphasising that the reader could expect to gather accurate information about not only British rule in India but also about India manners and customs, while being entertained by the story. As mentioned in the Introduction, the majority of the authors were writing at a time of intense interest in the empire as described by Mackenzie.³⁴ He disputes the argument that the British 'were indifferent to imperialism [a]part from a brief, aberrant burst of jingoism in the last quarter of the nineteenth century',³⁵ and documents the presence of the empire in theatre and music hall, imperial institutes, juvenile literature and elsewhere at the turn of the 20th century. He characterises much of the activity as 'overtly propagandist', defining propaganda as 'the transmission of ideas and values from one person, or groups of persons, to another, with the specific intention of influencing the recipients' attitudes in such a way that the interests of its authors will be enhanced'.³⁶ I have suggested that most of the authors may well have written with the aim, identified by Kipling, of advertising the importance of the work of the ICS in India which was under threat at this time, of demonstrating the need to preserve a distance from the Indian population or of defending themselves against the charge of 'oppressing the Native.' I would argue, therefore, that the novels of interracial marriage had a propagandist intention in that they advertise

³⁴ Cf. Introduction, p.8.

³⁵ MacKenzie, p.1.

³⁶ MacKenzie, p.3.

the work of the British in India, work in which the authors had often participated in some capacity. In addition, I suggest, these novels were the literary equivalents of ‘Crams by a Commissioner: or the way to govern India,’ the book that Mr. Fleetwood, the retired Commissioner of the Bengal Civil Service plans to write in Perrin’s *The Anglo-Indians*,³⁷ or accounts of travel and residence in India such as *The Land of Regrets* by Isobel Fraser Hunter.³⁸ In other words, there is a didactic aspect to the novels of interracial marriage in that they ‘have instruction as an ulterior purpose.’³⁹ A great deal of information on India, Indian people and their cultural practices, seen from a British perspective, of course, is contained in these texts.

The Close Identification of Author and Narrator.

There is, of course, a formal distinction between the author and the narrator of a text. The narrator cannot be assumed to occupy the same ideological position as the author *vis-à-vis* the written text. In the novels of interracial marriage, however, I argue that there is a close identification of author and omniscient narrator. Omniscient narration, as Paul Cobley describes ‘consists both of the narrator’s godlike ability to go everywhere and to possess the power and control that derives from unlimited knowledge’.⁴⁰ It is a description of the omniscient narrator which is strikingly similar to that of the orientalist gaze:

One of the most powerful strategies of imperial dominance is that of surveillance, or observation, because it implies a viewer with an elevated vantage point, it suggests the power to process and understand that which is seen...⁴¹

³⁷ See chapter 1, p.28.

³⁸ Isobel Fraser Hunter, *The Land of Regrets: A Miss-Sahib’s Reminiscences* (London: John Ousley, Ltd., 1909).

³⁹ Shorter Oxford English Dictionary. Entry on didacticism.

⁴⁰ Paul Cobley, *Narrative* (London: Routledge, 2001), p.101.

⁴¹ Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, p.226..

In other words, the omniscient author/narrator could be seen as taking up the same position with regard to the narrative as the coloniser takes up with regard to the colonised country. As Gail Ching-Liang Low argues, ‘knowledge of the land, climates and peoples underscores narrative authority by reinforcing its privilege, possession and its science’.⁴² The knowledge of the omniscient author/narrator is reflected in statements where ‘the structure of the text enables the unreflexive and authoritative white voice to scrutinise, define and pin down its [colonised] subjects’.⁴³ Knowledge of daily life in India and of its climate is to be found in such statements as the following from Perrin’s *Waters of Destruction*, although this type of pronouncement can be found in any of the novels of interracial marriage:

a meal was already on the table, prepared with that swiftness of resource in a culinary emergency which is the special talent of the Indian cook.⁴⁴

then on they went again always at the same slow, mechanical pace, half canter, half run, that is peculiar to the Indian horse.⁴⁵

‘It is the most enervating time of all the year in India, this sultry interval just before the rains. Even under the best conditions — large, cool houses, plenty of ice, thermantidotes in every room, and long evening drives over well-watered roads — it is almost unendurable to Europeans.’⁴⁶

Narratorial statements such as the following from Bray’s *Chattel or Wife* and Bruce’s *The Native Wife* are in the ‘manners and customs’ mode more usual in travel writing, instructing the reader in Indian culture:

The houses of an Indian city are built close, the streets are narrow, and what little roadway there is is greatly encroached upon by the platforms on which the various tradesmen display their wares, and by the open drains which run on either side.⁴⁷

⁴² Gail Ching-Liang Low, *White skins/Black Masks: Representation and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1996), p.50.

⁴³ Low, p.51.

⁴⁴ Perrin, *Waters*, p.123.

⁴⁵ Perrin, *Waters*, p.306.

⁴⁶ Perrin, *Waters*, pp.117–8.

⁴⁷ Claude Bray, *Chattel or Wife?* (London: Sands and Company, 1899), pp.322–3.

The other Indian garment is the voluminous one known as either *lugadi* or *sari*. It is little more than a yard wide, but often 30 or 40 feet long, with elaborate ornamental fringes. It is folded many times round and round the waist and then brought over the shoulders and head in those graceful folds which are most characteristic of Indian women. It is the main garment of Indian life.⁴⁸

In addition to these Indian matters, the author/narrators also 'know' the minds of Indians. Bruce cites a study done by a 'French Dr. Regnault', for example, who

has exhaustively studied the relations of Europeans with the various dusky races... He says that there is practically no case in which a native woman does not, in her heart, prefer one of her own countrymen. She often finds it to her material advantage, or to her prestige, to live with a European, as mistress or as wife. But she will infallibly, if she dares to do so, maintain relations with a man of her own colour.⁴⁹

Other author/narrators demonstrate 'knowledge' of the Indian derived from colonial and racial discourses. The following quotation from Bray: 'the man had grown quite eloquent (a quality seldom lacking to his race)' is typical of colonial stereotypes of Indians.⁵⁰ Diver/the narrator of *Lilamani* 'knows' that the 'Indian woman [is] the product of the hidden sanctuary of the home'⁵¹ as well as 'knowing' 'the subject that lies nearest the heart of all thoughtful Indians in this our day of agitation and transition'.⁵² This is the 'zealous championship of British rule, and fervent belief in ultimate concord between 'mother and eldest daughter'.⁵³ The omniscient coloniser/narrator thus places the individual 'into the homogenised, collective and subdued other of his [*sic*] race'.⁵⁴

⁴⁸ Henry Bruce, *The Native Wife or Indian Love and Anarchism* (London: John Long, Limited, 1909), pp.85–6.

⁴⁹ Bruce, pp. 80–1. I cannot identify the French doctor Regnault responsible for this exhaustive study.

⁵⁰ Bray, p.151.

⁵¹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p. 19.

⁵² Diver, *Lilamani*, p.83.

⁵³ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.83.

⁵⁴ Low, p.51. What is implicit in Diver's pronouncements on 'thoughtful Indians' is the appearance of the many 'non-thoughtful' Indians who were advocating independence at the time she was writing *Lilamani*.

Closely identified with the author/narrator is the character of the Old India Hand who features in most of these novels. The Old India Hand (abbreviated to OIH henceforward) is generally an Anglo-Indian who claims to ‘know’ India based on his (or occasionally her) experience of the country and the people. In several novels the OIH has not been to India him/herself but ‘knows’ all about it from family who have. In *Lilamani* the OIH is actually Indian although he is highly Anglicised, very ‘thoughtful’ and strongly pro-British. The function of the OIH is to present the case against the proposed marriage to the Indian suitor to the British man or woman who, ignorant of India (abbreviated to IOI henceforward), does not understand the magnitude of the mistake s/he is about to make. In order to make his/her case against the marriage the OIH rehearses a number of statements which recur in colonial and racial discourses. It is noticeable that there is greater resistance to the British woman marrying the Indian suitor than to a British man marrying an Indian woman. British women, constructed, as Collingham says, ‘as the repositories of all that was best in western civilization’ must remain uncontaminated by sexual contact with the Indian Other.⁵⁵ Miscegenation and the nature of Indian marriage (the British wife will find herself imprisoned in a *zenana* where she will be treated with the ‘habitual contempt’ Indian men entertain for their women⁵⁶) are also raised as arguments against the union. The predictions of the OIH are proved correct in the course of the novel, ratifying the position s/he takes up in relation to interracial marriage and supporting the colonial and racial discourses which underpin the texts.

The OIH and the IOI character generally engage in a debate about the proposed marriage which touches on some or all of the arguments derived from colonial and

⁵⁵ Collingham, p.111.

⁵⁶ Mill, I, p.364.

racial discourse discussed in the Introduction. This debate is not, however, allowed to be an authentic dialogue between two characters with different discursive positions, such as Mikhail Bakhtin argued was possible in the polyphonic novel. In this type of novel, as written by Dostoevsky whom he believed to be a master of the form, Bakhtin argues:

The character is treated as ideologically authoritative and independent; he is perceived as the author of a fully weighted ideological conception of his own, and not as the object of Dostoevsky's finalizing artistic vision. ...[T]he direct and fully weighted signifying power of the characters' words destroys the monologic plane of the novel and calls forth an unmediated response – as if the character were not an object of authorial discourse, but rather a fully valid, autonomous carrier of his own individual word.⁵⁷

These 'autonomous carriers', says Bakhtin, 'collide in the "great dialogue" of the novel, [which] leaves that dialogue open and puts no finalizing period at the end'.⁵⁸

I describe Bakhtin's concept of the polyphonic novel to demonstrate the possibilities of dialogue in the novel form but I argue that these possibilities are nowhere taken up in the texts under discussion. The didactic purpose of the novels of interracial marriage does not allow any character to be an 'autonomous carrier of his [or her] own individual word' but creates objects under the control of the author/narrator's 'finalizing artistic vision'.⁵⁹ Bakhtin describes this vision:

It contains only one cognitive subject, all else being merely objects of its cognition. Here a dialogic relationship of the author to his heroes is impossible, and thus there is no "great dialogue" in which characters and author might participate with equal rights; there are only the objectivized dialogues of characters, compositionally expressed within the author's field of vision.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Bakhtin, p.5.

⁵⁸ Bakhtin, p.165.

⁵⁹ Bakhtin, as many critics have noted, used 'author' where today one might use 'narrator'. But since I am arguing that there is a very close identification between authorial and narratorial perspective in these novels, I have substituted Anglo-Indians authors for the original Dostoevsky in the quotation.

⁶⁰ Bakhtin, p.71.

In these texts the author/narrator/OIH, the ‘one cognitive subject’, uses the debate on the marriage to expose the ignorance of the British protagonist and other British characters of matters Indian and thus to promote his/her didactic purpose. *Brenda’s Experiment* presents one of the most protracted of these ‘debates’ in which the world-view of the OIH and the author/narrator wins out over the IOI, ‘puts a finalizing period at the end.’

The debate in *Brenda’s Experiment* is between Brenda’s father, Professor Mogadore, who is an IOI character, and his friend, the OIH Dr Barton who has spent his working life in India. The fictional Dr Barton’s life and career in India is very similar to that of his creator. Greenhow was working in India during the ‘Mutiny’ and started writing novels based on his experiences when he retired from the Bengal Medical Service in 1876. The fictional doctor’s authority on the subject of India is established as the debate begins – he tells Mogadore that his ‘view of people and things at a distance of some five or six thousand miles’ cannot be as true as his own ‘whose best years have been spent out there, whose life has been practically given to India’.⁶¹ The professor on the other hand has met ‘with half-a-dozen young natives of Bengal’ and thinks that ‘he sees into the moral and intellectual character of the whole race’.⁶² The professor is thus positioned by the author/narrator/OIH as unqualified by his ignorance to make judgements on the subject of India.

The authoritative ‘knowledge’ of the man who has lived and worked in India is repeated in several other novels of interracial marriage. Alan Archdale (the OIH in *A Mixed Marriage* by Penny), for example, takes the position that a man who ‘has studied the natives of India for more than half a lifetime, and has an opportunity of

⁶¹ Henry Martineau Greenhow, *Brenda’s Experiment*, 1 vols. (London: Jarrold and Sons, 1896), p.7.

⁶² Greenhow, p.9.

forming an opinion' is in a better position to pronounce on the Indian character than someone who has never been to India.⁶³ Lorina Carlyon, like Professor Mogadore, claims to 'know' India on the basis of an acquaintance of one Indian; 'India,' she says 'has come to us, in the shape of the prince.'⁶⁴

The narrator of *Brenda's Experiment* works in other ways too to make sure that dialogue between Professor Mogadore and Dr Barton is under his control. As the dialogue proceeds, the professor becomes less assured about his knowledge of the Indian character in the face of what is presented as the doctor's genuine knowledge; 'it seemed as if his friend's words had at last made some sort of impression on his mind, and, at any rate, they had had the effect of placing in a strong light the possibilities which up to this time had floated but vaguely before him'.⁶⁵ The floating possibilities concern a possible liaison between his daughter Brenda and his protégé Ameer Ali. It is made clear that he has not considered what her position would be as the wife of an Indian in India and is discomforted by Dr Barton's disclosures on this subject. Brenda does marry Ameer Ali with the permission of her parents, although the text has made it clear in the 'debate' that the doctor's authoritative 'knowledge' enables him to make accurate predictions concerning the marriage. In every text, in fact, the same tropes of colonial discourse are presented to the reader, by the intrusive or omniscient narrator and by the characters, making the texts what Bakhtin has called 'monologic'. The monologic text as Lodge succinctly explains, 'seek[s] to establish a single style, a single voice, with which to express a single world-view'.⁶⁶ The only sense in which these novels are dialogic is that the author/narrator is attempting, in a

⁶³ Penny, p.26.

⁶⁴ Penny, p.23.

⁶⁵ Greenhow, p.15.

⁶⁶ David Lodge, *After Bakhtin: Essays on Fiction and Criticism* (London: Routledge, 1990), p.58.

dialogue with the implied reader, to instruct him/her in the racial and colonial discourses in which s/he is embedded.

First-hand knowledge of India and its people is not always necessary for the OIH, however. In *The Englishwoman* the OIH is a character whose knowledge is vicarious. Hugh ‘knows’ about India although he has never been there, because, he says, ‘I have heard a lot about the East from my father, and I am going out there myself...’⁶⁷ The authorial Askews never visited India either. The interesting point here is that Hugh and the narratorial Askews ‘know’ the same things about India and Indians as Greenhow, Dr Barton and all the other OIHs and their creators who have experienced India first-hand. Said, of course, raised the question of the nature of ‘knowledge’ about the Orient in *Orientalism*. The representations of India which are repeated in these novels by the IOHs, are, as Said argued, ‘a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient’.⁶⁸ Hugh, conscious of his position as ‘a member of the ruling race’ exhibits Said’s Western style of authority over the Orient.⁶⁹ It is not even necessary to go to India to ‘know’ the ‘truth’ about it provided information came from the right (Western) sources, as *The Englishwoman* demonstrates.

One can only speculate on the sources from which the Askews drew their representation of India and Indians, but it is worth noting that the two novels in this study (the other being *The Daughter of Brahma* by Wylie) which were written by non-Anglo-Indians appear chronologically later than many of the other novels. Both were written in 1912, 40 years after Taylor published *Seeta* and were preceded by the novels of interracial marriage written by Cross, Perrin, Bray, Penny, Greenhow and Diver. Wylie and the Askews were, I argue, part of what

⁶⁷ Askew, p.44.

⁶⁸ Said, p.3.

⁶⁹ Askew, p.44.

Said calls a 'complex dialectic of reinforcement by which the experiences of readers in reality are determined by what they have read, and this in turn influences writers to take up subjects defined in advance by readers' experiences'.⁷⁰ The non-Anglo-Indian authors who demonstrate the same 'knowledge' about India as the experienced Anglo-Indians are proving Said's point about the textuality of colonial discourses; 'such texts can *create* not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe'.⁷¹

Female authors and colonial and racial discourses.

The quotes above are taken from authoritative and 'knowledgeable' author/narrators, both male and female. I wish to return here to the issue of how female authors positioned themselves in relation to colonial discourses and how this manifests in the novels of interracial marriage.

I mentioned in the Introduction the contention of Sara Mills that women, positioned differently in relation to colonial discourse and the imperial enterprise, could not make the 'confident assertions about whole races, nations, countries, that male writers feel empowered to make'.⁷² Mills is discussing female travellers, European women such as Mary Kingsley who travelled in West Africa and Alexandra David-Neel who travelled to Lhasa: women who were transient and solitary (in terms of companions of their own race) in these countries. Their relationship with the country in which they travelled was very different, I suggest, to that of the group of Anglo-Indian female novelists who had grown up in and/or

⁷⁰ Said, p.94.

⁷¹ Said, p.94.

⁷² Mills, *Discourses*, p. 3 Reina Lewis similarly questions '[w]hat access does a white European woman have to the enunciative position of a white superiority that is implicitly male?' [Reina Lewis, *Gendering Orientalism: Race, Femininity and Representation* (London: Routledge, 2003), p.18] .

lived as adults in India. These were women, in Procida's phrase, who were 'married to the empire'. Procida, quoting Bart Moore-Gilbert, argues that:

travel writing is 'a form which implies only fleeting kinds of existential contact with the cultures being traversed', and thus differs from the texts produced by those with 'lived experience' in the empire. ... *[W]ives of officials in India were not imperial transients, but residents whose lives were intimately connected with the practices and ideologies of imperialism* (my italics).⁷³

Procida describes the position of British women living for long periods in India in circumstances where the separate spheres ideology of the metropole was inapplicable. Although women were still associated mainly with domesticity, the Anglo-Indian home did not provide the refuge from the outside world that the metropolitan home did. Procida argues that 'the Anglo-Indian bungalow served as a crucial locus for the creation and maintenance of British imperialism in India and for the integration of Anglo-Indian women into the politics of the British Raj'.⁷⁴ The Anglo-Indian marriage, too, was one which 'united men and women in an imperial marital partnership centered on governing the Raj'.⁷⁵ It is not surprising then that Anglo-Indian women felt that they had an interest in the government of India. They were part of the official community in India which, as Procida writes, 'had an acknowledged material, psychological, and ideological stake in the continuing success of British imperialism'.⁷⁶ After their husbands retired to Britain, these knowledgeable Anglo-Indian women, lacking the acknowledged authority to write 'Crams by a Commissioner: or the way to govern India,' turned instead to fiction to promote the Anglo-Indian perspective and urge the need for 'the continuing success of British imperialism.' Anglo-Indian women of the

⁷³ Procida, p.4 Procida is quoting from the Introduction to Bart Moore-Gilbert (ed.), *Writing India 1757-1990: The Literature of British India* (Manchester, 1996), p.19.

⁷⁴ Procida, p.21.

⁷⁵ Procida, p.29.

⁷⁶ Procida, p. 2.

official community, then, might be complicit in the creation of colonial and racial discourses of the type which Lewis has described as ‘irredeemably male’.⁷⁷

Thus, for example, Diver’s narrator presents in *Lilamani* an argument that links contemporary discourses of femininity with a threat to imperial power.⁷⁸ The contemporary women’s movement, represented in the novel by the character Audrey, is held to be responsible for an attempt to strip British men of their ‘true masculinity, the essential barbaric, that spells national power’.⁷⁹ The author/narrator intrudes to convince the reader that if women cease to be ‘other-regarding’, the empire will fail: ‘Nature – who abhors equality as heartily and justly as she abhors a vacuum – framed the other-regarding woman for her own great ends’.⁸⁰ Reading a novel by Diver whose ‘tone of pride in the British as a master-race’, Parry suggests, is ‘strident’ suggests that Anglo-Indian women were able to ‘wholeheartedly adopt’ colonial and racial discourses and were able to make, in Mills’s phrase, ‘confident assertions about whole races, nations, countries’ (as well as having very decided (and very negative) opinions on the ‘Woman Question’).⁸¹

Characterisation

The final formal property of the texts that I discuss is the characterisation of the protagonists, British and Indian. I referred above to the characters represented in

⁷⁷ Lewis, p.17.

⁷⁸ Diver was a member of a family with very strong ties to India. Through the paternal side of the family, she was related to Honoria Lawrence (née Marshall) who married Henry Lawrence, her cousin. This was the Henry Lawrence who died in the siege of Lucknow in 1857, brother of Sir John Lawrence who was Viceroy of India. There was evidently a long history of service in the Indian Army and administration in the Marshall/ Lawrence families. Diver herself married an army officer serving in India.

⁷⁹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.102.

⁸⁰ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.102.

⁸¹ Parry, p.78.

the novels of interracial marriage as objects under the control of the ‘finalizing artistic vision’ of the author. All the protagonists are also stereotypes, characters reduced to a few traits which, in the racial discourse of the period, construct them as British or Indian. The four sections which follow discuss the stereotypes of the British and Indian male and female protagonists, noting in particular the variations from the standard stereotype.

Before this, however, I want to draw attention to the significant difference in the way that the British and Indian characters are introduced in the novels. I take Penny’s *A Mixed Marriage* to illustrate my point. In this novel the British female protagonist, Lorina, is introduced to the reader by the author/narrator as follows: she is ‘twenty-one, good-looking, outspoken to a fault, generous, high-spirited, self-reliant in her complete ignorance of the world that lay outside Winston’.⁸² She has inherited her father’s ‘sporting instincts and his unsuspicious nature’ as well as his ‘strong liking for adventure’.⁸³ She has not inherited her father’s ‘dislike of all trouble and [...] desire to shirk all responsibility’.⁸⁴ This is direct description by the authoritative author/narrator which the reader understands to be the ‘truth’ about the character of Lorina.

In contrast, the Indian protagonist of *A Mixed Marriage*, Mir Ali Yacoob Khan, is focalised through the other characters in the novel. To Mrs Carlyon he is a disappointment: ‘The man before her did not appear like the ideal prince she had so long pictured to herself. He was labelled English gentleman rather than Indian prince.’⁸⁵ To the Anglo-Indians, Alan Archdale and Mr Barton-Smith, he is ‘a foreigner’ or ‘that black fellow’ whose introduction in an English drawing room

⁸² Penny, pp.10-11.

⁸³ Penny, p.11.

⁸⁴ Penny, p.11.

⁸⁵ Penny, p.14.

causes Alan to react as if a bear had been brought into the room. Thus from the beginning of the novel the reader has, through the different methods of introducing the protagonists, different understandings of the Indian and British characters. Mir Yacoob, presented through the reactions of other characters, cannot be fixed as the character of the British Lorina, presented by the authoritative author/narrator, is.

The same strategy is used by a number of other authors. Thus, for example, in *Lilamani* by Diver, the appearance of the Indian woman is first described through the eyes of Nevil Sinclair whose gaze wanders over her, reading her character from her face, 'a hint of passion in the ripe lower lip, and of wilfulness in the round chin'.⁸⁶ Nevil's appearance is, on the other hand, described by the omniscient author/narrator as that of 'a slim, clean-cut figure of a man, with long sensitive hands, a mobile face, and thoughtful eyes where a smile lurked always'.⁸⁷ Cross, in most respects the most transgressive of the writers of novels of interracial marriage, also presents her protagonist, Frances Wilson, through the description of the author/narrator while the Indian protagonist, Hamakhan, is first presented through the gaze of Frances.⁸⁸ Later episodes where the character of Hamakhan is focalised by other British characters cast him in a different light. Even for Cross, the fixed character of the British protagonist is the standard by which the Indian is measured and, generally, found wanting. I elaborate on the introduction of the characters to each other in chapter 3 in the section on their first meeting.

⁸⁶ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.5.

⁸⁷ Diver, *Lilamani*, p. 5 The 'long sensitive hands' denote the artist, of course, the 'mobile face' suggests a man whose emotions are discernible on his face and the 'thoughtful eyes in which a smile lurked' are those of a character who thinks but is has a sense of humour too. Indian features can be read in the same way as British ones by those who have the key to the code. *Lilamani*'s full round chin means wilfulness as it would in a British girl.

⁸⁸ The concept of the Western gaze is important in this study and I address it at greater length in chapter 3.

The British Male Protagonist.

The British male protagonist presents the same attributes of appearance and personality in nearly all the novels of interracial marriage. In fact, he is so much of a type that Bruce in *The Native Wife* can describe his protagonist, James Stubbs, in terms of this stereotype of the British colonial hero, relying on his readers to recognise Stubbs as anti-hero, anti-stereotype: ‘There was no glint of gold in his close-cropped hair, nor of sky-blue in his eyes, as is the case with most of the heroes of Anglo-Indian novels, who have to be exaggerated Saxons as a contrast to native hues’.⁸⁹ As Bruce notes, Stubbs is an ‘unheroic hero’, not the stereotype of the British novelistic hero. He is ‘a stupid hero’, ‘inclined to quiet domesticity... without intellectual resources’.⁹⁰ Not being an exaggerated Saxon, constructed in opposition to the Indian, he more easily crosses racial boundaries. He is suspected by the Anglo-Indian community of having ‘got too close to native life...he had deteriorated, degenerated’.⁹¹ In other words, Stubbs has ‘gone native’, has entered what Spurr calls an ‘in-between state’.⁹²

The pedestrian Stubbs is not typical of the British male protagonist in the novels of interracial marriage or the imperial romances in general. Tosh, in his article, ‘Gentlemanly Politeness and Manly Simplicity in Victorian England’, describes the discourse of masculinity which produces the hero of the Anglo-Indian (and other) novels:

Manly vigour included energy, virility, strength – all the attributes which equipped a man to place his physical stamp on the world. Next came the moral qualities which enabled men to attain their physical potential - decisiveness, courage and endurance. These virtues had traditionally had a strong military resonance... These qualities of physique and character ...were in turn yoked to

⁸⁹ Bruce, p.36.

⁹⁰ Bruce, p.36.

⁹¹ Bruce, p.29.

⁹² Spurr, p.84. Cf. p.49 above.

some notion of social responsibility - whether loyalty to one's peers or chivalry towards women.⁹³

In addition, Tosh argues, real men of the late Victorian period were supposed to exhibit a 'frank straightforwardness'.⁹⁴ 'The manly man was someone who paid more attention to the promptings of his inner self than to the dictates of social expectation.'⁹⁵ He was a man rather than a *gentleman*. He did not aim to please but to 'convey meaning without equivocation'.⁹⁶ This is reminiscent of Diver's strictures in *Lilamani* on the women's movement which she accuses of trying 'to refine away from man... all the true masculinity, the essential barbaric, that spells national power'.⁹⁷ The imperial enterprise needed this sort of manly man.

The heroic hero of the turn of the 20th century was thus the opposite of Stubbs. He can be found in Haggard's *King Solomon's Mines* in the character of Sir Henry Curtis, for example: 'He had yellow hair, a thick yellow beard, clear-cut features, and large grey eyes set deep in his head. I never saw a finer-looking man, and somehow he reminded me of an ancient Dane'.⁹⁸ Sir Henry is as magnificent a warrior as his Viking look-alike was supposed to have been, as is demonstrated in his encounter with the evil king Twala. He is a moral hero too: he is risking his life, not for the sake of wealth, but to find his brother whom he feels he has wronged. The type proliferated in late-19th-century boys' literature in particular. Angela Woollacott argues that it was G. A. Henty, rather than Haggard, who was most influential in creating a conception of masculinity that supported 'imperial

⁹³ John Tosh, 'Gentlemanly Politeness and Manly Simplicity in Victorian England', *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society*, 12 (2002), pp. 455-72 (p.460).

⁹⁴ Tosh, 'Gentlemanly Politeness', p.460.

⁹⁵ Tosh, 'Gentlemanly Politeness', p.460.

⁹⁶ Tosh, 'Gentlemanly Politeness', p.460.

⁹⁷ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.102.

⁹⁸ H. Rider Haggard, *King Solomon's Mines*, ed. by Dennis Butts (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989), p.11.

annexation, expansion, aggressive posturing and outright warfare'.⁹⁹ The personality traits that are required in this are to be found, for instance, in G.A. Henty's Dick Holland, the protagonist of *The Tiger of Mysore*. Dick is 'strong and active'.¹⁰⁰ He has been brought up to know the 'first duty of a true knight was to succour the oppressed'.¹⁰¹ He also has a dogged endurance and imperturbable good temper but is not a great scholar. Intellect was not required in the colonial hero, apparently, although they are never described, as Bruce describes Stubbs, as 'stupid.'

Comment [PStG1]: Missing references.

There are many heroes like Curtis and Dick in the novels of interracial marriage; they are generally represented as having careers in the Indian military or the ICS, as men of action who are accustomed to command others. Cyril Brandon in *Seeta* is the earliest example in the novels examined and harks back to a different phase of British colonial rule in India and a different ideal of the type of man required by imperialism. He is 'tall, exceedingly well-made and graceful in his movements'.¹⁰² He is endowed with 'never-failing affability and good temper, ... cheerful patience.. Strict and impartial in his duties'.¹⁰³ He is the protector of the Indians in his district – a true knight – and is acknowledged to be so by the people who love him as their *ma-bap*. The most obvious difference to the hero of the later novels is that Cyril is a scholar – he knows the local Indian vernacular as well as Sanskrit and Persian and has studied Indian culture (the 'manners and customs' of Indians) – so that 'the people were therefore perfectly at ease with

⁹⁹ Angela Woollacott, *Gender and Empire*, Gender and History (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), p.59.

¹⁰⁰ G.A. Henty, *The Tiger of Mysore: A Story of the War with Tippoo Sahib* (London: Blackie & Son Ltd., 1896), p.17.

¹⁰¹ Henty, p.17.

¹⁰² Taylor, *Seeta*, p.69.

¹⁰³ Taylor, *Seeta*, pp.67-70.

him'.¹⁰⁴ In case the reader thinks Cyril is too good to be true, the author/narrator claims that 'it is no ideal portrait' that he paints.¹⁰⁵ Taylor's conceptualisation of the role of the pre-'Mutiny' British administrator, demonstrated in his autobiography, *Story of My Life*, and in his novels by characters like Cyril, is that of the benevolent and sympathetic paternalist towards a people who are worthy of his affection and respect. His stated intention in writing his autobiography and his Indian novels was 'to bring India nearer to England – to bring its people nearer our people; and if...any have felt more interest in their Indian brothers and sisters, or have been led to read and study more, my object has been achieved.'¹⁰⁶ As Brantlinger writes, Taylor had 'a daydream of justice, service, and loyalty which looks backward to the ideals of the utilitarian reformers, among whom Taylor began his own career'.¹⁰⁷ In *Seeta*, Taylor cites 'Elphinstone, Metcalfe, Munro, Malcolm'¹⁰⁸ as the examples whom British officials should be following.¹⁰⁹ These men, according to Taylor, still 'lived as household words in the thoughts and memories of all creeds and classes', but had been succeeded in Indian administration by men who 'despise and refuse the society' of Indians, who 'consider themselves demeaned by any concession to their manners or long-existing customs'.¹¹⁰ In the character of Cyril, Taylor gives a lesson on 'the way to govern India.'

¹⁰⁴ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.70.

¹⁰⁵ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.70.

¹⁰⁶ Philip Meadows Taylor, *The Story of My Life* (London: Zwan Publications, 1989), pp.461–2.

¹⁰⁷ Patrick Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness British Literature and Imperialism, 1830-1914* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1988), p.215.

¹⁰⁸ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.419.

¹⁰⁹ Thomas R. Metcalf also groups these men together as illustrative of 'Romantics in India'. He writes of them: 'Sensitive to history as an organic expression of an society's character, anxious to conserve the enduring institutions, as they saw them, of India's past, these men endeavoured to rehabilitate, and reclaim for the Raj, what they conceived of as the Indian tradition of personal government.' Metcalf, III.4, p.25.

¹¹⁰ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.70.

Not all the heroes of the later novels of interracial marriage are as idealised as Cyril or as stupid as Stubbs. I quoted in the Introduction Hall's definition of the stereotype: 'Stereotypes get hold of the few "simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped and widely recognized" characteristics about a person, *reduce* everything about the person to those traits, *exaggerate* and *simplify* them, and fix them without change or development to eternity'.¹¹¹ Thus, in most of the novels of interracial marriage, the British male protagonist is reduced to his simplicity, his courage, his loyalty, his chivalry and these qualities are repeated (anxiously, according to Bhabha) with very little variation in the interchangeable heroes of any number of novels about the empire in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. I have mentioned Hugh Seymour in *The Englishwoman* – a powerful, plain-speaking man in contrast to his rival in love, the romantic Jotindra who seduces Lucy with his poetic descriptions of India. Plain speaking equates with honesty, poetic speaking with deceit. In addition, there are Peter Heriot in Wynne's *Warning* (a strong silent type, who writes books about the frontier where he serves as a soldier), Alan Archdale in Penny's *A Mixed Marriage* ('a man of strong character ... there was a quiet strength which inspired confidence in others'¹¹²) among others. The reader aware of novelistic conventions should be able to spot the right suitor immediately from their descriptions, if the race of the successful wooer is not clue enough. These are all the right suitors of the British female protagonist who marries her after the demise of the wrong Indian suitor.

Other British male protagonists are less idealised as the imperialist hero. Stephen Dare in Perrin's *The Waters of Destruction* possesses some of the stereotypical characteristics of a Cyril Brandon: he is loyal, dutiful and chivalrous.

¹¹¹ Hall, p.258.

¹¹² Penny, p.13.

He is also driven to doubt his own sanity in the isolation of his posting at the aqueduct over the Kali Nadi, and thus cannot withstand the temptation that Sunia, the Indian female protagonist, presents. The author/narrator excuses his marriage to Sunia as both chivalrous (she is a child-widow, abused by her uncle who does not want such an ill-omened creature in his house) and as brought on by powerful loneliness in Stephen who is also ignorant of India and matters Indian. Wylie in *The Daughter of Brahma* also depicts a British male protagonist who is less than the perfect English male coloniser although he too has the attributes of the stereotype which, finally, take precedence in his character. These two British male protagonists are not in the narrative position of the right suitor and thus are not required to be the antithesis of the Indian wrong suitor (the wrong suitor in these novels is the Indian woman). This allows for some flexibility in their representation. I return to these British male protagonists in later chapters where I examine the desire and the intimacy involved in their marriages to Indian women.

Cross has a different perspective on the British colonial male. In *Life of My Heart*, Frances, the British female protagonist, rejects the British men of the Anglo-Indian community for their stupidity and their racism. Frances describes the wrong suitor, George Thompson, an assistant commissioner in the ICS, as ‘a sort of mechanical log’.¹¹³ He has forgotten nearly everything that he has learned and ‘the little that remained he was trying to get rid of, to make more room... for the bigotry and prejudice with which he is stuffed’.¹¹⁴ He is, in a sense, interchangeable with heroes whose racism is presented as acceptable: heroes like the right suitor, Norman Halifax, in *The Daughter-in-Law* by Savi whose 15 years’ residence in India has increased his ‘prejudice against the natives and has made

¹¹³ Cross, *Life*, p.29.

¹¹⁴ Cross, *Life*, p.29.

him fastidious and intolerant'¹¹⁵ or Hugh in *The Englishwoman* who does not have it in him 'to make a friend of a nigger'.¹¹⁶ These British male characters derive from contemporary racial and colonial discourses. Cross's shift of perspective on the colonial male is due to her valorisation of the Indian who, in *Life of My Heart*, occupies the privileged position in the Eastern/Western, black/white binary. Like Taylor, Cross condemns the British assumption of racial superiority and the behaviour towards Indians which derives from that assumption. Thompson is represented as one of those administrators who, in Taylor's words, 'declare India to be an "infernal hole", who speak and think contemptuously of its people'.¹¹⁷ Thompson has also been guilty of an assault on his servant which eventually killed the man. Since then, the narrator says, 'he had certainly never given the matter a thought'.¹¹⁸ In this case, the wrong suitor is rejected because his racism and violence are not the values which the heroine admires. The British in India are not handsome and chivalrous heroes; in Cross's writing the violence which underpins colonial rule is not applauded as it is in the other texts. I quoted above Diver's pronouncement on 'true masculinity, the essential barbaric, that spells national power'.¹¹⁹ 'Barbaric' in Diver's text clearly indicates a positive attribute – a lack of sophistication, courage and simplicity in the male defenders of the empire. 'Barbaric' in its negative connotation – brutal and remorseless – applies to Cross's representation of George Thompson.

¹¹⁵ E. W. Savi, *The Daughter-in-Law*, 2nd edn (London: Hurst and Blackett, 1913), p.71.

¹¹⁶ Askew, p. 43.

¹¹⁷ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.70.

¹¹⁸ Cross, *Life*, p.117.

¹¹⁹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.102.

The British Female Protagonist.

There are more novels where the British female protagonist is represented as marrying an Indian husband than those representing British male protagonists marrying Indian wives. The British female characters in these novels are no more complex or developed than the male protagonists (or the Indian female protagonists, as I demonstrate). Their function in the plot, deriving from their close proximity to the Indian suitor, is to instruct the reader in some of the ‘realities’ of Indian cultural practices and the Indian racial character. There is, however, more variety in their representation; they are not interchangeable across texts to the same extent that the British male protagonists are. This variety reflects the late Victorian discourses of femininity, the Angel in the House and the emerging New Woman, discussed in Chapter 1. In their representations of the British female protagonist, the authors of the novels of interracial marriage often participate in the current debates on femininity.

There is another aspect to the authors’ representations of femininity which reflects their own gendered experience as Anglo-Indians. Many of the female Anglo-Indian authors would have experienced the colonial requirement to ‘overcome the constraints of gender and to signify masculine authority in her person,’ as Mary Procida describes, and this affects their depiction of the British female protagonist in India.¹²⁰ What may seem in the novels New Woman characteristics attributed to the heroine – independence, extra-marital interests, a predilection for outdoor pursuits – may be in fact Anglo-Indian woman characteristics. As Procida points out,

feminine women, like effeminate men, were not suited to imperial endeavours. Just as the imperial experience proved critical in the construction

¹²⁰ Procida, p.6. Procida’s point demonstrates the impact of living elsewhere that Crane and Mohanram analyse in their discussion of the ‘diasporic identity.’

of British masculinity, so too was the empire pivotal in reconfiguring ideas about femininity for British women.¹²¹

This British female protagonist is constructed as a ‘domestic explorer.’ By marrying the Indian man, she gains access to the hidden space of Indian domestic life and is able to disclose its secrets. This exploration of an unknown and often dangerous hinterland requires of her character attributes which are more usually gendered male and which she needs to survive the murderous intent of the inhabitants of the zenana without access to British assistance.

At the same time, many of the authors (and their metropolitan audience) would have been aware of another construction of femininity in the colonial context. This was a construction which stemmed from the ‘Mutiny’ narratives of the slaughter of defenceless British women and children by Indians. This, as Procida shows, offers ‘two options for Anglo-Indian women’ in the wake of the ‘Mutiny’; they might die ‘in a martyrdom of blood’ or they might ‘passively and pathetically ... await rescue by the heroic British male’.¹²² The defenceless British female protagonist who needs to be rescued by one of the stereotypical British chivalric heroes also appears in the novels of interracial marriage where she replays the rape script disseminated widely after the ‘Mutiny’.

A New Woman – or perhaps a woman who is overcoming the constraints of gender in the Anglo-Indian context – appears in two of the novels of interracial marriage. In *Life of My Heart*, Frances is represented as independent and highly educated – ‘she had read Indian history... and discussed Old High German in German with a Hanoverian, while an Oxford M.A. had conducted her through

¹²¹ Procida, p.6.

¹²² Procida, p.114.

Attic and Doric'.¹²³ She returns to India with no social or marital ambitions but thinking of the 'cities of Asia, of the races she would see, and the peoples she would learn to know'.¹²⁴ Having acknowledged her sexual desire for Hamakhan, she does not lose the power of rational thought in a welter of romantic love but carefully weighs up the consequences of running away with him. Finally, the lovers are discovered and have to flee, although 'secret, dishonourable flight... revolted the proud, English-trained mind of the girl'.¹²⁵ After the elopement, Frances is represented as living in a small hut, behind the *purdah*; she is 'a Mohammedan's property' but 'perfectly happy' with Hamkhan.¹²⁶ She passes the time when she is confined by solving quadratic equations. Despite this apparent subordination, brought about by her sexual desire for Hamakhan, she is shown to be in control when circumstances demand clear British thinking and resolution; in other words, masculine authority. When the naive Hamakhan walks into a trap organised by an Indian who wants Frances for his harem, she recognises the danger and organises his rescue. And finally, she abandons her child ('the maternal instincts had never been strong in her'¹²⁷) to accompany Hamakhan on a journey which ends in their deaths. Just as the Pathan Hamakhan dies for abiding by his code of honour, so Frances reflects, she can do the same, for 'a Saxon... knows how to die for his [*sic*] word'.¹²⁸ At this moment the Pathan and the British codes of honour are the same and ungendered. Frances shows the same physical courage in standing by her code of honour as any Anglo-Indian male hero would have done, even in the face of death. The representation of Frances derives from

¹²³ Cross, *Life*, p.23.

¹²⁴ Cross, *Life*, p.23.

¹²⁵ Cross, *Life*, p.65.

¹²⁶ Cross, *Life*, p.161.

¹²⁷ Cross, *Life*, p.345.

¹²⁸ Cross, *Life*, p.346.

the intersection, made possible by the colonial context, of the discourse of the New Woman and the discourse of colonial masculinity. It is interesting to speculate how influential Cross's highly popular novels were 'in reconfiguring ideas about femininity for British women'.¹²⁹

While Frances is a positive depiction of the sexually liberated, independent New Woman, Audrey in Diver's *Lilamani* is depicted in negative terms. She is a doctor, working to aid secluded Indian women. She is the wrong suitor for the dilettante artist Nevil while the Indian Lilamani possesses the Angel in the House feminine qualities which make her the right suitor within the framework of Diver's anti-feminist novel. Nevil recognises that Audrey is a suitable wife for him (she is British, well-bred, interesting) and wonders why he has not fallen in love with her. The answer formulated by the omniscient author/narrator is that

[she] lacked altogether that indefinable essence called charm, atmosphere. Even as a landscape at noon fails to thrill the imagination as at sunset or dawn, so does the clear-cut, self-complete woman of transition fail to stir the tumultuous depths of passion.¹³⁰

Audrey, the New Woman, viewed as a 'landscape at noon', laid out before the male gaze in the bright midday light, is too sharply defined, too easy to know, to excite love which needs shadow and mystery to flourish, according to the author/narrator. Unfortunately, Audrey falls in love with Nevil against her will. 'The thing challenged her pride; her perverted spirit of antagonism against all that man stood for in the average woman's life'.¹³¹ It is suggested through the character of Audrey, that 'the self-complete wom[e]n of transition' are denying themselves what women essentially desire. They have not been able to purge themselves of their 'natural' feelings: 'Nature, careless of individual conviction, had wrenched

¹²⁹ Procida, p.6.

¹³⁰ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.42.

¹³¹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.60.

the heart out of her body, and given it to a man.’¹³² Audrey and her ilk are here constructed as unnatural in their desire for equality with men and as doomed to failure while there are real women in existence. The intrusive author/narrator comments on this:

what hope for the champions of self-assertion and so-called equality? What hope indeed, seeing that Nature – who abhors equality as heartily and justly as she abhors a vacuum – framed the other-regarding woman for her own great end?¹³³

Another representation of the ‘woman of transition’ is Maude Ashley, the female protagonist of Bray’s *Chattel or Wife*. Maude is a highly-educated woman but is now unable to find an outlet for her talents. The author/narrator positions her as a victim of the women’s movement:

She was, in fact, one of the victims of a half-completed social revolution. The tendency of her age was to admit women on equal terms to all the educational advantages for so long the monopoly of man, but hitherto it had totally – or all but totally – failed to furnish the necessary continuation, in the shape of a career in after-life, to which all this high-pressure education should be but the prelude.¹³⁴

Maude marries to gain a career (a trope which I address in chapter 3).

The other side of the argument on the Woman Question in *Chattel or Wife?* is given to Colonel Frank Eustace, an OIH and a possible right suitor, a position which validates his opinion:

He understood the sex pretty well, and he was an exponent of that school of thought which greatly prefers the old-fashioned ways of our sires and grandsires, and which believes that woman’s mission lies in the glorifying of her own, her husband’s, and her children’s home.¹³⁵

¹³² Diver, *Lilamani*, p.60.

¹³³ Diver, *Lilamani*, pp.102-3.

¹³⁴ Bray, pp.21-22.

¹³⁵ Bray, p.23.

The author/narrator aligns himself with Colonel Eustace: 'Do what they will, the weaker sex, struggling so desperately in these latter days to become, not the equals, as they pretend, but the masters, cannot manage without the assistance of their male belongings'.¹³⁶ This pronouncement is borne out in the novel as Maude turns from New Woman into a victim of Indian deceit requiring to be rescued by the heroic male. Trapped in a miserable marriage to Mowlah Bux, Maude cannot help herself but must turn to Colonel Eustace. Imprisoned in her husband's zenana, she can only 'passively and pathetically ... await rescue by the heroic British male', Colonel Eustace, only to die penitent shortly afterwards.¹³⁷

Having been found guilty of transgressing racial and gender boundaries, Maude is punished by death. Her fate is dictated by the rape script which Paxton describes. This script was broadly disseminated after the 'Mutiny' of 1857 casting Englishwomen as 'the victims of abduction, imprisonment, intimidation, and rape by violent and lawless Indian men'.¹³⁸ She is also, the novel suggests, the victim of the 'half-completed social revolution' which offers women educational opportunities for which they are not suited. Women, claims the narrator, are 'capable of assimilating an indefinite quantity of information, and of reproducing it when needed for purposes of examination'.¹³⁹ This is reminiscent of the description of the intellectual capacity of Indian students in Greenhow's *Brenda's Experiment*: these students can hold 'an abstruse theory in the mind in the form in which it is received.... [but] there is a want of originality, of striking out new lines

¹³⁶ Bray, p.76.

¹³⁷ Procida, p. 114.

¹³⁸ Paxton, p.5.

¹³⁹ Bray, p.19.

of inquiry'.¹⁴⁰ The author/narrator concludes, 'cakes and not conic sections, love and not Latin, gooseberry fool rather than Greek, are woman's mission in life.'¹⁴¹

Other British female protagonists who are not presented as 'self-complete women of transition', being neither sexually liberated, highly educated nor possessing advanced ideas on the Woman Question, nevertheless display a desire for greater freedom of action which initiates the action of the love-plot. Lorina Carlyon of *A Mixed Marriage* wants to travel to escape a stifling life in England where she rebels against her lack of liberty – 'simply because I am a girl I have to repress all my longings to be free',¹⁴² she says. Like Maude Ashley, this freedom is obtainable only through marriage; Lorina marries Mir Yacoob because he offers her the chance to see India and to do important work for the oppressed women in India; again she is in love with the idea and not the man.¹⁴³ She is represented, as Frances Wilson is by Cross, as possessed of the more 'male' qualities of physical and moral courage as well as the ability to think clearly in the face of the repeated attempts of her mother-in-law's serving woman to kill her. Like Frances too, she possesses a masculinised code of honour, announcing 'I hate to show the enemy my back. It is not British.'¹⁴⁴

Lucy Travers in *The Englishwoman* is not as New a Woman as Frances Wilson or even Lorina Carlyon. Her marriage to Prince Jotindra is inevitably a disaster but she demonstrates the British racial qualities of duty and courage as the title of the novel indicates. Lucy recognises quickly that her marriage will not work – her Indian husband murders his own brother in front of her, poisons Lucy's maid-companion and is seduced by a dancing girl. But Lucy, accepting that she is

¹⁴⁰ Greenhow, p.9.

¹⁴¹ Bray, p.17.

¹⁴² Penny, *A Mixed Marriage*, p.19.

¹⁴³ Cf. Penny, p.168.

¹⁴⁴ Penny, p. 190.

responsible for her marriage, nevertheless, because she is 'an Englishwoman' with all that that implies, determines to be of some use to her erring husband. Her British principles demand this of her: British men and women do not run from difficult situations, these novels indicate, especially difficult situations of their own making. In this respect the novels represent the female characters as possessed of racial attributes which are usually gendered as masculine – physical and moral courage, a strong sense of duty, a desire to succour the oppressed.

Not all the British female protagonists display these qualities, however, when faced with Indian marital murderousness and deceit. The epitome of the passive female protagonist is Joan Mansfield in *Warning* by Wynne. Repeatedly described as 'small', her face resolutely 'tear-stained' throughout, she spends the novel being abused by men, even British men. When her Indian husband (a very obvious wrong suitor from the first moment of meeting) tires of her, she is shipped off to her mother-in-law to be quietly murdered. Rescued from this predicament by the Indian servant of the right British suitor, she is disguised as an Indian youth and enters the service of the British suitor without his knowledge. She is nearly raped by the British doctor who guesses her sex and beaten by the British lover (which she rather likes). This representation of the British female rests on the Victorian ideology of the Angel in the House, the subservient, self-abnegating woman with little or no capacity for independent action. The tendency towards masochism is new, however. Sadly, Wynne constructed the victimised Joan Mansfield in 1923, after decades of feminist campaigning for improved conditions for women and only four years after women finally got the vote.

But even the small and tear-stained masochist, Joan Mansfield, has, in a sense, taken on the traditionally male role of the explorer. She and her fictional

counterparts have penetrated into the forbidden Indian domestic space – as Richard Burton penetrated Mecca or Livingstone the Congo – and ‘disclosed’ its secrets to the West. In this exploration, the heroine generally (excepting Joan Mansfield) faces physical danger with courage, maintains her rationality (often supposed a male quality as opposed to female irrationality) in the face of the irrationality of Indian life and adheres to her British code of principles. The female characters, in fact, display qualities more often thought masculine in the situations in which they are placed so that the British identity is often in these novels distinguished as much by race as by gender.

The Indian Male Protagonist

The Indian protagonist as the other suitor in the two-suitor plot is almost inevitably the wrong suitor. The two-suitor plot demands, as Kennard says (above), that the protagonist chooses between suitors who embody two different ways of life and/or two different sets of values set up in opposition to each other. Making one suitor British and the other Indian immediately sets up this opposition of ways of life and values in the same way that Said claims Orientalism defined the British Self in opposition to the Oriental Other. ‘The Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience,’ he argues.¹⁴⁵ Thus, where the British protagonist is a paragon of late-Victorian masculinity, the Indian is constructed as his opposite: deceitful and cowardly where the British hero exhibits manly plain-speaking and courage. Their attitudes to women were constructed as opposite too. The Indian male protagonist, in other words, is as stereotypical as his British male counterpart.

¹⁴⁵ Said, pp. 1–2.

With one exception, the Indian suitors of British women are represented as mimic men (see Chapter 1). In keeping with the historical real, there are several princes and noblemen among them as well as Indian men being trained in law in Britain. Prince Mir Yacoob has just come down from Oxford when Lorina meets him in *A Mixed Marriage* as has Prince Jotindra in *The Englishwoman*. Both return to India to govern their own states. Ameer Ali in *Brenda's Experiment*, Mohammed Khan in *Warning*, Hurri Mohun Dey in *The Daughter-in-Law* and Mowlah Bux in *Chattel or Wife* have all studied law in England. All these Indian men, as Mrs Carlyon in *A Mixed Marriage* thinks to herself of Mir Yacoob, can be 'labelled English gentleman rather than Indian prince'.¹⁴⁶ All Indian suitors speak perfect English and could be mistaken for Italians or Spaniards based on their skin and hair colour. Racial difference is thus minimised and possible resistance to the marriage thereby reduced. The Indian men mix the attraction of an exotic background with familiar appearance, speech and behaviour. They offer the British female protagonist adventure and a purpose in life, even love in some cases.

Initially the Indian suitor appears to epitomise the success of British attempts at social reform in India, the civilising mission. However, as noted in the section on mimic men in Chapter 1, the Anglicised Indian falls between two discursive stools. Although he can be educated to appear almost white, his racially naturalised character must, in the racial ideology of the 19th century, reassert itself. The mimic man returns to India and reverts to an Indian stereotype – that is, he shows himself to be cowardly, murderous and licentious.

¹⁴⁶ Penny, p.14.

The reassertion of inherent racial inferiority of the Indian despite his British education is problematic in these novels. It undermines the premise of the civilising mission and highlights the precariousness of colonial rule, implicitly demonstrating its inevitable failure in the face of racial naturalism.¹⁴⁷ Within a range of competing but connected discourses, the discourse of the stereotypical Indian often wins out over the discourse of the civilising mission in the two-suitors plots. As mentioned above, however, this is not invariably the case in these texts and it is those texts which show ambivalence about the race of the right suitor that highlight the unstable and sometimes contradictory nature of colonial and racial discourse.

There is an Indian male protagonist who does not fall into the category of the mimic man: the right suitor, Hamakhan, in Cross's *Life of My Heart*. He is constructed in opposition to the British men in the novel as handsome and intelligent in contrast to Thompson who is neither, thus reversing the privileging of the binary opposition white/black. Hamakhan also has a code of honour to which he adheres, although doing so causes his death and that of Frances. Facing the British police who are questioning him 'like a bronze statue, at which two fussy, consequential terriers were yapping',¹⁴⁸ Hamakhan refuses to betray his *bhai*; 'he was filled with the ineffable pride and dignity of his unconquerable race'.¹⁴⁹ It is the sort of behaviour that is usually attributed to the British hero in imperial romances; indeed, Hamakhan has displayed throughout the novel a chivalrous and protective attitude towards Frances, as well as the qualities of courage and endurance which mark the British imperial hero. Implicitly, Cross undermines the imperial project in India; the bronze statue, Hamakhan, immovable

¹⁴⁷ cf. Goldberg, p.74.

¹⁴⁸ Cross, *Life*, p.369.

¹⁴⁹ Cross, *Life*, p.374.

and enduring, faces down the short-lived and servile minions of empire, who cannot force him to transgress his 'fierce, savage code of honour'.¹⁵⁰ It is an unusual comment on the limits of the dominance of the British in India.¹⁵¹

The Indian Female Protagonist

There is greater variation in the representation of the Indian female protagonist, possibly because, like the discourse of British femininity at the time, the discourse of Indian femininity was under debate in both Britain and India. As Chapter 1 demonstrated, British feminist and missionary constructions of the Indian woman range from the Sita-type of the devoted and submissive wife to the *bibi*-type of the sexually available and alluring woman. Little attention was paid to the fact that there were a good number of Indian women who fitted into neither category. Indian women like Cornelia Sorabji, Pandita Ramabai or Kandamini Ganguly who were highly-educated workers for female Indian emancipation do not appear in these texts. Many of the British feminists and missionaries who wrote on the domestic life of the Indian woman described it as 'degraded', concentrating their attention on practices of seclusion, lack of education, child marriage and enforced widowhood. Most, however, admitted that they knew little about life in the *zenana*. Thus, as a contemporary review of Bray's *Chattel or Wife?* in *The Tablet* from 1st September 1900 suggested: 'there may perhaps be overcolouring or exaggeration' in the novel's depiction of the horrors of the *zenana* but noted too that 'the abuses of a system screened from all legal or other external intervention

¹⁵⁰ Cross, *Life*, p. 373.

¹⁵¹ It should be noted, however, that Cross makes Hamakhan a Pathan, a member of a 'martial race' for whom the British felt respect. Had Cross chosen to represent a Bengali as an idealised Indian man, the subversion of the racial and colonial discourses would have been that much greater but, one speculates, quite possibly such a novel was untreatable at this time, even for Cross.

make all things possible, and open a legitimate field for the imagination'.¹⁵² The review raises an important point about the novels' depictions of life in the unknown space of the *zenana* to which I will return in subsequent chapters.

The marriage of a British man to an Indian wife does not feature as often in the novels of interracial marriage as the opposite configuration of partners. This is possibly because the practice of keeping an Indian *bibi* had fallen into disrepute by the late 19th century. It is also possible that this configuration of partners did not furnish the same opportunities of fictional penetration into the secret spaces of Indian domestic life as did the novels where it is through an Englishwoman in the *zenana* that 'the abuses of a system screened from all legal or other external intervention' can be imagined for the instruction of the British reading public.

In Britain, whether one saw the Indian woman as victim of the Indian man and Indian cultural practices or whether one saw her as a shining example of self-abnegating, subservient and domesticated woman might depend on the stance one took on the Woman Question. Burton has written of how British feminists based their demands for inclusion as citizens of the imperial nation on the plight of their suffering Indian sisters who needed the help of British women to improve their lives.¹⁵³ To others, however, the Indian woman could be valorised as everything the woman in Britain was in the process of discarding.¹⁵⁴

Diver's *Lilamani* is an example of the way in which the novel of interracial marriage might be used polemically to offer an anti-feminist view on the position of women. *Lilamani* is represented as 'pure Hindu woman in [her] capacity for sacrifice of self'.¹⁵⁵ Her first sacrifice is of home and country: 'If I, a Hindu, marry

¹⁵² Review of *Chattel or Wife?* In *The Tablet*, 1st September 1900

¹⁵³ Cf. Burton.

¹⁵⁴ As in *Lilamani*.

¹⁵⁵ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.114.

to a foreigner, I am cut off for always from family, from caste, from religion – from ever going back to my home.’¹⁵⁶ She chooses to follow ‘the way of the heart... the way of all true women’ and marry British Nevil.¹⁵⁷ ‘Nature,’ the author/narrator announces, ‘framed the other-regarding woman for her own great ends: a fact more frankly recognized in the East than in the West’.¹⁵⁸ Lilamani, being ‘Eastern to the core’, if in love with Nevil, ‘would quite conceivably take a pride in prostrating herself at his feet’.¹⁵⁹ *Lilamani* clearly privileges the Angel in the House/Sita type of femininity over the New Woman represented by Audrey Hammond. Not only the authorial/narratorial pronouncements but also the ending of the novel where, all difficulties resolved, Lilamani murmurs to Sinclair, ‘Live for ever, my lord and my king’ demonstrate the submission and devotion to her husband which the novel regards as necessary in a woman.¹⁶⁰ The fact that the privileged feminine position is represented by an Indian woman in this novel allows Diver to develop her other thesis that ‘East and West are not antagonistic, but complementary: heart and head, thought and action, woman and man.’¹⁶¹ The devoted and submissive Lilamani represents India prostrating herself before her British husband. ‘Between all these “pairs of opposites”, fusion is rare, difficult’ states the author/narrator: perhaps not so difficult if one side of the opposition is constructed as totally submissive to the other.

There are two other Sita-types who marry British husbands in the novels of interracial marriage studied here. Sarasvati, a temple priestess, in Wylie’s *The Daughter of Brahma*, like Lilamani, makes a great sacrifice for the British male

¹⁵⁶ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.97 Lilamani and her father are represented throughout the novel as speaking slightly ungrammatical English. .

¹⁵⁷ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.16.

¹⁵⁸ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.102.

¹⁵⁹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.103.

¹⁶⁰ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.336.

¹⁶¹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.171.

protagonist, David Hurst. She has almost attained Nirvana but is diverted from her spiritual path by his need for her. In language reminiscent of the Biblical story of Ruth, she declares to him: 'Whither thou callest I must follow.'¹⁶² Seeta in Taylor's *Seeta* makes the greatest sacrifice, ultimately dying to save the life of Cyril Brandon. These women, again like Lilamani, are constructed as deeply spiritual in line with both Indian and British discourses of the Angel in the House. The Indian alignment of women with the home/inner/spiritual sphere has been mentioned previously and it is possible that the Anglo-Indian authors were aware of it; Wylie may have accessed this construction of Indian women through her involvement with the suffrage movement, for example. The British Angel in the House was constructed in much the same way, as domestic, pious and subservient, so it is not possible to distinguish which discourse was dominant in these representations. In the case of Seeta and Sarasvati, however, they turn out to be the wrong suitor although representing ideals of womanhood very similar to those of their British rivals. Cyril, having married Seeta, then meets the British Grace Mostyn who is a British Angel in the House as opposed to Seeta's Indian version. Cyril and Grace enjoy similar pursuits – they are companionate in a way that Seeta and Cyril are not. In fact, Seeta is constructed as Grace and Cyril's pupil in an ongoing process of Anglicisation. David Hurst, having married Sarasvati and returned with her to England, discovers that the right suitor is the British Diana Chichester who shares some feminine qualities with Sarasvati (devotion to David, compassion) but is better suited by virtue of being British to help him in his new life as a country squire and Parliamentary candidate in England. In both these

¹⁶² I. A. R. Wylie, *The Daughter of Brahma* (Indianapolis: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, 1912), p.153.

cases it is the racially different ways of life and interests that determine which woman is the right or wrong suitor.

There are two examples in the texts of the other stereotype of Indian womanhood, the sensual *bibi* type of woman: Sunia in *The Waters of Destruction* and Tara in *The Native Wife*. Sunia is beautiful - like all the Indian female characters – but she is not constructed as innocent as are the three Sita-type characters just discussed. On first meeting, Sunia meets Stephen's gaze 'fearlessly with bright dark eyes', something which Sita-type Indian women are too modest to do – Lilamani several times is described as pulling her sari over her head to shield herself from the male gaze.¹⁶³ The return of the male gaze signifies her boldness and sexual availability. Once married, however, Sunia grows fat and indolent. The text describes her almost as a child: 'She liked to be petted and played with',¹⁶⁴ she likes cheap jewellery and she has tantrums when thwarted. She remains however devoted to 'her lord'. A similar type of Indian woman is represented in Bruce's *The Native Wife*. Tara has been raised by missionaries and is intended by them to be a teacher. However, when Stubbs, the anti-hero, proposes that she visits him at his house she is well aware what this means and by means unwilling to oblige him. She has affection for him but also has a shrewd understanding of what profit a relationship with Stubbs will bring her. The intrusive author/narrator informs the reader about the nature of Indian's women's love. To Indian women, sexual relationships with British men are commercial transactions: 'She often finds it to her material advantage, or to her prestige, to live with a European, as mistress or as wife.'¹⁶⁵ The novel, however, contradicts this assessment of the love of Indian women. Tara saves the life of Stubbs at the expense of her own and in

¹⁶³ Cf. Diver, *Lilamani*, p.97.

¹⁶⁴ Perrin, *Waters*, p.156.

¹⁶⁵ Bruce, p.81.

her dying moments declares her love for him. Indian women, virginal or available, are always represented as devoted to their British husbands.

Other Indian women are represented in the novels of interracial marriage in roles other than the spouse of the British man. They are often women of the *zenana* where they are shown to wield great power over the actions of their sons and husbands in relation to the British wife. I discuss these women in greater detail in Chapter 4.

Conclusion

My purpose in this chapter has been to show that the formal properties of the novels of interracial marriage structure the colonial, racial and gender discourses in which their authors participated in such a way as to present a regime of truth about Indian matters and, implicitly, the need for continued British government.

The romance genre allows the authors to explore the issue of the relations between the two races on a personal level, exploring the dynamics of desire and intimacy between the individual coloniser and the colonised. The relationship represented, I argue, has a broader significance, moving out from the personal to the political relationship. As Darby writes: when ‘the novel offers a broader social or political commentary, it usually does so by working outwards from the lives of the characters.’¹⁶⁶ The novels may thus be read as exploring relations between the British Raj and India, a point I return to in the Conclusion.

By using the two-suitor plot, the authors are able to contrast two different ways of life and values while at the same time reassuring readers aware of the convention of the plot that racial boundaries, if breached, would be mended before the end of the

Comment [PStG2]: Needs work. Why talk about the romance, and the narrative voice and not about stereotypes. And why repeat myself as I’ve said all this before I’ve said this in the chapter. Or do I?

¹⁶⁶ Darby, p.39.

novel. The contrast between the two ways of life is described by an author/narrator who is the 'one cognitive subject' of the 'finalizing artistic vision' in Bakhtin's formulation of the monologic text.¹⁶⁷ The stereotypical characters of the novels are 'merely objects of [the one cognitive subject's] cognition'.¹⁶⁸ The result is a set of single-voiced texts based on 'knowledge' of Indians and their cultural practices which 'prove' the need for racial segregation while 'proving', perhaps unwittingly, that British authority in India is precarious, that the Indian will never be successfully Anglicised. Thus the authoritative voice of the author/narrator/OIH, as Young writes, 'loses its univocal grip on meaning'.¹⁶⁹

The next chapters turn to the examination of the content of the novels, their representations of affective relations between Indian and Briton, their repetition of the same regime of truth concerning India and, importantly, the departures from the regime.

¹⁶⁷ Bakhtin, p.71.

¹⁶⁸ Bakhtin, p.71.

¹⁶⁹ Young, p.22.

CHAPTER 3 DISTANCE, IGNORANCE AND DESIRE

Introduction

The following section serves as an introduction to chapters 3 and 4 in which I examine the novels of interracial marriage, focusing on the colonial, racial and gender discourses in which they participate and structuring my analysis according to the novels' very similar plot trajectories. In Chapter 3 I analyse the meeting of the protagonists and the desires which lead to their marriage. It is a central argument of my thesis that it was not only 19th century men who were interested in cross-racial contact. Young, for example, omits a large number of late-19th-century writers when he suggests that only male imperial romancers like Burton, Haggard, Kipling and Stevenson were 'concerned with forms of cross-cultural contact, interaction, an active desire, frequently sexual, for the other'.¹ I demonstrate that there existed a large number of female 'imperial romancers' who also wrote of 'cross-cultural contact, interaction, an active desire [...] for the other'. The active desires, postulated by the novels of interracial marriage as leading to cross-cultural contact, are not always sexual for reasons discussed in this chapter but demonstrate how India might attract the British in ways other than the sexual. There is even, of course, one female Anglo-Indian author who does acknowledge the possibility of British female sexual desire for the Indian Other.

Chapter 4 examines the consequences of the marriage to the Indian Other and its eventual dissolution. My argument in that chapter is that the didactically-inclined Anglo-Indian authors of the novels of interracial marriage have 'proved' by their representations of Indian domestic and social life that, however desirable, intimate cross-cultural contact, interracial marriage, cannot work. The view they

¹ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.3.

provide of the Indian home, the brutality of the Indian husband and the unwillingness of the Indian wife to be emancipated are used to show how primitive the colonised are, and consequently that the races needed to be kept separate. It also provides an argument for a continuation of the British presence in India since the Indian man who behaves like a domestic tyrant cannot be allowed to extend his tyranny to a wider sphere such as government of his own country.

In the close readings of the novels in the next two chapters, I focus on the tropes of distance and proximity or intimacy, ignorance and knowledge which are brought into play in these novels in often contradictory and inconsistent ways. As Lisa Lowe says,

although orientalism may represent its objects as fixed or stable, contradictions and noncorrespondences in the discursive situation ultimately divulge the multivalence and indeterminability of those fictions.²

The tropes do not work so neatly in these novels that, for example, distance and ignorance can be contained in Chapter 3 (which discusses meeting and desire) while Chapter 4 (on the marriage) examines only intimacy and knowledge. Ignorance may masquerade as knowledge in these novels while intimacy may hold the Other at a distance as I show in the discussion of the novels in chapters 3 and 4.

Distance/Intimacy, Ignorance/Knowledge

In chapter 1 I examined the proximity in which British and Indians lived in the early days of British rule and noted how this 'indianisation' of the colonisers became less common after 1857 and the events of the 'Mutiny'. Socialising or

² Lowe, p.x.

cohabiting with Indians and adopting Indian cultural practices became unsuitable for rule 'in a British idiom' which involved the dismantling of Indian structures of government in favour of British models linked, as Collingham observes, to a 'more aggressive belief in the benefits of contemporary British civilization'.³ This 'spatial separation of the races' emphasised the racial and cultural superiority which the British considered their justification for ruling India, so that the physical separation of the races is closely allied to a moral distancing by the British from their Indian subjects. In adopting an ideology which regarded the Indian as racially and culturally inferior, the British withdrew to a position where contact with the colonised was regarded almost as a contamination. Collingham notes the revulsion with which certain Indian practices inspired the British, such as oiling the body with coconut or other oils, chewing betel nut and spitting, as well as belching which, 'without the least attempt to restraint ... is ... surprising to an Englishman'.⁴ In addition, the stereotype of the Indian as lazy, deceitful, decadent and effeminate increased the moral distance between the races.

It was not just the British who preferred to keep their distance from contaminating contact with the Other. Hindu purity laws meant that they could not associate with the British without fear of pollution. This created resentment among the British who, as the dominant group, found it difficult to tolerate the idea that their touch was pollution to the colonised. The author of *Life in the Mofussil*, G. Graham, wrote that:

We in India are often accused of a want of desire to amalgamate with the natives, and cultivate their society. How can you be on friendly terms with a man who believes that your very touch defiles him, and who would not eat his food if, in passing, your shadow had happened to fall on it?⁵

³ Collingham, p.50.

⁴ Collingham, p.147.

⁵ G. Graham, *Life in the Mofussil; Or, The Civilian in Lower Bengal* (London: C.K.Paul & Co., 1878), p.146.

Graham's comment seems to suggest that the British would have associated with the colonised if the Indian caste system had not prevented it. The British distance from the Indian purports to be, in other words, a thwarted desire for proximity. The comment is also interesting for the insight it gives into criticism of colonial ('[w]e in India') attitudes towards the Indians by those in the metropole who censure the colonisers for their practice of racial segregation. Graham clearly regards the British at home as ignorant of the real conditions of life in India and his remark is reminiscent of Kipling's criticism, noted earlier, of metropolitan attitudes towards Anglo-Indians which 'asserted that [they] spent violent lives "oppressing" the native'.⁶

The distance created between coloniser and colonised after the 'Mutiny' produced in the British an ignorance of Indian social and domestic life and of the Indian female population. They were aware of this and both regretted and resented it. Lawrence wrote in *The India We Served*, for example, that he regretted that he 'never had the pleasure of meeting the women of India and of understanding their life'.⁷ He knew that, when he visited their husbands in their homes, 'they were present, watching from behind 'their latticed windows', but he 'could never speak to them, nor share their thoughts. ... This crippling convention has cut us off from the real India, and we have never come near her heart and mind and soul.'⁸ 'Some Civilians,' notes David Gilmour, 'admitted that they could not hope to understand India when half of it was closed to them, because the "confinement of women in zenanas [was] an impassable obstacle to our getting a glimpse of their family life

⁶ Kipling, *Something of Myself*, 1.929.

⁷ Lawrence, p.139.

⁸ Lawrence, p.140.

and customs ...from within'.⁹ Consequently, C. A. Bayly writes in *Empire and Information*, '[t]he basic fear of the colonial official ... was [...] his lack of indigenous knowledge and ignorance of the 'wiles of the native'.¹⁰ The segregation of the races, the discontinuation of the practice of intermarriage, according to Bayly, meant that the British did not have 'an inflow of affective knowledge', which he defines as 'knowledge which derived from the creation of moral communities within the colonial society by means of conversion, acculturation or interbreeding'.¹¹

Since acculturation and interbreeding were limited after the 'Mutiny', much of the 'knowledge' of Indian domestic and social life was derived from British attempts to convert Indians to Christianity. Missionary women, as Procida describes, had greater access to the Indian home as they had been visiting Indian homes for decades, 'hoping to convert the "zenana women" to Christianity and to educate them sufficiently so that they would become aware of their oppressed condition'.¹² Many missionaries wrote accounts of their work, of which Barnes's *Behind the Pardah* is typical in its denigration of Indian practices, especially those linked to religion:

It is the heart of India that we seek. And the heart of India is the woman of India... Lifting the Zenana curtain — fit emblem of the dark pall of ignorance, superstition, and misery, behind its folds — they [missionaries] are coming, going, to-day.¹³

Like the Anglo-Indian officials, the missionaries regarded the invisible Indian woman in her obscure home as the 'heart' of India. Access to this hidden space

⁹ Gilmour, *Ruling Caste*, p.257 Gilmour is quoting from the unpublished papers of Sir Harcourt Butler.

¹⁰ C. A. Bayly, *Empire and Information: Intelligence Gathering and Social Communication in India, 1780-1870*, 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), p.6.

¹¹ Bayly, p.7.

¹² Procida, p.177.

¹³ Barnes, p.39.

was crucial for knowledge of 'the real India'. In keeping with her conversionary motives, however, Barnes considered zenanas 'dens of iniquity', which could not have 'any other than a demoralising effect upon its millions of prisoners'.¹⁴ And the Indian men who kept these women prisoners revealed themselves as equally ignorant and superstitious and thus as incapable of self-rule, the treatment of women being an index of the civilisation of a nation. It was assumed that the British Raj was needed until social and domestic reform was achieved in India.

Partly because of the lurid descriptions of the missionaries and partly because of general ignorance, Indian social and domestic life and the zenana in particular became a subject of great interest and speculation for the British. Janaki Nair notes that '[b]y its very unknowability, [the zenana] was a seat of sedition and intrigue, as much as it was a site of ambiguous sexuality'.¹⁵ It was also represented as the site of the abuse of Indian women as the previously quoted review of Claude Bray's *Chattel or Wife?* made plain.¹⁶ In the absence of impartial information-gathering in the hidden space of Indian domestic and social life, the 'knowledge' of this life furnished by the missionaries, the only colonisers with access, was taken up, reworked and re-imagined by others, including the Anglo-Indian authors of the novels of interracial marriage, for their own purposes. In the process an extended 'knowledge' was created which would help to make visible and thus master the invisible Indian woman and her inaccessible home. As Said writes: 'A text purporting to contain knowledge about something actual... is not easily dismissed. Expertise is attributed to it. ... [S]uch texts can create not only knowledge but also the very reality they appear to describe.'¹⁷ The novelists'

¹⁴ Barnes, p.51.

¹⁵ Nair, p.11.

¹⁶ Cf. pp.114-5.

¹⁷ Said, p.94.

authority on matters Indian helped to create for a British reading public ‘the very reality they appear to describe’ although this ‘reality’ was in fact based on a profound ignorance. As I noted in Chapter 2, authors who had never been to India demonstrate the same ‘knowledge’ of matters Indian, proving Said’s point about the textuality of colonial discourses.

The desire to ‘know’ the heart of India, its social and domestic life, runs parallel, however, to a recognition that too much knowledge of the Other may be dangerous. Kerr writes in *Eastern Figures* about the problems of knowledge and what he calls ‘prophylactic ignorance’ which characterised colonial discursive formations.¹⁸ Writing about Lord Cromer’s rule in Egypt, Kerr notes that, while a certain amount of knowledge of ‘the Oriental mind’ is necessary to aid wise government on the part of the administrator, ‘he [the administrator] will recognize and even welcome the fact that his knowledge runs only up to a point, and beyond that point the Oriental remains unknowable in his radical difference’.¹⁹ This, however, is not to be regretted as ‘[a]ssimilation is not possible, or desirable, and the Englishman’s authority and identity are guaranteed by what we might call a prophylactic ignorance’.²⁰ The coloniser needs to keep his/her distance because to get too close, to know too much (how much is too much? asks Kerr, and it is a very good question) would be dangerous to British authority and identity. Kerr uses the example of Kipling’s policeman, Strickland, to illustrate the conflict between knowledge and ignorance among the British in India. Strickland knows more than any other British official about Indians. When other men have leave they go hunting in the hills. When Strickland has leave he also goes ‘hunting’, although his quarry is of a different kind.

¹⁸ Kerr, 1.5452.

¹⁹ Kerr, 1.5449–5450.

²⁰ Kerr, 1.5451–5452.

When other men took ten days to the Hills, Strickland took leave for what he called *shikar* [hunting], put on the disguise that appealed to him at the time, stepped down into the brown crowd, and was swallowed up for a while.²¹

The knowledge derived from his immersion, as Kerr points out, makes Strickland suspect to everyone. He risks ‘a double alienation’ – from the Indians who hate him because he knows too much and from the British who fear that his proximity to Indian life has led to a blurring of the boundaries of his British identity. He risks, in other words, going native and succumbing to the moral degradation that this was considered to entail. This ‘double alienation’ also affects the British protagonists of the novels of interracial marriage.

These tropes of distance, ignorance, intimacy and knowledge structure the analysis of the novels of interracial marriage which follows. In the rest of this chapter I analyse the representations of the meeting of the British and Indian protagonists, using the concept of the authoritative gaze, moving then to a discussion of the desires which motivate the British protagonist to enter into marriage with the Indian Other. I show that these desires are based on ignorance of the real conditions of Indian social and domestic life and the nature of the Indian. Chapter 4 takes up the story of the interracial marriage and its dissolution, analysing this in terms of the knowledge that is acquired by the British protagonist within relations of intimacy, not only with the Indian spouse but also his/her friends and relations. The divisions between distance/ignorance and intimacy/knowledge are not always so neat, however. Of particular interest are the novels where the knowledge acquired through intimacy is not dangerous but produces an understanding between the British and Indian protagonists which proposes that closer relations between the races are possible and even desirable.

²¹ Quoted in Kerr, 1.5513 The passage appears in the short story ‘Miss Youghal’s Sais’ which appeared in *Plain Tales from the Hills* (1888). .

First Impressions – the Power of the Imperial Gaze

One of the most powerful strategies of imperial dominance is that of surveillance, or observation, because it implies a viewer with an elevated vantage point, it suggests the power to process and understand that which is seen, and it objectifies and interpellates the colonized subject in a way that fixes its identity in relation to the surveyor.²²

The gaze, described as above by Ashcroft, is a mechanism for acquiring/exercising knowledge and power, implicitly at a distance. It is a prominent feature in the representation of the meeting of the protagonists in many of the novels. The British protagonist, in possession of an ‘elevated vantage point’, observes the Indian spouse-to-be for the first time, appraises him/her, fixes him/her as knowable in European terms while at the same time distancing him/her as Other, and finally appropriates him/her. A subject/object relationship is established by the gaze which in Meyda Yeğenoğlu’s words, ‘is characterized by a desire to master, control, and reshape the body of the subjects by making them visible’.²³ Before examining the novels, however, I will explain briefly how I understand the gaze to work.

Analyses of the gaze almost always reference Michel Foucault and his idea of the disciplinary system of Panopticism which was described in *Discipline and Punish*.²⁴ The observer in the central tower of the Panopticon can see all the prisoners in the cells around him/her but cannot be seen by them. This creates in those observed a need for self-regulation for they do not know when the central observer is watching and hence must behave as required at all times. Spurr

²² Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, p.226.

²³ Meyda Yeğenoğlu, *Colonial Fantasies: Towards a Feminist Reading of Orientalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), p.12.

²⁴ Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (London: Allen Lane, 1977), p.200 The Panopticon ‘reverses the principle of the dungeon; or rather of its three functions – to enclose, to deprive of light and to hide – it preserves only the first and eliminates the other two. Full lighting and the eye of the supervisor capture better than darkness, which ultimately protected. Visibility is a trap.’

comments: '[f]or the observer, sight confers power, for the observed, visibility is a trap'.²⁵ The spatial relationship within the Panopticon – the 'elevated vantage point' of the observer guard in the central tower who views all around and below him/her – thus supports the operations of the network of power within the institution of the prison and also contributes to its knowledge system in a one-way flow of information from cells to central tower.

Jacques Lacan's concept of the gaze is also important here. He describes the gaze as having the power to create *anxiety* in the person who knows him/herself to be visible to another. There is a loss of autonomy when one knows oneself to be not only visible to another, but also an object in that other's gaze. This notion of the anxiety-producing, objectifying gaze has been used by Bhabha to describe what happens within a colonial context in the relations between the colonising subject who has the power of the gaze and the colonised object who is observed. Bhabha has described the process 'by which the look of surveillance returns as the displacing gaze of the disciplined' to disrupt the identity of the observed.²⁶ What is dangerous in the gaze of patriarchy or colonialism which attempts to control is that the object of the gaze might look back at and remind the gazer that the object is also a subject, simultaneously turning the gazer into an object and thus destabilising further the already unstable identity of the coloniser, reducing the psychological distance between them. The Other can pass judgement on the coloniser and the coloniser has no control over those judgements; s/he cannot force the Other to define him/her as s/he would like to be defined.

It was impossible to segregate the races completely in India and impossible to avoid the judgements of the colonised. Not only did the Eurasian population attest

²⁵ Spurr, p.16.

²⁶ Bhabha, p.127.

to past interracial intimacies but Indians were also present in the Anglo-Indian home: a bungalow was staffed by a large number of Indian servants. Privacy was felt to be impossible: it was a frequent complaint that the British in their bungalows were constantly under the gaze of the Indian servants. Mills quotes Charlotte Canning on the subject of this unnerving gaze: '[t]hese gliding people come and stand by one, and will wait for an hour with their eyes fixed on one... and one is quite startled to find them patiently waiting when one looks round.'²⁷ The effect of this surveillance, Diver suggested, was that the British had to behave themselves well at all times because, for example, the Indian ayah, from whom little could be hidden, 'judges [the British woman's] conduct by Eastern standards, and communicates those judgments without reserve to an admiring circle of listeners over her evening hookah'.²⁸

This inability to control the judgements of the Other leaves two alternatives for Jean-Paul Sartre:

I can either regard the Other as an object, as one special object among many in my world. In that case, I am safe; I keep control of the situation, and the Other's threat is disarmed. Or I can regard him as a subject, as a consciousness defining me by his look. In that case, I lose control of the situation; I become an object for him. My being-for-itself becomes a being-for-him — a being-for-others. I can be adopting the one or the other attitude toward the Other. But I can never combine them. In short, there is a tension, a struggle between us. ... Which one of us is going to be the one to define the world?²⁹

A number of the novels of interracial marriage describing the first sight of the Indian spouse-to-be, distance him/her and diminish his/her power to return the gaze by equating him/her with a 'special object', a European work of art – a painting, a statue, a vase. For example, in *Seeta*, Taylor represents Cyril's first

²⁷ Quoted in Mills, p.121 Mills is quoting from C. Hibbert, *The Great Mutiny, India 1857*.

²⁸ *Memsahib's Writings: Colonial Narratives on Indian Women*, ed. by Indrani Sen (New Delhi: Orient Longman, 2008), p.284.

²⁹ Paul Vincent Spade, 'Jean-Paul Sartre's "Being and Nothingness"', 1995
<<http://www.pvspade.com/Sartre/pdf/sartre1.pdf>> [accessed 26 February 2014].

sight of Seeta. She enters the tent where the hearing into her husband's death is to be held and, taking a place where 'the light from without fell full upon her', she is fully exposed to the gaze of the magistrate, Cyril.³⁰ The text gives a full description of what he sees – the 'rich silk saree of a green colour, shot with crimson, which had heavy borders and ends of gold thread' which, draped over her head and falling on her right arm 'contrasted vividly with its fair colour and rounded outline', the large soft eyes, the 'mobile and expressive mouth'.³¹ This ekphrastic description of Seeta, posed in the light under Cyril's gaze, is underscored by his next thought:

For a native woman, Cyril Brandon had never seen any one so fair or of so tender a tone of colour. Such, he remembered, were many of the lovely women of Titian's pictures – a rich golden olive, with a bright carnation tint rising under the skin – and Seeta's was like them. One in particular came to his memory like a flash – the wife of the Duc d'Avalos, in the Louvre painting; or Titian's Daughter, carrying fruits and flowers, in Berlin.³²

Similarly in *Lilamani*, Nevil sees Lilamani for the first time, seated on a balcony reading a book. She is, like Seeta, posed unmoving under his gaze in the late afternoon sun. Like Seeta, Lilamani's face with its 'olive skin faintly aglow', is framed by her sari, this one 'gold-bordered...pale as an evening primrose' and she has an 'alluring air of unreality... purely Eastern stillness'.³³ Nevil is an artist looking for a subject who will fire his imagination and at first he sees Lilamani, 'rather as a possible picture than a possible woman. Her absorption tempted him: so also did the sketch-book on his knee.'³⁴ The resemblances between these two descriptions of exotic Indian women, written nearly 40 years apart, are striking. In this instance, Graham Huggan's definition of exoticism is relevant: it is 'a

³⁰ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.61.

³¹ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.61.

³² Taylor, *Seeta*, p.61.

³³ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.5.

³⁴ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.6.

particular mode of aesthetic *perception* – one which renders people, objects and places strange even as it domesticates them, and which effectively manufactures otherness even as it claims to surrender to its immanent mystery'.³⁵ Both women are posed with the gorgeously coloured *Indian* sari drawn over the head, representing their Otherness, their distance from the British observer; but both women have pale complexions (for 'natives'), which serves to collapse racial difference.

The male gaze objectifies the Indian woman as it lingers over her appearance. As Spurr writes, the 'monarch of all I survey' position, the 'elevated vantage point', adopted by colonisers, travellers and explorers of the 19th century, could be found also 'in accounts of the surveillance of the body itself':

The eye treats the body as a landscape: it proceeds systematically from part to part, quantifying and spatializing, noting color and texture, and finally passing an aesthetic judgement which stressed the body's role as object to be viewed.³⁶

The Indian woman in these texts is not only fixed in the male gaze; she is *doubly* fixed, doubly objectified, by being equated with and appraised as a work of art. And by seeing the Indian spouse-to-be in terms of European works of art, the text renders them safe(r), domesticated and yet strange, removed from the observer because they are unable to look back. The picture of Titian's daughter which Cyril recalls in relation to Seeta, for example, seems to gaze at the spectator but we know she cannot see us and the observer can gaze at her without the anxiety of having the gaze returned.

The objectification of the Indian woman through her equation with a work of art is also present in Wylie's *Daughter of Brahma*. The remoteness of the object of

³⁵ Graham Huggan, *The Postcolonial Exotic: Marketing the Margins* (London: Routledge, 2001), p.13.

³⁶ Spurr, p. 23.

the gaze is even more marked in this novel. David Hurst, the British protagonist, is captivated by the beauty of the priestess, 'daughter of Brahma', Sarasvati. Hidden in the dark outside the ruined temple where she lives, David looks into the lighted interior of the building – '[l]ike a picture painted on a canvas of darkness' – and within this frame, focuses on the figure of Sarasvati, kneeling at the altar.³⁷ She does not look at anything for 'her eyes were dead'.³⁸ David returns to watch Sarasvati, to gaze on her, but 'her eyes were blank' and he is able to *paint*... 'into them all the warmth of his own imagining'(my italics).³⁹ She is not a woman to David, any more than Seeta or Lilamani are seen as living women by the British protagonist. Sarasvati, to David, is 'only as a lovely *vase* into which he poured his dreams and ideals, his whole unsatisfied desire. She had belonged to him. ...[he] watch[ed] her, marking with the appreciation of the instinctive *artist* the exquisite outlines of her features, the noble carriage of the dark head'(my italics).⁴⁰ The inability of Sarasvati to return the gaze of the British protagonist allows him to appropriate the Indian simply as a vessel for his own desires, a being-for-him rather than a being-for-herself in Sartre's terms.

In the novels discussed above, it is obviously the British male protagonist who holds the power of the gaze over the Indian woman. In *Life of my Heart* by Cross, however, it is the British *woman* who holds the power of the gaze. She thus gains a power over the male which she could only possess in relation to a racial Other. Frances is captivated by the beauty of the *chetai wallah*, Hamakhan. She looks at him 'with the joy of an artist on a particularly beautiful painting'.⁴¹ Her ideal of beauty, mental and physical, formed by her study of ancient Greek literature and

³⁷ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.122.

³⁸ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.123.

³⁹ Wylie, *Daughter*, pp.149–50.

⁴⁰ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.150.

⁴¹ Cross, *Life*, p.30.

culture, induces her to find Hamakhan 'beautiful on the Greek model'.⁴² The correctness of Frances's judgement is endorsed by the narrator:

It was as if one of those figures whose beauty lives in the pages of Plato and Aristophanes had stepped out of them before her.... "Just like a statue," she murmured ... And she was right. If a bronze statue from the Vatican had been taken from its pedestal and set there behind the chick with the Indian light upon it, it could not have looked any different.⁴³

Here it is the female gaze that lingers on the landscape of the Indian male body, making aesthetic judgements which again draw on European art to fix and appropriate it. Cross demonstrates that the gaze is not solely the property of the male as Laura Mulvey implies, but that, in a colonial context, the female coloniser can also be what Mulvey calls the 'Bearer of the Look'.⁴⁴ Here again Huggan's definition of exoticism is relevant. Hamakhan is both knowable in European terms (as a Greek statue) and 'thoroughly Oriental', or Other.⁴⁵ The author/narrator recognises the ambivalence of the attraction of the exotic: 'He attracted her, half by the force of the unknown, half by the claims of an old acquaintance.'⁴⁶

Hamakhan returns Frances's gaze but his cannot be an open, appraising gaze as hers is; as he sits on the floor at her feet, he 'glance[s] *up* sideways with a quick furtive glance and then look[s] down again' (my italics).⁴⁷ The way the characters look at each other and the positions from which they do so demonstrate their relative positions of power in the first stage of their relationship.

Another attribute of works of art is that, as objects, they can be owned. In the *Daughter of Brahma*, David feels that Sarasvati, 'a lovely vase' 'belonged to him'.

⁴² Cross, *Life*, p.51.

⁴³ Cross, *Life*, pp.52–3.

⁴⁴ Cf. Laura Mulvey, 'Visual Pleasure and Narrative Cinema', *Screen*, 16.3 (1975), 6–18.

⁴⁵ Cross, *Life*, p.52.

⁴⁶ Cross, *Life*, p.52.

⁴⁷ Cross, *Life*, p.30.

This idea of possession is amplified in Cross's *Life of My Heart* where Frances is explicit about her desire to possess Hamakhan:

With a sudden leaping of her heart she saw that she could make that magnificent beauty her own. How would that be? she asked herself, turning a gold bracelet slowly round on her arm. What a new toy! what a new study! what a new possession! Would it be very expensive?⁴⁸

Hamakhan is, at this point in their relationship, no more to Frances than the gold bracelet she plays with on her arm: a beautiful and possibly expensive object that she can make her own to play with and to study as she pleases. And which, implicitly, can be discarded when she no longer desires it. The same sort of relationship (owner and object) features in Cross's novel *Anna Lombard* where Anna marries in secret her servant, the Pathan Gaida Khan. She says of the Indian that '[h]e is a possession I value.'⁴⁹ Possession, as Christa Knellwolf and Iain McCalman point out, is another way of taming 'the potentially frightening otherness' of people or objects by emphasising one's control over them.⁵⁰

First Impressions of the Mimic Man

I move now to the operation of the gaze in a different context. In the colonial context, I argued, the observer occupies an 'elevated vantage point' within networks of colonial power and colonial discourses of race which position the British colonisers as superior, above, the subordinate Indians. I demonstrated how the colonial act of observation in the novels of interracial marriage is linked to desire – the desire to possess as one possesses an object as well as the desire to understand the Other. This understanding can only be formed within the

⁴⁸ Cross, *Life*, p.49.

⁴⁹ Cross, *Lombard*, p.56.

⁵⁰ Christa Knellwolf and Iain McCalman, 'Introduction', *Eighteenth-Century Life*, 26.3 (2002), p.2.

parameters of the coloniser's own knowledge system. In this section I analyse how the Anglo-Indian authors represented what they saw as the failure of the gaze to process and understand the Other which occurs when the observer is a metropolitan British character who occupies a position outside colonial networks of power and knowledge systems which support and justify colonial rule.

In *A Mixed Marriage*, the social climber Mrs Carlyon is eager to have her son's undergraduate friend, Mir Yacoob, as a guest in her house. For her, the arrival of a prince, regardless of his colour, 'surpassed her most ambitious dreams' as Mrs Carlyon privileges rank and wealth over race.⁵¹ She expects something exotically unfamiliar in Mir Yacoob and her reaction on first sight of him as he appears to her in a British drawing room is disappointment:

She could not have explained what she expected, but the man before her did not appear in her eyes like the ideal prince she had pictured to herself. He was labelled English gentleman rather than Indian prince.⁵²

Her disappointment derives from the fact that Mir Yacoob is highly Anglicised: he speaks English as well as his friend, St. George Carlyon, and dresses like him in Savile Row suits. He has had English tutors all his life and studied for his degree at Oxford. 'He is as refined and polished as any European gentleman; he worships the same God... [he] might be an Italian or Spanish gentleman, as far as complexion goes'.⁵³ The British metropolitan protagonist appraises and processes Mir Yacoob's Anglicisation and fixes him as English gentleman, disappointingly familiar. It is only the OIH Alan Archdale whose gaze is informed by colonial discourses of race who recognises that Mir Yacoob is out of place in the British drawing room. He is as astonished to meet an Indian in an English home as he

⁵¹ Penny, p.10.

⁵² Penny. p.14.

⁵³ Penny, p.26.

would have been to meet 'a brown bear'.⁵⁴ In Archdale's eyes, the presence of Mir Yacoob has removed the distance which needs to be preserved between coloniser and colonised: he explains that '[t]hings are so different out in India, where we do not receive the natives on an intimate footing into our families'.⁵⁵

An interesting feature of the colonial gaze as it operates in *A Mixed Marriage* is that it is not represented as interpellating Mir Yacoob. He remains 'English gentleman' under Alan's scrutiny, exhibiting 'an ease which covered the slight embarrassment they all felt at Alan's strange manner', his astonishment on meeting an Indian in an English home.⁵⁶ This indication that Mir Yacoob's Anglicisation is more than skin-deep is sustained by his behaviour towards Lorina during their marriage in India. In Claude Bray's *Chattel or Wife?*, on the other hand, the gaze of the Anglo-Indian creates anxiety in the mimic man who has 'been received on an intimate footing' in the metropolitan home. The English ladies, including the British female protagonist, Maude Ashley, think the Indian is 'a most charming and well-informed man'.⁵⁷ He is 'the lion of the hour' at a London tea-party.⁵⁸ As so often, the Indian has been accepted by the metropolitan British as a familiar and simultaneously exotic specimen: '[i]n England, a native dressed in English clothes in the English style, with his ready wit and smooth tongue, seems often to the ignorant a more than passable individual,' the omniscient author/narrator asserts.⁵⁹ The metropolitan ignorance concerning Indians is hinted at through the inability of the English ladies to pronounce his

⁵⁴ Penny, p.14.

⁵⁵ Penny, p.22.

⁵⁶ Penny, p.14.

⁵⁷ Bray, p.35.

⁵⁸ Bray, p.27.

⁵⁹ Bray, p.73.

name: he is introduced to the Anglo-Indian Colonel Eustace as 'Molar Bacchus' rather than Mowlah Bux.

The metropolitan British again do not occupy the 'elevated vantage point' and their gaze misses rather than reveals the 'truth' about the Indian. The colonel, as 'a man who knows India well', immediately interpellates and fixes the identity of Mowlah Bux, who, 'seemed absurdly cowed and upset by his [...] appearance on the scene.'⁶⁰ The explanation for Mowlah Bux's sudden departure is given by the colonel: 'I understand him, which none of you others did. I know all about him and his home....I know the type, and he did not like my knowing it.'⁶¹ Under the coloniser/colonel's interpellating gaze, this Indian mimic man recognises that he is out of place and succumbs to anxiety.

The Ignorance of British Female Desire

The distance implied in the relationship of observer and observed is reduced by the desire generated by the act of looking. This gaze, as noted previously, is gendered. The gaze of the metropolitan British female protagonist fails to fix the identity of the Indian correctly (according to colonial 'knowledge') because her gaze does not occupy the elevated vantage point of the colonial observer. She fixes the Indian as an Englishman with all that that implies in terms of his 'tastes... opinions...morals ... and intellect'.⁶² As an Englishman, he may be expected to have the stereotypical values of chivalry towards those weaker than himself, courage, a strong sense of duty, rationality, decisiveness and so on. The Indian thus moves closer in his knowability which renders him non-threatening to the metropolitan British. At the same time, the

⁶⁰ Bray, p.32.

⁶¹ Bray, p.36.

⁶² Quoted in Bhabha, pp.124.5.

foreignness of the Indian is not obscured although its importance is diminished. To a British female protagonist desiring escape from a life of confinement, he offers access to a wider and more interesting world than her own; to a British female protagonist desiring an opportunity to work for the good of others, he offers the chance to work for the emancipation of Indian women. These desires, like the gaze, are gendered. The British female protagonist may act on her desires because, in her ignorance, she ‘knows’ the Indian as Englishman. Only the colonial observer of the mimic man in the British drawing room knows that the Indian remains Other: unknowable and threatening in his mimicry.

The Enchanting of the British Female Protagonist

[H]er head was filled with romance after reading Indian novels written by people who know nothing of the East, and which are full of a false glamour and unreality. Girls at home haven’t the foggiest idea of India, and think they are going to live a sort of Arabian Nights existence out here...⁶³

Three of the novels of interracial marriage represent the British female protagonist falling under what is described as a kind of spell, succumbing to the lure of the East, when they meet the handsome Indian prince who is the embodiment of the exotic India that he describes to her.⁶⁴ This fascination is gendered. The exotic East that lures the British female protagonist offers different opportunities and attractions from those offered to men.

As noted in the Introduction, Said describes the Orient as a place where Westerners might find sexual liberation easier, this being one of the ‘family of ideas and ... unifying set of values’ which comprise latent Orientalism.⁶⁵ The

⁶³ Savi, p.140 Savi herself was not an author who knew nothing about India. .

⁶⁴ I.e. Savi’s *The Daughter-in-Law*, the Askew’s *The Englishwoman*, Wynne’s *Warning*.

⁶⁵ Said, p.41.

Orient, he argues, is feminised and ‘an exclusively male province’; thus it ‘seems to suggest not only fecundity but sexual promise (and threat), untiring sensuality, unlimited desire...’⁶⁶ John McLeod notes the sexual vocabulary which can thus be used about the Orient (it is ‘deemed passive, submissive, exotic, luxurious, sexually mysterious and tempting’⁶⁷) and Said himself refers to its ‘feminine penetrability’.⁶⁸ The Orient’s ‘*feminine penetrability*’ suggests that (heterosexual) European women would not be looking on the Orient as a place of ‘untiring sensuality, unlimited desire’ or regard ‘the Orient [as] a place where one could look for sexual experience unobtainable in Europe’.⁶⁹ They were unlikely too to indulge in daydreams of the Orient which come ‘packed with Oriental clichés: harems, princesses, princes, slaves, veils, dancing girls and boys, sherbets, ointments (*sic*), and so on’.⁷⁰

What becomes apparent in the novels of interracial marriage is that the British female protagonist has her daydreams of the Orient but they tend not to be packed with the erotic content of the dreams Said describes. The images of the East which enthral the British female protagonist are exotic rather than erotic and owe their success in her seduction to her ignorance of India and its people, manners and customs, an ignorance represented as widespread among the metropolitan British characters of the novels.

The Englishwoman by the Askews demonstrates the lure of India for the British female protagonist. Lucy, whose life has been lived in Oxfordshire, has just refused to marry her prosaic English suitor, Hugh. Her guardian Mrs Travers

⁶⁶ Said, p.188.

⁶⁷ John McLeod, *Beginning Postcolonialism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), p. 45.

⁶⁸ Said, p.206.

⁶⁹ Said, p.190.

⁷⁰ Said, p.190.

seeing Prince Jotindra, a fellow undergraduate of her nephew's at Oxford is impressed by his familiarity. He is 'a slight, olive-skinned young man' who speaks excellent English: it 'might have been his mother tongue'.⁷¹ Unaware that the British are keeping 'a sharp eye on her young guest,' Mrs Travers 'merely saw a young man with charming manners bowing gracefully to her'.⁷² Knowing of the prince's rank and wealth, ignorant of his status as mimic man, Mrs Travers is complacent about his obvious admiration for Lucy and allows her to take the prince into the garden. Here Jotindra treats Lucy to an impassioned speech on India. A storm is threatening as he speaks of the beauties of India:

'Can you imagine what our bazaars are like? You can hear forty languages spoken all at once, and the whole place is like a great flower garden. ... [O]ur women are wrapped in mantles of purple and glowing green; and the brown limbs of the children – limbs that shine like bronze in the sunshine – why, they are a sheer delight. ... There is nothing so wonderful in the world as the hazy shimmer of our cities and the golden dust of our wide plains. And then, our palaces! The lights comes into them through trellised screens, and the walls are mostly of marble inlaid with jewels.... In my garden – the garden of my palace,' he murmured, his voice very low and musical, 'there are shady trees of every kind; the air is fragrant with the scent of orange flower, tuberose, carnation, and lily; and above all other flowers the rose blooms in those glowing gardens – the rose!... [T]he silver moon beams down... [t]he sky is like a veil of purple powdered with stars.'⁷³

This sumptuous and sensual description of Jotindra's garden, is reminiscent of, for example, the garden discovered by Nur Al-Din in the tale of Night 36 of *The Arabian Nights*:

On the branches birds sang tunefully, with the nightingale repeating her melodies and the turtledove filling the garden with song, the blackbird warbling like a human singer, and the ringdove singing like one drunk with wine... There were flowers like pearls and coral. The redness of the rose put to shame the cheeks of the beautiful women; the violets were like sulphur to which fire

⁷¹ Askew, p.1.

⁷² Askew, p.2.

⁷³ Askew, pp.12-14.

has been put at night; and there was myrtle along with gillyflowers, lavender and red anemones.⁷⁴

‘A true lover’ takes the ‘Chosen of the Palace’ into such a garden; ‘and there, on his knees at her feet, he [confesses] his passion, and she – she [blesses] him above all men’.⁷⁵ Lucy, the Englishwoman, cannot resist:

Lucy leaned towards him spellbound, her eyes fixed on his face, her senses stirred, her heart palpitating.
‘Oh, how wonderful the East must be!’ she whispered; ‘how more than wonderful!’⁷⁶

As the threatened storm breaks, thunder sounds and lightning flashes, the prince seizes her in his arms and kisses her. Lucy ‘felt helpless beside him. He drew her as with invisible cords – she was fascinated almost against her will – he subjugated her senses.’⁷⁷

As Catherine Belsey writes in *Desire: Love Stories in Western Culture* ‘the metaphors of desire repeatedly invoke not pleasure, but various kinds of natural disturbance or disaster’.⁷⁸ The storm breaking in *The Englishwoman* as Jotindra kisses Lucy is, of course, a metaphor for the emotional ferment into which Lucy is thrown by the prince’s descriptions of an exotic India, so very different to Oxfordshire, and by the declaration of his passion for her, so very different from the prosaic declarations of Hugh in the ‘curtained alcove’ in the prosaic sitting room.⁷⁹ Belsey suggests too that desire in popular romance very often ‘represents the return of nature, challenging the sovereignty that the Enlightenment attributes to the rational subject’.⁸⁰ The passage quoted above exemplifies just this ‘return of nature’. Unlike Hugh who proposes in the

⁷⁴ Robert Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: Tales of 1,001 Nights: Volume 1*, trans. by Malcolm Lyons and Ursula Lyons (London; New York: Penguin, 2010), p.261.

⁷⁵ Askew, pp.15–16.

⁷⁶ Askew, p.14.

⁷⁷ Askew, p.17.

⁷⁸ Catherine Belsey, *Desire: Love Stories in Western Culture* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994), p.27.

⁷⁹ Askew, p.2.

⁸⁰ Belsey, p.27.

cultured space of the drawing room, Jotindra takes Lucy outside into ‘the very quiet, very peaceful, very English’ garden and seduces her with descriptions of an India as colourful, as odorous and as exotic as ‘a great flower garden’.⁸¹ In *The Englishwoman*, Lucy (who might also be described as ‘very quiet... very English’) is represented as ‘losing her head’ completely over Jotindra, losing any capacity for rational thought in her fascination and desire for him and the India he supposedly represents.

This loss of the rational self is threatening, however, as *The Englishwoman* insists. It might lead to ‘going native’ which calls attention to the instability of the British identity when confronted with the attractions of the Other. Lucy, in the middle of her storm of passion as she succumbs to the spell of Jotindra, tries to retain her English identity and all that that implies – “I am an English girl” she murmured, “an Englishwoman...”⁸² In the throes of passion for the Other (Indian prince/India), the boundaries of race are transgressed and British identity is threatened. The civilised, Enlightened British/Western self is overwhelmed and this, it is implied, will lead to disaster as the loss of reason brings one closer to the Indian Other. The British woman is, as Kerr writes, ‘in danger... of becoming engulfed in Oriental formlessness and incommensurability’.⁸³ The surrender is not achieved without a struggle, however. Along with the overwhelming desire for the Other goes a feeling of aversion, a desire *not* to feel desire for the Other, a feeling that this is happening against the will and rational judgement of the British woman. Once again the validity of Young’s notion of ‘the ambivalent axis of desire and aversion’ is demonstrated, the desire for distance felt simultaneously

⁸¹ Askew, p.12.

⁸² Askew, p.17.

⁸³ Quoted in Kerr, *Eastern Figures*, loc.263.

with the inability to resist getting closer, based on a profound ignorance masquerading as knowledge.⁸⁴

The hypnotic power of the Indian is presented in less romantic terms in Wynne's *Warning*. The emphasis in Mohammed Khan's seduction of Joan Mansfield is on the danger he represents to the British identity. Meeting Joan in a Streatham drawing room, he 'soon had her entrapped, and she followed him blindly through a maze of colour and mystery, blazing moons, dark mysterious nights, all teeming with an unspoken romance and glamour of their own... she forgot entirely where she was'.⁸⁵ Much is made of the gaze of Mohammed Khan in his hypnotism of Joan, represented as being like the cobra hypnotising its prey with its unblinking gaze and sinuous movements: she 'stared up like a trapped bird, and held out a little hand that shook, and Mr Mohammed Khan took it, and his grasp was like the grip of a snake when it first curls itself round its prey'.⁸⁶ In *The Englishwoman* there is no suggestion that Jotindra has deliberately set out to seduce Lucy with his impassioned descriptions of India; his interest in the beautiful Lucy is romantic. In *Warning*, the snake-like Mohammed Khan capitalises on Joan's interest in his country to ensnare her for his own purposes. Both British female protagonists, however, share an ignorance which makes them susceptible to the Indian.

In *The Daughter-in-Law* by Savi, Kathleen Dey, as ignorant of India and Indians as any of the other British female protagonists, also succumbs to a fantasy of glamour and romance. Kathleen has derived her 'knowledge' of India from stories or books, however, not from a handsome Indian prince, although the exotic

⁸⁴ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.17.

⁸⁵ Pamela Wynne, *Warning* (London: Philip Allan & Co. Ltd., 1923), p.18.

⁸⁶ Wynne, p.18. Mohammed Khan sounds more like a boa constrictor than a cobra as he curls himself round his prey. Either way the allusions to his dangerously snake-like qualities still stand.

India imagined by Kathleen is very similar to the India described by Jotindra. But this India has another dimension that Jotindra's lacks; it offers 'freedom from convention... life... aglitter with colour and vitality.'⁸⁷

There was luxury for all and freedom from conventions; youths and maidens lived love-stories, and life was aglitter with colour and vitality. Palm trees waved everywhere in fanciful profusion under cerulean skies; ...She had grown up with a child's conception of the Orient, and pictured it as a Golden Land of Fairy-tales; a sort of paradise of extravagant desire, and overflowing with romance and good fellowship.⁸⁸

Both sources of information on India (books and princes) excite the desire of the British female protagonist through their non-threatening exoticism. It is the exoticism without the eroticism of an expurgated *Arabian Nights*, a book which, as Robert Irwin remarks, '[i]n the nineteenth century, ... was a standard work in gentlemen's libraries'.⁸⁹ According to A. S. Byatt, in the 18th and 19th centuries, 'the Arabian Nights stood for the wonderful against the mundane, the imaginative against the prosaically and reductively rational'.⁹⁰ The India of the passages quoted above, although it contains none of the overtly sexual elements that Said notes as the content of male daydreams about the Orient (harems, dancing girls and, apparently, ointments), is a dazzling and unreal place – a 'Golden Land of Fairy-tales... a paradise of extravagant desire' where there is '*freedom from convention*'. In this fairy tale world, 'a sublimated location, with no connection to the real East', the heroine's fantasies of love and freedom can be played out, albeit in a sanitised form which replaces Said's male daydreams of harems and dancing

⁸⁷ Savi, p.174 The quotation begins 'She tried to recall the land she had pictured to herself in her early imagination, and all she could conjure to mind was a panorama gorgeous with colour and unreality: everybody lived in bungalows that were rose-covered bowers, and rode on richly caparisoned elephants among picturesque people clad in lively-coloured shawls and turbans. Bazaars were interesting haunts where exquisite silks and muslins were sold by handsome Arabian-Nights heroes of distinguished manners and courtly bearing. Over all was a glamour of sunlight and warmth, with hospitality and kindness everywhere.'

⁸⁸ Savi, p.174.

⁸⁹ Robert Irwin, *The Arabian Nights: A Companion* (London: Tauris Parke Paperbacks, 2003), p.2.

⁹⁰ A.S. Byatt, *On Histories and Stories: Selected Essays* (London: Vintage, 2001), p.167.

girls, with fairy-tale handsome princes and ‘romance and good fellowship’.⁹¹ In these romances the same words occur to describe the influence which the tales of a fantastical India (and their tellers) have over the British women: ‘glamour’, ‘enthral’, ‘spell’, ‘spellbound’, ‘beguile’. The women are bewitched by the exotic rather than the erotic promise of India and it is, as Belsey suggests, a loss of the rational self that is described in these descriptions of desire and ‘the return of nature’.⁹²

Escape and Good Work for the British Female Protagonist

The India imagined by the British female protagonists in their ignorance is a fantasy: as Kabbani argues, the Orient that was derived from *The Arabian Nights* never featured ‘a depiction of social misery. Poverty is conspicuously absent... riches took its place’.⁹³ It offers the British female protagonist love and adventure and ‘freedom from convention.’ Other British female protagonists are seduced by the promise of the purposeful life which they may lead in India as examples to and emancipators of secluded Indian women. This reflects the contemporary feminist and missionary discourses, discussed in chapter 1, on the situation of the Indian woman and Indian domestic practices which included child marriage, enforced widowhood, lack of access to education and health care and, particularly, the practice of seclusion.

As I argued in Chapter 1, the novels of interracial marriage were written at a time when women were challenging contemporary gender roles and relations. The New Woman of ‘commercialized popular literature’ like the novels of interracial

⁹¹ Rana Kabbani, *Imperial fictions: Europe's myths of Orient* (London: Saqi, 2008), p.57.

⁹² Belsey, *Desire*, p.27.

⁹³ Kabbani, p.59.

marriage, according to Willis, was 'attractive, independent, highly intelligent' and she wants the chance to see the world before marrying.⁹⁴ As Willis argues, this New Woman is a cross between the characters of Sarah Grand and George Egerton and the heroine of popular romantic fiction. She does not exhibit active sexual desire, being the type of modest woman whom William Acton helped to establish in 'respectable middle class culture'.⁹⁵ Her marriage at the end of the novels removes any challenge to gender roles her actions in the novel may have raised.⁹⁶ I contend that this type of heroine raises questions not just about gender but also *racial* roles and relations. Often, as Willis notes, the challenge to gender roles is removed when the heroine gives up her aspirations to independence and marries.⁹⁷ In the novels of interracial marriage the challenges to gender and *race* are removed when the British female protagonist, who has crossed racial boundaries by her marriage, comes to realise her mistake in marrying an Other and returns to the right British suitor. This position on the crossing of gender and racial boundaries is not always adopted by the Anglo-Indian authors, however, as I demonstrate with the analysis of Cross's novels.

Bray's British female protagonist in *Chattel or Wife?*, Maude Ashley, is an example of the New Woman of popular fiction. She is highly educated, having taken a double first at Cambridge, but has no outlet for her learning as discussed in the section on the British female protagonist in Chapter 2. In pursuit of a career which will make use of her education, Maude decides that she will work for 'advancement of humanity in general, and women in particular'.⁹⁸ She sees her opportunity when she meets the Indian barrister Mowlah Bux whose racially-

⁹⁴ Willis, p.53.

⁹⁵ Tosh, *A Man's Place*, p.44.

⁹⁶ Willis, p.53.

⁹⁷ Willis, p.53.

⁹⁸ Bray, p.22.

constituted nature she is not in a position to recognise. The Anglo-Indian gaze of Colonel Eustace quickly identifies Mowlah Bux as 'plausible as a shaddock and as slippery as an eel'.⁹⁹ His warning is wasted on Maude, however: '[t]he fair theorist ...felt only indignation against the man of practical knowledge, whom she placed upon a level with slave-dealers and their kin'.¹⁰⁰ Maude's gaze has fixed Mowlah Bux's identity as British and thus non-threatening and knowable. She agrees to marry him for the sake of the 'grand and useful life' which has been offered to her, working for the emancipation of Indian women.¹⁰¹ The desire to help Indian women may be regarded as an example of what Gayatri Spivak calls, '[w]hite [wo]men saving brown women from brown men'.¹⁰² It is not just white men who acted to save Indian women from the 'dens of iniquity' which constituted the Indian homes. White women could also be involved in the chivalric rescue of 'brown women'.

In *A Mixed Marriage* by Penny, Lorina is another New Woman of popular fiction. She is not highly-educated like Maude but rather is represented as tomboyish in her 'love of sport' which is linked to a strong liking for adventure'.¹⁰³ Lorina has been kept in 'complete ignorance of the world that lay outside Winston'¹⁰⁴ (the country house in which she lives) and is eager to escape 'from the depths of the eastern counties'.¹⁰⁵ She longs to travel to Africa or India but cannot because, she says, 'I haven't the same liberty as St George [her brother]. Simply because I am a girl I have to repress all my longings to be free;

⁹⁹ Bray, p.36.

¹⁰⁰ Bray, p. 31 Compare this with Graham's and Kipling's complaints about the ignorance of the metropolitan British quoted above. .

¹⁰¹ Bray, p.72.

¹⁰² Williams and Chrisman, p.93.

¹⁰³ Penny, p.11.

¹⁰⁴ Penny, p.10.

¹⁰⁵ Penny, p.19.

you don't know how I long to be off.'¹⁰⁶ Mir Yacoob offers her the chance to go to India with him as his wife to help him in the work of emancipating Indian women as Mowlah Bux does to Maude Ashley and Mohammed Khan does to Joan Mansfield in *Warning*:

He spoke of the great work they might do together for the women of his country; they might exemplify in their lives the new doctrines of liberty which they preached. They would not be living for themselves alone, but for a great and good cause.¹⁰⁷

Lorina accepts this chance of adventure, despite the warnings of the Anglo-Indian Archdale, the right suitor: 'She had been longing for some object to live for, and craving for years to go out into the unknown world, to devote herself to some cause...Here was the opportunity.'¹⁰⁸ She is not in love with Mir Yacoob; as with Maude Ashley there is no surrender of the rational self to the Indian. Her reason for marrying is, like Maude's, to escape from gendered restraints and to do something useful.

Thus, the British female protagonist is represented initially as ignorant of the implications of marriage to an Indian man. Her mistake may be provoked by a surrender of the rational self prompted by fantasies of exotic India, by a desire to escape the dullness of her life in Britain for this fabulous land of promise and opportunity and by the desire to do good work. In these desires the British female protagonist has parallels with the heroes of imperial romances. Not only is she a chivalric rescuer of brown women but she is an adventurer, albeit within gendered restrictions. While male adventurers explore unmapped territory, wide-open spaces, the female explorers of these novels are sent to penetrate the unknown hidden spaces of the Indian home. 'Englishmen are [...] adventurers to the

¹⁰⁶ Penny, p.19.

¹⁰⁷ Penny, p.50.

¹⁰⁸ Penny, p.50.

backbone,’ announces Allan Quatermain in Haggard’s *Allan Quatermain*, “‘Adventurer’ - he that goes out to meet whatever may come.’¹⁰⁹ Englishwomen too, the novels of interracial marriage suggest, are ‘adventurers to the backbone’ and as keen as Englishmen to ‘forsak[e] their own culture’, as Young argues.¹¹⁰ The ‘active desire, frequently sexual’ which Young sees in his male romancers is in fact rarely to be found in the female romancers but it does feature in two novels as the motivation for a mixed marriage.

Female Sexual Desire

Cross in *Life of My Heart* and *Anna Lombard* represents active sexual desire for the Other in her British female protagonists. Unlike the other British female protagonists who meet the wrong Indian suitor in Britain and are seduced by the desire he excites because of their ignorance of his racially-constituted nature and of matters Indian, Frances in *Life of My Heart* is both a New Woman and an Anglo-Indian, knowledgeable about India and matters Indian.¹¹¹ She should be aware that distance between the races is required, as she occupies the elevated vantage point required for the imperial gaze. Frances, however, is not a typical Anglo-Indian any more than she is typically feminine: not only does she dislike the men of her community for their stupidity and racism but ‘[i]n the ten months that she had been in India, she had made her own both Hindustani and Persian... and through these two channels she communicated directly with the sympathies of the natives’.¹¹² She is, the narrator says, ‘a sympathetic and deeply interested

¹⁰⁹ Haggard, *Allan Quatermain*, p.94.

¹¹⁰ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.3.

¹¹¹ Cf. the section on the British female protagonist in Chapter 2 for a discussion on Frances Wilson’s New Woman credentials.

¹¹² Cross, *Life*, p.17.

observer of [the natives'] lives and an appreciator of their virtues'.¹¹³ The anthropological gaze that she turns on the lives of the natives is redeemed, perhaps, by her appreciation of their virtues, of their cultural Otherness. Her gaze cannot penetrate the hidden spaces of Indian social and domestic life, however, and in this she is ironically as ignorant as any other Anglo-Indian or the metropolitan British.

The Indian mimic men mentioned previously are not represented as exciting sexual desire in the British female protagonist through their handsome appearance. The classically-educated Frances, at first sight of the Pathan, Hamakhan, is struck by his extraordinary beauty:

How well old Plato hit it off, three thousand years ago, when he said that at the sight of physical beauty the coarse, untutored mind feels nothing save a desire to despoil, but in the pure soul there arises an indescribable awe and reverence, and it feels oppressed and humiliated in the owner's presence.¹¹⁴

At this point in the narrative, Frances' scopophilia arouses in her only 'awe and reverence'; in the presence of 'the perfection of the pure, unmixed beauty of nature,' she feels a sense of her own inferiority and an almost holy wonder at the sight of physical perfection. It is only when Hamakhan embraces her that her voyeuristic objectification of him is disrupted. 'While she had been wholly absorbed and engrossed in the admiration of the native's beauty, it had not crossed her mind, that she was exciting his passions.'¹¹⁵ Having recognised that Hamakhan has returned her gaze, Frances' sense of identity is disturbed. She has been consistently described up to this point of the narrative as a 'student' and a 'thinker'. In Hamakhan's embrace, she ceases, temporarily, to think; 'her brain

¹¹³ Cross, *Life*, p.17.

¹¹⁴ Cross, *Life*, p.15.

¹¹⁵ Cross, *Life*, p.49.

was captured and fired by this beautiful living creature'.¹¹⁶ Her sexual awakening has begun.

Hamakhan's reaction to Frances, in contrast, is purely physical from the start. 'His riotous blood flowed like fire along his veins, his pulses were beating as they beat in fever, as the keen eyes, in their quick, shifting glance, took in the serene figure, in its all but transparent clothing.'¹¹⁷ Thus, while Frances is studying and analysing his beauty 'in a philosophic calm', Hamakhan is experiencing the heightened physical sensations of sexual desire.¹¹⁸ Understanding that Frances is attracted by his beauty, he nevertheless restrains himself from acting according to his own cultural lights; the omniscient author/narrator remarks that 'it is hard, next to impossible, for an Eastern to conceive the idea of any feeling in a woman but that of physical impulse'.¹¹⁹ Hamakhan is aware that he is ignorant of the connotations of Frances' attraction towards him; he senses that in a white woman this might not take the form of 'physical impulse.' Later, misinterpreting her behaviour for a sexual invitation, he forcefully embraces her. Frances repulses him but is aware in her turn that she has behaved in a way that could be misinterpreted. Even when they realise that they love each other, there is still confusion based on their ignorance of each other's sexual mores. Frances caresses Hamakhan's arms while he, bewildered by 'her mixture of ... coldness and passion', stands still and passive.¹²⁰ 'Love making', comments the narrator didactically, 'is short straight, quick work in the East, and with all their versatility it is hard for Easterns to

¹¹⁶ Cross, *Life*, p.54.

¹¹⁷ Cross, *Life*, p.43.

¹¹⁸ Cross, *Life*, p.42.

¹¹⁹ Cross, *Life*, p.43 Cf. Chapter 2 on Formalities for a discussion of the 'manners and customs' mode into which many of the Anglo-Indian authors, even Cross, often fall. .

¹²⁰ Cross, *Life*, p.55.

understand the Western fashion.¹²¹ Cross acknowledges here that there are differences between love, sexual desire and their behaviours in different cultures and that the West is as unknowable to the East as the East is to the West. It is a theme which recurs in some of the other novels although nowhere else is it treated with quite this degree of even-handedness and recognition of the existence of an Indian perspective. Cross unusually is aware that the unknowability of the British might also be a source of anxiety to the Indian.

Anna Lombard also features an interracial marriage, although it does not occupy centre stage as does the marriage in *Life of My Heart* with which, however, it shares many features.¹²² Anna, beautiful, educated and virginal like Frances, secretly marries her Pathan servant Gaida Khan. Like Hamakhan, Gaida Khan's beauty is compared to that of a Greek statue – he has 'statuesquely beautiful features' of 'the Greek type'.¹²³ There is a different power relation between Anna and Gaida Khan, however. Unlike Hamakhan, whom the text positions at work on the floor, often looking up at Frances, Gaida Khan 'moved into the room like a king coming to audience' when summoned by Anna.¹²⁴

Anna's reaction to this male beauty – her sexual awakening - is the same as Frances's. The difference in this relationship is that Anna knows Gaida Khan to be vicious and uncaring but she cannot let him go because of her intense sexual feelings for him. She tries to explain to Gerald, her British fiancé, the nature of her ambivalent attraction to the Indian:

¹²¹ Cross, *Life*, p.55.

¹²² The novel was originally published in 1901. The relationship between Anna Lombard and Gaida Khan is so close in many respects to that of Frances Wilson and Hamakhan that one suspects that Cross wrote *Life of My Heart* to investigate more fully the interracial romance which is only touched on in *Anna Lombard*. Or perhaps to capitalise on the notoriety which *Anna Lombard's* representation of an interracial marriage achieved.

¹²³ Cross, *Lombard*, pp.64-65.

¹²⁴ Cross, *Lombard*, p.65.

...you don't know what it is to lie prisoned in arms that you love and whose touch delights you, to lean your head against a breast that is heaven to you, and yet to know that the heart beneath is mean and narrow and full of cruelty and treachery!¹²⁵

Gail Cunningham, in the introduction to her edition of the novel, notes that several contemporary reviewers of *Anna Lombard* did not mention that Anna's first husband is Indian, as if this were not an issue. The novel was read, Cunningham argues, as 'part of the contemporary debate about gender roles and sexual conduct', as an attempt 'to claim for women a freedom in sexual expression equal to men's' and not so much as a part of a racial debate.¹²⁶ The transgression of racial boundaries is equally interesting, however. In both these novels Cross constructs India as, potentially, a sexually liberating country for Englishwomen prepared to flout the rules. I have found no other interracial romances that are so open in their depiction of European female sexual desire for Indian men. What is particularly interesting about Cross's representations of this desire is that it simultaneously endorses and challenges Said's concept of the Orient as an erotic space where sexual liberation is easier to achieve as discussed above. Cross endorses the argument that the Orient is a place of possible sexual liberation but challenges the implication in Said that this is only available to men. It is not surprising *Anna Lombard* was a best-seller in the early 20th century.

The Ignorance of British Male Desire

So far, I have concentrated on the British female protagonist and the desire that leads her to marry an Indian spouse. This is because the desire and the ignorance which leads the British female protagonist to marry an Indian spouse are

¹²⁵ Cross, *Lombard*, p.55.

¹²⁶ Cross, *Lombard*, p.xvi.

represented as different to the desire and ignorance which prompt the British male protagonist to marry an Indian. There is a gendered aspect to the desire and the ignorance which is derived from the historical real.

First, the British male protagonist is often an Anglo-Indian, an official of the EIC or of the Raj and thus cannot be represented as ignorant of Indian manners and customs in the way that the metropolitan British female protagonist is. Occupying a position in which he can exercise the power of the imperial gaze, the British male protagonist might be expected to understand the requirement to keep the races separate but he is represented as almost as ignorant as the British female protagonist of the hidden spaces of Indian social and domestic life. The exception to this type of British male protagonist is Nevil Sinclair, an English artist and aristocrat in Diver's *Lilamani*. The second point about the novels with a British male protagonist is that he is more often represented as more susceptible to the beauty of the Indian woman for whom he feels sexual desire. This has its roots, as noted previously, in the early 19th century historical conditions when the practice of marrying or cohabiting with an Indian woman had been very common when travel between India and Britain took months and there were few British women in India. It also links to the 19th century understanding of male sexual responsiveness – 'the sex-passion' as William Acton called it.¹²⁷ Although sexual desire appears more frequently in the novels where the husband is British and the wife Indian, other desires appear too, in part to mitigate the sexual desire for the Other which prompts the marriage. Loneliness, a condition suffered by some of the British male protagonists, may prompt the marriage, or a chivalrous desire to rescue the Indian woman from degrading circumstances. And, as in the case of the British female

¹²⁷ See Chapter 1 for a brief description of the understanding of male and female sexual desire in the 19th century.

protagonist, fantasy may appear too, all mixed with an ignorance of the consequences which will follow from the marriage. Also like the British female protagonist, loss of the rational self appears as a mitigation of the decision to marry. I start, however, with the earliest of the British male protagonists of the novels of interracial marriage, Cyril Brandon. I examine this novel's themes of desire and ignorance first because Taylor lived and worked in India before the 'Mutiny' and writes from a different colonial discourse to the later 19th- and early 20th-century novelists of interracial marriage.

Seeta: 'More useful, more interesting, more easily satisfied.'

Seeta was written in 1872, decades before the other novels of interracial marriage examined here, and features, as British protagonist, an official of the EIC. I argued in Chapter 2 that Taylor's conception of the role of the British administrator was that of the benevolent and sympathetic paternalist towards a people worthy of respect and affection. The plot of *Seeta* is embedded within a 'daydream of justice, service and loyalty which looks backward to the ideals of the utilitarian reformers.'¹²⁸

I described Taylor's representation of Cyril as the ideal pre-Raj administrator in Chapter 2. Later administrators, he suggests, 'know natives only "when they are trying them, or taxing them"', and therefore seek no further than to know, and believe in, the worst points of their character'.¹²⁹ Cyril, who speaks the local Indian vernacular 'almost as one of the people' as well as having studied Sanskrit and Persian, is also interested in 'their manners and customs' and has 'many native

¹²⁸ Brantlinger, *Rule of Darkness*, p.215.

¹²⁹ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.419.

friends of all classes'.¹³⁰ In other words, Cyril, unlike later administrators, 'knows' India and is close to it. He is also represented as having partially entered the hidden space of the Indian home where he recuperates after being wounded in the outer hall of Seeta's grandfather's house.

Cyril first notes Seeta's great beauty and dignity as she appears before him in court but quickly grows to admire her intellect as he recuperates in her home.¹³¹ They read Indian literature together and he cannot forget Seeta as she sits before him 'with a book in her lap, her finger pointing to a favourite passage, and her face upturned to him as he lay, full of interest and excitement'.¹³² The text implies that Cyril also desires Seeta sexually: he cannot forget

her sweet mouth partly opened, showing her little pearly teeth, her cheek glowing with the lovely Titianesque colour... and her dark, wavy hair (it was not black) escaping from the knot... and falling in soft curls over her neck and shoulders... could she not live with him?¹³³

The temptation is great to ask her to become his concubine, prompted by two justifications for marriage to an Indian woman: loneliness of the white man and the rescue of the brown woman. Little is made of Cyril's loneliness in comparison to the novels of Bruce and Perrin; he is said only to have lost his 'former content with his loneliness' since seeing Seeta.¹³⁴ The rescue of Seeta plays a bigger part in Cyril's inner conflict: she is a widow 'and of no value to her family; she would probably never marry again, but live out a useless, lonely life till she died... with him she would be happy in her own way'.¹³⁵ A precedent for this arrangement is invoked – 'How many as good as he had formed such connections, some for life,

¹³⁰ Taylor, *Seeta*, pp.69–70.

¹³¹ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.114.

¹³² Taylor, *Seeta*, p.114.

¹³³ Taylor, *Seeta*, pp.114–5.

¹³⁴ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.114.

¹³⁵ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.115.

and others till they married?’¹³⁶ That is, until they married *white* women. These personal reasons for the marriage to an Indian woman appear again in later novels of interracial marriage as I demonstrate in the next section.

Cyril rejects the possibility of such a proposal as ‘dishonourable and insulting’ to Seeta, whose model of Indian womanhood is Savitri.¹³⁷ The text later features a discussion between him and his friend, Judge Mostyn on the advantages of taking an Indian wife. *Seeta* is the only novel of interracial marriage I have found where an argument *for* marriage between the races is put forward by British characters. The advantages of such a marriage are not just personal, however, but also political and reflect Taylor’s aim of bringing ‘India nearer to England.’

Indeed, I often think that if there were not our horrible social prejudices against it, many of us would be happier with such a wife than with some of our own people. I think such a one as that girl would be more interesting, more useful, more easily satisfied.¹³⁸

The Indian woman is interesting, perhaps in the sense that living with her allows the British man a better chance to observe the Other at close quarters, to access what Richard Burton had called ‘the syntaxes of native life’.¹³⁹ This access, I have argued, the British thought they required but failed to achieve in practice. She might be useful in the sense that Mostyn suggests: such a marriage would forge an alliance between the two ‘races’, citing the example of ‘the marriage of Akbar to a Rajpoot princess... How it harmonized with all the jarring interests of those days!

¹³⁶ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.115.

¹³⁷ The story of Savitri is found in the *Mahabharata*. (John D Smith, tran., *The Mahabharata: An Abridged Translation* (London: Penguin, 2009)., cf. p.220.) Savitri, knowing that the husband she has chosen will die in a year from the marriage, nevertheless will have no other husband. When Yama comes for her husband, she follows, begging for his life. Yama is impressed with her devotion and returns her husband to her. So, says Seeta, ‘she went, the wife with her husband – into death. She had no fear of death. So I would have done once, for my duty, as [her first husband] died;’ later she declares that she be Brandon’s ‘own Savitri now, not of duty only but of love too – a faithful wife until she died.’ (Taylor, *Seeta*, pp.110-11...132

¹³⁸ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.87.

¹³⁹ Quoted in Collingham, p.8.

What a hold it gave him of the country and its affections!’¹⁴⁰ Also, later in the novel, Seeta is represented helping Cyril in his work among the Indians: ‘she knew the real wants of the people. ...and could lay them before him ...freely’.¹⁴¹ The Indian wife, in other words, may help the British administrator to know and rule the Indian population more effectively. The third reason for marrying an Indian woman is personal, based on sexual desire. Samuel Sneade Brown, who also lived in India before the ‘Mutiny’, endorses the idea that an Indian wife would be ‘more easily satisfied’:

I have observed that those who have lived with a native woman for any length of time never marry a European ... [the Indian woman is] so amusingly playful, so anxious to oblige and please, that a person after being accustomed to their society shrinks from the idea of encountering the whims or yielding to the fancies of an Englishwoman.¹⁴²

Finally, after prolonged debate on the personal and political arguments for an interracial union, Cyril marries Seeta according to Hindu law. The ‘knowledge’ of Indian manners and customs attributed to him by the equally ‘knowledgeable’ author/narrator leads the reader to expect, perhaps, that this will be a successful marriage, bringing ‘India nearer to England’ with Cyril and Seeta teaching each other the ‘syntaxes’ of their different cultures. In Chapter 4 I demonstrate how the marriage begins to fail despite the attempt to bring India in the person of Seeta nearer to England.

¹⁴⁰ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.87.

¹⁴¹ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.419.

¹⁴² Quoted in Hyam, p.117.

Fantasies and Spiritual Love of the British male protagonist

Two later novels also feature the Seeta/Sita stereotype of Indian womanhood, self-sacrificing and spiritually devout. These are *The Daughter of Brahma* by Wylie and *Lilamani* by Diver. In both novels, fantasy based on ignorance plays a large part in the attraction of the British male protagonist to the Indian woman as it did in the attraction of the British female protagonist to the Indian man. Like Seeta, the Indian female protagonists of these novels attract the British man by their beauty but their moral natures demand from him a higher order of love than the sexual desire which the *bibi* stereotype, who features in the next section, excites. The Indian women of *The Daughter of Brahma* and *Lilamani* are deserving of rescue by the chivalrous British hero and of his romantic love.

Wylie, as noted previously, was not an Anglo-Indian and her material was not gathered at first-hand. She admits in her autobiography, *My Life with George*, that she had got her material about India from an Anglo-Indian schoolfriend, Esmé Thomas.

Esmé rejoined her parents in India but she left behind her enough sahibs, memsahibs, Bo-trees, ayahs and compounds to furnish me with all the necessary ingredients for an Anglo-Indian novel.¹⁴³

Wylie wrote several novels with Indian backgrounds although, clearly, she supplemented Esmé Thomas's information with further reading.¹⁴⁴ Parry writes that, 'the author's picture of India was derived entirely from second-hand sources and her lurid imaginings are some indication of the European dream of India as a

¹⁴³ Wylie, *My Life with George*, p.129.

¹⁴⁴ The novel to which she refers in her autobiography is possibly her first novel, *The Native Born, or The Rajah's People*, which was published in 1910. It features, interestingly, an Indian Rajah who turns out to be British and a British woman who turns out to be Eurasian, although in this novel the Eurasian girl seems to have inherited the best of both races.

primeval place, both licentious and spiritual'.¹⁴⁵ Wylie's India is also an unknowable place where, as one of the characters says,

[q]ueer and ugly things happen... things we Europeans never get to see, although we think we see everything. As a matter of fact, we never have and never shall get to the bottom of the country we govern, and so we can always expect to have our theories upset.¹⁴⁶

It is similar to Cromer's argument that the colonial administrator's 'knowledge runs only up to a point, and beyond that point the Oriental remains unknowable in his radical difference'.¹⁴⁷ In this context, however, prophylactic ignorance is represented as dangerous to the Anglo-Indian community. In *The Daughter of Brahma* Hinduism plays a central role and it is represented, as Parry says of Wylie's imagined India, as 'both licentious and spiritual.' Unknown to the colonisers, ancient Vedic worship has been revived in a ruined temple in the jungle. This worship in the hidden space of the jungle is one of the 'queer and ugly things' which the European gaze has failed to take in. It is decidedly licentious, featuring orgies as part of the ritual, full of 'the smouldering fire of demoniac passion'.¹⁴⁸ At its centre, however, is the daughter of Brahma, Sarasvati, a being of 'divine purity and grace'.¹⁴⁹ The secret religious revival is linked to violent political agitation for Swaraj and the description of the events in the novel is possibly based on Valentine Chirol's *Indian Unrest* which appeared in 1910.¹⁵⁰ Wylie's representation of Indian religion may also have been culled from Chirol who described Hinduism as an 'almost unthinkable combination of spiritualistic

¹⁴⁵ Parry, p. 88.

¹⁴⁶ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.64-5.

¹⁴⁷ Kerr, 1.5449-5450 It is possible that Wylie had also read Cromer's *Ancient and Modern Imperialism* which was published in 1910.

¹⁴⁸ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.52.

¹⁴⁹ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.52.

¹⁵⁰ Parry notes that Wylie's novel was published 'shortly after a wave of agitation against British rule had expressed itself in what the alarmed British perceived as the revival of obsolescent religious practices.' Parry, p.88.

idealism and of gross materialism, of asceticism and of sensuousness'.¹⁵¹ In the novel, the Anglo-Indian community is unaware of what is happening in the jungle. Only the German professor, Heilig, understands what is coming. 'They [the Anglo-Indians] laugh and they play their mad games, and the devil goes past with a lighted torch in one hand and a powder-cask under the other arm.'¹⁵²

Against this background of Indian unknowability and subversion is played out the British male protagonist's fantasies around the figure of the daughter of Brahma, Sarasvati. Unlike the British female protagonists' fantasies of India centring on the exotic figure of real or imagined Indian princes and scenes, David Hurst's fantasies are represented as unconscious psychological fantasies, defence mechanisms in the Freudian sense.¹⁵³ Brutally rejected as a boy by his emotionally cold mother because of his physical and intellectual inadequacies, the lonely David discovers Sarasvati and, through her, glimpses the possibility of transcending his defectiveness.

He had seen something more lovely than his mother, more lovely than the hungry pictures of his imagination. The barriers which had surrounded his young life had been broken down and a new undiscovered world lay before him, rich in promise. The crushing loneliness was gone; intuitively he recognized a loneliness greater than his own.¹⁵⁴

As an adult he visits her repeatedly in the ruined temple, gazing on her secretly. In this way, he is able to possess her from a distance as he does not wish to in reality. This gaze does not confer knowledge of the object of surveillance, however, but bolsters fantasy.

¹⁵¹ Chisolm, p.26.

¹⁵² Wylie, *Daughter*, p.87.

¹⁵³ Sigmund Freud and Anna Freud, *The Essentials of Psycho-Analysis* (London: Vintage, 2005), p.371 'The process of sublimation... enables excessively strong excitations arising from particular sources of sexuality to find an outlet and use in other fields.... Here we have one of the origins of artistic activity.'

¹⁵⁴ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.52.

In his dreams she had belonged to him as no other human being had ever done or would do. ... He had known that he, too, dreamed, but his dreams had had for their object a living being who had never shattered his illusion, nor thrust upon him his own utter folly.¹⁵⁵

He has created her in his imagination and defined himself by her: '[h]er passivity, her very helplessness had aroused in him the knowledge of his own strength, and with that a chivalrous reverence and tenderness'.¹⁵⁶ Hurst's fantasy of Sarasvati is a good example of Said's Orientalism at work. Hurst creates Sarasvati in fantasy as he needs her to be and defines himself against his creation. Sarasvati/India is passive; she is the 'lovely vase into which he poured his dreams and ideals, his whole unsatisfied desire. She had belonged to him.'¹⁵⁷ The helplessness and passivity and the corresponding chivalric response have, of course, been noted before in colonial discourse theory. McLeod describes it thus: 'In Orientalism, the East as a whole is 'feminised', deemed passive, submissive, exotic, luxurious, sexually mysterious and tempting; while the West becomes 'masculine' – that is, active, dominant, heroic, rational, self-controlled and ascetic'.¹⁵⁸ In this fantasy, even the crippled and rejected David can become a hero. The fact that Wylie insists that this is a fantasy draws attention to the instability of this creation of spiritual India/Sarasvati. It is a dream from which the protagonists must wake.

Finally, David rejects his own people. In this state of 'freedom', he turns towards Sarasvati, changing his racial allegiance. She represents a life 'rich in promise' to him but no longer an entirely spiritual promise. He has come to realise that '[b]ehind the smooth forehead there was a brain which dreamed apart from

¹⁵⁵ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.149.

¹⁵⁶ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.150.

¹⁵⁷ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.150.

¹⁵⁸ McLeod, p.45 Wylie explicitly draws the comparison of India with the feminine. India is 'a woman all over, inscrutable, fascinating, dangerous. Women are dangerous, ... infernally dangerous,' the judge tells Hurst. [Wylie, *Daughter*, p.76].

him,' and wants to know/possess it.¹⁵⁹ Having distanced himself from the Anglo-Indian community, he desires to move closer to an Other who is a creation of his own need. In Chapter 4 I discuss the outcome of David's 'possession' of the physical Sarasvati as he begins to understand what marriage to an Indian will mean for him.

Like Hurst, Nevil Sinclair, the British male protagonist of *Lilamani* by Diver, is entirely ignorant of the problems that arise from getting too close to the Indian Other. Nevil has never visited India and knows nothing about Indian manners and customs. He meets Lilamani in the south of France where his gaze falls on her as 'a possible picture' which he hopes will make his artistic fortune. That Nevil is not a member of the Anglo-Indian administration is significant. He does not occupy the 'elevated vantage point' required for the imperial gaze; he is ignorant of the colonial discourse which valorises the maintenance of distance between the races although he evinces knowledge of the racial discourse which would mean that his 'people would be ... against the marriage'.¹⁶⁰ Diver's placing of the events of the novel outside India, however, remove many of the difficulties which the British male protagonists in other novels of interracial marriage face in terms of Anglo-Indian disapproval of the union with a member of an 'inferior' race or of getting too close to the Indian population through contact with the Indian wife's friends and relations and thus jeopardising British prestige.

For some time, Nevil is unaware of Lilamani as anything other than a way through which he can achieve his artistic ambitions. It is only when he is told the story of Lilamani's escape from an arranged marriage in India and her awkward

¹⁵⁹ Wylie, *Daughter*, p.150.

¹⁶⁰ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.115.

situation that he realises that Lilamani could and should be his wife. He will not only paint her but rescue her:

save her from a degradation worse than death. ... He – Nevil Sinclair – would be the god out of the machine. This pearl of womanhood – who had awakened his talent no less than his heart – should not die, but live – and give herself to him.... The divine intoxication that had put a new song in his mouth, blinded him to the hundred and one prosaic obstacles that hovered outside the charmed circle of his dream.¹⁶¹

Even as Nevil decides to rescue her from the impasse to which he considers he has led her, Lilamani is still not realised as a subject in her own right. She is a precious object to him – a pearl which brings with it connotations of purity and innocence appropriate to the Sita stereotype of Indian womanhood to which Lilamani belongs. The text suggests the loss of the rational self which prompts this rescue scenario. Sinclair is *intoxicated* and *blinded*, caught up in an Eastern fantasy, as were the British female protagonists of *The Englishwoman*, *Warning* and *The Daughter-in-Law*, although Sinclair's is the masculine fantasy of the heroic rescue of the beautiful maiden in distress.

Sexual Desire and the Bibi.

When the British male protagonist encounters the *bibi* stereotype of Indian woman, as in Bruce's *The Native Wife* and Perrin's *The Waters of Destruction*, sexual desire is foregrounded. The *bibi* is constructed as responsive to his sexual desire. In Said's words, these are of the type of Oriental women who 'expressed unlimited sensuality, they are more or less stupid, and above all they are willing'.¹⁶² In both novels, however, the authors work to represent the British male protagonist as acting in accordance, as far as possible, with his morally superior

¹⁶¹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.73.

¹⁶² Said, p.207.

character. Thus, in both these novels, the trope of chivalric rescue is problematised for, while the British male protagonists feel pity for the plight of the Indian woman, both also feel sexual desire for her. The novels suggest, too, that neither man is in his right mind when he marries the *bibi*. Both British male protagonists are represented as entering the relationship out of desperation, ignorant of what intimacy with the Indian woman will mean for them.

Thus in *The Native Wife*, the ‘stupid hero’, James Stubbs, ‘inclined to quiet domesticity... without intellectual resources,’ is led into the relationship with Tara by his isolation from Anglo-Indian society.¹⁶³ Because of his low socio-economic position (Stubbs is in trade), he is not well-regarded by the Anglo-Indian community of Tulsipur: ‘[t]here is a frightful deal of snobbishness in Anglo-Indian society ... Successive generations of them had glowered at him, or raised their monocles at him. “Who is that trading fellow?”’¹⁶⁴ Stubbs is not physically attractive either. He is not an ‘exaggerated Saxon[...] as a contrast to native hues’.¹⁶⁵ By constructing a hero who is not physically so opposite to ‘native hues’, the text also moves Stubbs closer to the ‘natives’, morally as well as physically.

The lonely Stubbs has been nine years in India, and, in further mitigation of his actions, the author/narrator suggests that this long stay has had the effect of loosening his moral fibre: ‘A stay twice that period, without a change, means degeneration which all can see. He has been baffled in his efforts to get honourably settled in his own sphere. Why not drop definitely into an easier, though lower, sphere?’¹⁶⁶ ‘Inclined to quiet domesticity’, shunned by Anglo-

¹⁶³ Bruce, p.36.

¹⁶⁴ Bruce, p.34.

¹⁶⁵ Bruce, p.36.

¹⁶⁶ Bruce, p.39.

Indian society and lonely, Stubbs has had 'several temporary households'.¹⁶⁷ The author/narrator, Bruce, who falls often into the 'manners and customs' mode of writing more usual in travel writing than in novels, justifies to the reader the temporary households: 'This is the life led by a considerable proportion of Anglo-Indian bachelors. It seldom makes a scandal; but when it does, it is severely and rightly reprobated.'¹⁶⁸ Thus, even before meeting Tara, Stubbs has been getting too close to Indian life for which the author/narrator excuses him:

'Stubbs was not liked any the better by the natives because of his easy ways with them. But he always felt there was at least this gain, that he had been able to live among human beings of a sort, instead of living in the crushing solitude to which he would otherwise have been condemned.'¹⁶⁹

Meeting Tara, Stubbs is suffering from 'a case of hyperæsthesia upon the subject of native women': he is in an abnormally aroused state.¹⁷⁰ It is made clear, however, that for all his closeness to Indian social and domestic life, Stubbs remains ignorant of some of its aspects. He is unaware, for example, of the fact 'established' by 'Dr Regnault' that the Indian woman may find it to her advantage financially or in terms of raised social status to live with a European but she will always prefer a man of her own race. The novel claims that the relationship with the European is never, for the Indian woman, predicated on romantic love which is felt only by Europeans:

no European need be afraid of tampering with the affections of a native woman, in India or elsewhere. Such a thing is hardly possible. The sentiment, the idealisation, and the wounded heart on parting, are all on the European side, being, indeed, the exclusive products of Europe.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁷ Bruce, p.29.

¹⁶⁸ Bruce, p.37.

¹⁶⁹ Bruce, p.48 It is interesting that while Brandon's 'easy ways' with the Indian population make him popular, Stubbs' 'easy ways' have the opposite effect. The difference derives from British estimations of Indian feeling at the time of writing. The paternalist Taylor respect and admired the Indian people he met; Bruce, writing after the 'Mutiny' and the rise of the INC with increasing nationalist agitation, probably felt very differently about the Indian attitude to British rule. .

¹⁷⁰ Bruce, p.120.

¹⁷¹ Bruce, p.81.

Thus Stubbs is not sexually exploiting Tara but being exploited by her for her own ends. In addition,

Stubbs thought he knew them [Maratha people] thoroughly, although he did not as yet. He had still to learn, in the course of a passionate personal romance, something of the ineradicable hostility to Europeans which they hide behind an apparently frank exterior.¹⁷²

The character of Stubbs highlights the instability of the construction of the superiority of the British race/character by showing how easy it was for a Briton to 'go native', to cross the racial boundaries in the throes of sexual desire and out of loneliness. Yet despite his rejection of the Anglo-Indian community and his participation in Indian social and domestic life, Stubbs does not truly 'know' his Indian wife, Tara. Her initial rejection of his marriage proposal, for example, is based on reasons that Stubbs cannot fathom. It is not, as he supposes, that Tara is afraid he will lower himself by marrying her. Her reason, says the author/narrator is 'more sinister': 'Her thought was rather: "Shall I, a high caste girl, who before my baptism would not have eaten with anyone outside my caste, shall I marry one of these pale-faced wanderers from beyond the Black Water?"'¹⁷³ Stubbs' inability to understand the Indians with whom he surrounds himself, to know what is happening even in his own household, leads to disaster as I show in Chapter 4.

Perrin's *The Waters of Destruction* shares many of the attempts at justification for the interracial union that Bruce advances although her British male protagonist, Stephen Dare, never changes his racial allegiance in the way that Stubbs does. The trope of the rescue of the brown woman from brown men is more prominent in this novel but the loneliness, an abnormal state of mental disturbance and prophylactic

¹⁷² Bruce, p.45.

¹⁷³ Bruce, p.182.

ignorance are offered as reasons for the marriage the ignorant Stephen makes to Sunia.

Stephen is a young irrigation officer, living alone 30 miles from the nearest British community. As the novel opens, he is becoming increasingly aware of his solitude which, he suspects, is damaging him psychologically.

Fearfully he began to recognise that the vampire of loneliness was draining his vitality, and imprisoning his mental vision. Sometimes the outer world seemed to him merely a phantasy, or his work would assume exaggerated importance till it appeared to be the pivot upon which must turn the whole machinery of the Irrigation Department.¹⁷⁴

This 'vampire of loneliness' is draining the life-blood, his British energy and integrity, from Stephen, driving him into decline and reducing him to a narrow, dreamlike existence. In this condition, he is vulnerable to the sexual dangers of India. His fear of the consequences of loneliness to his mental health are represented as partial motivation of his desire for the Indian woman.

Although he is in danger of being destroyed by it, Stephen makes no attempt to comprehend India or its people. The author/narrator comments of Stephen that: 'He ... was one of the multitude of Europeans in India who can never feel themselves in touch with Eastern life, and the gulf between black and white seemed to him unbridgeable.'¹⁷⁵ In this situation of prophylactic ignorance, with no prospect of home leave for years to come and loneliness draining him of will and identity, Stephen encounters the child-widow Sunia as she flees from her uncle who is outraged that the widow should be left on his hands, a 'burden and disgrace'.¹⁷⁶ Stephen, unlike the knowledgeable Cyril, has only a vague

¹⁷⁴ Perrin, *Waters*, p.65.

¹⁷⁵ Perrin, *Waters*, p.115.

¹⁷⁶ Perrin, *Waters*, p.11.

understanding of the miseries of widowhood for a Hindu woman.¹⁷⁷ He is more aware of Sunia's physical charms: 'He saw that her slender limbs were finely modelled, her skin of a delicate golden brown, and her eyes deep and lustrous as those of an antelope. He pitied the pretty little thing sincerely.'¹⁷⁸ Pity sets in motion a chivalric rescue as Stephen prevents Sham Lal beating the widowed Sunia. The chivalric rescue is problematised, however, not only by the implication that Sunia, a *bibi* stereotype, does not really deserve rescue but also by the fact of Stephen's unwilling sexual desire for her.

Sunia is immediately inscribed as the sensual Indian woman. As she sobs in the dust at Stephen's feet, she looks up at him 'fearlessly with bright dark eyes'.¹⁷⁹ Sunia is not a modest Hindu girl like Lilamani who cannot lift her eyes to a male stranger. The text represents Stephen's struggles with himself over his behaviour towards Sunia in his broken language: 'That native girl's beauty is extraordinary, I tell you . . . she is like a highly-bred little animal . . . naturally perfect . . . but she's black . . . and I don't. . . .'¹⁸⁰ It is noticeable here that Sunia is compared to an animal, an antelope.¹⁸¹ Her animality, her natural and unrestrained responses to the sexual drive, are apparently what attract Stephen and override other

¹⁷⁷ Mrs Marcus B. Fuller, *The Wrongs of Indian Womanhood* (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1900), p.56 According to Mrs Fuller, the widow is treated very badly in Hindu society: 'her bright clothes removed; no ornaments allowed her; she must eat but one meal a day; must fast twice a month; and must never join in the family feasts and jubilees.'

¹⁷⁸ Perrin, *Waters*, p.30.

¹⁷⁹ Perrin, *Waters*, p.129.

¹⁸⁰ Perrin, *Waters*, p.99.

¹⁸¹ The comparison of the Indian to an animal is not limited to *The Waters of Destruction*. When Seeta is first noticed by Brandon, it is noted that "her eyes were large and soft, of that clear dark brown which, like a dog's, is always so loving and true."¹⁸¹ Hamakhan, included here because of the inversion of the gaze noted above, is compared to several animals: he has "the look of the wild animal half tamed"; Frances "really loved this beautiful, shy, wild animal, who was as graceful in every physical movement as a leopard". After he has been naughty and trespassed on a dinner Frances is holding for her European friends, he is described as feeling 'a confused sense of his wrong-doing... much as a small, playful, giddy-brained kitten steals after its mistress into a forbidden drawing-room'¹⁸¹, a comparison not often applied to men. He can also jump like a frog which is appropriate for a character who turns into a handsome prince. It is as if the Indian can be equated with the natural world and its inhabitants as he/she belongs to a lower order of progress or civilisation than the European.

considerations. He realises with dismay that her 'race and colour had no longer the power to lessen her attraction for him'.¹⁸² But

[h]e had no delusion as to the nature of his feeling; *he knew that had he been leading a less isolated existence he should never have thought of her*, and that had she not possessed the beauty and grace of a *wild creature*...the notion of her would have repelled him. Mentally he condemned himself with helpless rage because he could think of her as a native at all without repugnance (my italics).¹⁸³

The fantasy of the 'rescue' of Sunia is grounded on her attractiveness and her availability, her 'beseeching adoration' of Stephen.¹⁸⁴ She is, in fact, inscribed as 'more or less stupid, and above all ...willing'.¹⁸⁵ The text cannot, however, allow Stephen, the upright Englishman and colonial official, to rescue Sunia from her abusive uncle only so that he can exploit her 'beseeching adoration' sexually. Perrin works very hard to justify what could be seen as his exploitation of the outcaste girl-widow: Stephen's loneliness and his unbalanced mental state are responsible for his response to Sunia. Unlike the 'unheroic hero', Stubbs, however, Perrin cannot allow Stephen, a blond, blue-eyed, heroic hero, to contemplate exploiting Sunia sexually. Thus, as Nancy Paxton argues,

[a]lthough Stephen could easily satisfy his sexual desire for this young Indian woman without the benefit of marriage, since she is both poor and unprotected, Perrin apparently feels obliged to design a plot that requires her hero to remain chaste until he is married; otherwise, Stephen would compromise the moral superiority that is the most meaningful sign of his race.¹⁸⁶

Perrin solves the problem by the introduction of Mr Tod, the missionary, who marries the couple in his dying delirium. The British participants are both in a state of mental unbalance; they know not what they do. Perrin describes Stephen's

¹⁸² Perrin, *Waters*, p.116.

¹⁸³ Perrin, *Waters*, pp.116–7.

¹⁸⁴ Perrin, *Waters*, p.133.

¹⁸⁵ Said, p.207.

¹⁸⁶ Paxton, p.203.

reaction to the prospect of this binding marriage: ‘He sat beside the dying man with passion tearing at his heart, and reason protesting.’¹⁸⁷ Not only is Dare wilfully ignorant of Indian matters, he also ignores what he knows to be the right course of action under the influence of sexual desire. Here again is Young’s ‘ambivalent axis of desire and aversion’¹⁸⁸ which he sees operating in so many novels about the empire. I discuss the outcome of this deliberate ignorance in Chapter 4.

Conclusion

Thus the desire of the British protagonist leads to a mixed marriage and the partners set up home together. The fact that the marriage is not generally prompted by romantic love but by ignorance, deluded passion, a desire to escape and/or work for some purpose, or even because the British protagonist is mentally disturbed, is suggestive. That the British protagonist does not feel romantic love for the Indian is partly a function of the two-suitors plot which represents the right suitor as the one with whom the protagonist can achieve a companionate marriage, based as Tosh describes, ‘on love, common values and shared interests’.¹⁸⁹ This plot also, as noted in Chapter 2, features a protagonist ‘who learns to abandon a view of the world based on fantasy and adjust [him]/herself to reality’.¹⁹⁰ The ignorant fantasies which prompt the desire for India and for the Indian spouse, the reader versed in the conventions of the two-suitors plot knows, will lead to the

¹⁸⁷ Perrin, *Waters*, p.143.

¹⁸⁸ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.17.

¹⁸⁹ Tosh, *A Man’s Place*, p.7.

¹⁹⁰ Kennard, p.11.

maturing of the protagonist as s/he 'adjusts[...] to the real world which is synonymous with becoming like the right suitor'.¹⁹¹

The lack of romantic love evident in the desires which prompt the marriages therefore supports the colonial ideology which required and, perhaps, hoped that white women in particular did not find brown men romantically or sexually attractive. Collingham argues that

Women's position in British society as the repositories of morality meant that within India they acted as the ultimate symbols of western refinement and high culture or as the primary indicators of the civilized state of the West. This would no longer be effective if they were indianized.¹⁹²

Indianisation would be more likely if the British woman desired the Indian romantically or sexually. In their role as what Nira Yuval-Davis calls 'cultural reproducers' it is therefore more important for women than for men to maintain their symbolic status as the carriers of western civilisation - which entails not succumbing to the lure of the East. Women, as Yuval-Davis argues, are also the biological reproducers of the nation and she comments that 'it is not incidental ... that those who are preoccupied with the purity of the race should also be preoccupied with the sexual relationships between members of different collectivities'.¹⁹³ The British female protagonist, in desiring the Indian, opens up the way for a betrayal of her cultural and biological reproductive functions. The conventions of the two-suitor plot close down the real possibility of this betrayal in the novels of interracial marriage.

I turn next to an examination of the representations of intimacy in the marriage between the British and Indian spouses, using the tropes of knowledge and intimacy as discussed above. The didactic purposes of the authors will be

¹⁹¹ Kennard, p.12.

¹⁹² Collingham, p.42.

¹⁹³ Nira Yuval-Davis, *Gender & Nation* (London: Sage Publications, 1997), p.27.

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analysed, both in their challenges to, as well as their endorsements of, colonial, racial and gender discourses.

CHAPTER 4 HOME, INTIMACY AND KNOWLEDGE

Introduction

[Y]ou have learned by now that there is no bridging the gap that divides the East from the West – least of all by intermarriage.¹

It has been a central argument of this thesis that it is part of the Anglo-Indian authors' instructive purpose to show the metropolitan British reading public that relations with Indians are complex, that separation of the races is necessary and practised for good reason. The novels place the British spouse in intimate relations with the Other, because, as Claude Bray remarks in *Chattel or Wife?*

a right understanding of how a native of India regards his wife and daughters is a thing not easily to be attained by any European, because one has to marry and live among these peoples as one of themselves to get it.²

Once in the Indian home, the British protagonist is represented as realising where their ignorance, fantasy and desire lead, what the OIH was warning against. The novels of interracial marriage now represent the British protagonist coming to 'a right understanding' of how an Indian marriage works; the author/narrator is able to show a number of Anglo-Indian-constructed 'truths' about the racial identity of Indians and about Indian domestic and cultural practices, focalising the lessons to be learned through the ignorant British protagonist who has decided 'to marry and live among these peoples as one of themselves.'

This exposure of Indian domestic practices has a wider purpose. I noted (see Chapter 1) that the ICS at the turn of the 20th century, according to Gilmour, was under attack from the metropole for its administration of India. Gilmour writes that Civilians 'could not comprehend how... they were ending up derided for their intentions and

¹ Savi, p.138.

² Bray, p.120.

consigned by history to the role of oppressors'.³ I suggested that the novels which many Anglo-Indian wives wrote not only supplemented a reduced family income in retirement but also were designed to explain the importance of the work done by the British in India. The construction of Indian social and domestic practice as uncivilised supported the British idea that, until such time as Indian men could demonstrate their commitment to social reform, they were incapable of benefitting from self-government.⁴ The Anglo-Indian 'knowledge' about Indians and degrading and degraded Indian domestic and social practices displayed in the novels of interracial marriage demonstrate the necessity for a continued British presence until India was sufficiently civilised to rule itself.

Once the British protagonist has been placed by the narrative in intimacy with the Indian spouse, a number of similar tropes occur in the novels of interracial marriage in which the British protagonist learns from personal experience that what they rejected as 'race prejudice' in the OIH is, in fact, 'true'. In a trope I have labelled 'The Return of the Native', the Indian husband who seemed so Anglicised when encountered in Britain reveals his Englishness to be a performance; he remains culturally Indian (or as racial theory of the period would have it, racially Indian since race and culture were thought to be strongly imbricated). His reversion to Indian cultural practices, in particular domestic and social practices, demonstrates, among other 'truths', the 'truth' of the Anglo-Indian warning against close, let alone intimate, contact with the Other. The sexual, emotional and physical violence often meted out to the British wife by the Indian husband is linked to Indian subversion against British rule in an interesting twist on what Paxton calls the 'rape script'.⁵

³ Gilmour, *Ruling Caste*, p.327.

⁴ Cf. Chapter 1, section on 'British representations of the Indian woman and Indian Domestic Life.'

⁵ Cf. Paxton, pp.6-8.

In the Indian home, the British spouse is often exposed to the horror at the dark 'heart of India', that domain of the 'Inside' that the missionaries and ICS officials longed to access and enlighten. The British protagonist generally is appalled by what s/he sees on entry to the Indian home. In this dangerous space they gain knowledge of the heart of India which they are fortunate to survive. The Indian home does not only threaten physically, however. There may also be a threat to the British racial identity from this intimate connection with the Indian. As discussed in Chapter 3, in the throes of deluded romantic love for the Other, there is always the danger of crossing racial boundaries. If the racial boundaries are not threatened by love, pressure may still be brought on a reluctant British female protagonist in particular to adopt Indian practices which threaten her sense of her British identity. Domestic arrangements and, in particular clothes, feature in these novels as signs of resistance to the cultural practices of the Other as I show.

Another repeated trope is that of the traditional Indian woman, whom the British female protagonist has gone to emancipate, refusing to have her marital and domestic arrangements reformed. She resists all efforts to liberate her from the zenana, refuses to abandon the practice of child marriage and enforced widowhood. Nor is the mother of the Indian husband (a frequently appearing character) welcoming to the foreign bride. She, as a guardian of tradition, does not want her son to marry a foreigner who will import different practices into the house. This scenario is used to demonstrate a wide-ranging set of issues, among them the Indian failure/resistance to embrace (British) ideas of modernity.

Occasionally the British spouse may find him/herself exposed to the consequences of intimacy with the Other in the shape of a mixed-race child. This issue is rarely mentioned in the novels as a reason against the marriage, perhaps because sexual

desire is played down, especially in the novels featuring a British female protagonist, for reasons of contemporary disinclination to attribute sexual feeling to women and to public discussion of the sexual act. The mixed-race child does not appear in many of the novels but, when it does, it is regarded with revulsion by the British parent to whom the child represents all that s/he has come to understand is wrong with interracial marriage while, at the same time, by its very existence, binding the mismatched couple together. The mixed-race child rarely survives infancy, usually being too frail to survive, like its parents' marriage.

Before the analysis of the knowledge acquired by the ignorant British protagonist who gets too close to the Indian Other, however, I address the question of the space in which the interracial couple establish themselves. The following section uses Mary Louise Pratt's idea of the contact zone and James C. Scott's theory of public and hidden transcripts to analyse the intimate relations represented by the novels of interracial marriage, in particular the power structures within the Indian home which the British protagonist enters. Within the contact zone and its shifting power relations it is sometimes difficult for the British protagonist to acquire knowledge about India and matters Indian, as I demonstrate.

At Home in the Contact Zone.

In *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, Pratt uses the term 'contact zone' to describe 'the space in which peoples geographically and historically separated come into contact with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict'.⁶ The 'contact zone' 'treats the relations among colonizers and

⁶ Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 2008), p.7.

colonized, ... not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power'.⁷ The spaces in which the British and Indian protagonists interact in the novels of interracial marriage constitute such contact zones, representing members of normally segregated races in terms of 'copresence' and 'interaction'.

In the contact zone of the home represented in the novels of interracial marriage, 'asymmetrical relations of power' are present but problematised by the issue of gender. Within the contact zone of the imagined home, the complexities of several power structures must be negotiated. There are instances where power is simply 'that actual or virtual force which says "no", which is prohibitive', a power imbalance where the stronger uses violence to enforce the compliance of the weaker member of the marital partnership.⁸ This is always the Indian husband using violence to force the British wife into compliance. In fact, the novels problematise the normally privileged terms of the binaries of power – coloniser/colonised, white/black, male/female. In colonial contexts, the coloniser of either gender is *theoretically* dominant in the relationship with the colonised of both genders. In a patriarchal society such as existed in Britain and in India, the male is *theoretically* dominant in the relationship with the female. Many of the novels place a female member of the 'ruling race' in a marital relationship in which she would normally be subordinate to the male who, in this case, is a member of the ruled race. The novels represent various consequences deriving from the intersections of discourses on race and gender inherent in the power structure of this imagined relationship. The relations of power are asymmetrical as

⁷ Pratt, p.7.

⁸ John Lechte, *Key Contemporary Concepts: From Abjection to Zeno's Paradox* (London: SAGE Publications, 2003), p.183.

Pratt says, but not static. Power in the novels of interracial marriage moves between the spouses in different **circumstances**.

Thus, I called the dominance of the colonised *theoretical* because, as Diver's example of the disruptive surveillance of the ayah mentioned in Chapter 3 demonstrates, there was a 'secret and covert level' at which the colonised were able to influence and manipulate the behaviour of the coloniser.⁹ I find the 'contact zone' does not place enough emphasis for my purposes on the power structures in which the interaction between coloniser and colonised takes place and have therefore linked it with Scott's theory of transcripts as described in *Domination and the Arts of Resistance*. Here, Scott addresses the concept of power operating between coloniser and colonised at a 'secret and covert level', using the terms *public transcript* and *hidden transcript* to describe interactions between dominant and subordinate groups. The *public transcript* describes the way in which dominant and subordinate, coloniser and colonised, interact in the public spaces of the contact zone. In Diver's example, the memsahib gives orders, the ayah shows the deference and obedience required of a servant.¹⁰ The subordinate, according to Scott, are, however, 'likely to create and defend a social space in which offstage dissent to the official transcript of power relations may be voiced'.¹¹ In this case the 'admiring circle of listeners' who listen to the ayah's opinions on the memsahib, expressed 'without reserve...over her evening hookah' constitutes the 'social space' in which the ayah's deference to her mistress is replaced by a *hidden*

Comment [PStG3]: point on p.5 on power being dynamic and not static could be foregrounded in the Intro and Conclusion to your thesis for rationalising the importance of literature in analysing colonial power relations – lit. engages with the dynamics and precariousness of power;

⁹ Sen, *Memsahib's Writings*, p.277.

¹⁰ Steel and Gardiner in *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook* write that it is the duty of the mistress 'to insist on her orders being carried out... The secret lies in making rules, and keeping them. The Indian servant is a child in everything save age, and should be treated as a child; that is to say, kindly, but with the greatest firmness. ... first faults should never go unpunished.' Flora Annie Steel and Grace Gardiner, *The Complete Indian Housekeeper and Cook* (Oxford ; New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), p.12.

¹¹ James C Scott, *Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1990), p.12.

transcript performed within a private space.¹² This demonstrates what Scott describes as ‘the relation between what is said in the face of power and what is said behind its back’.¹³ That these judgements may be less than complimentary of the ruling race is acknowledged in Diver’s comment that ‘the unscrupulous chattering of her and her kind has done more to darken understanding and confirm countless misconceptions than any of the ways and works of Englishwomen themselves’.¹⁴

Another feature of Scott’s argument can be illustrated by Diver’s ayah. Scott writes that: ‘[a]s one of the key survival skills of subordinate groups has been impression-management in power-laden situations, the *performance* aspect of their conduct has not escaped the more observant members of the dominant group’ (my italics).¹⁵ For Scott, the public transcript depends on performances of mastery and control from the dominant group and of deference and consent from the subordinate. However, these performances are not necessarily fool-proof. Scott notes that

to the degree that the dominant suspect that the public transcript may be ‘only’ a performance, they will discount its authenticity. It is but a short step from such skepticism to the view, common among many dominant groups, that those beneath them are deceitful, shamming and lying by nature.¹⁶

Bhabha has, of course, written about the British ‘knowledge’ of ‘the essential duplicity of the Asiatic’.¹⁷ Scott’s idea of the performance aspect of power-laden situations is reminiscent too of Bhabha’s theory of the coloniser’s ambivalence towards the mimic man. These Indians have been encouraged to *act* like British

¹² Sen, *Memsahib’s Writings*, p.284.

¹³ Scott, p.5.

¹⁴ Quoted in Sen, *Memsahib’s Writings*, p.284.

¹⁵ Scott, p.3.

¹⁶ Scott, p.3.

¹⁷ Bhabha, p.89.

colonisers but ‘the result is a ‘blurred copy’ of the coloniser that can be quite threatening’.¹⁸ It is to Scott’s conceptualisation of shifting power-relations between dominant and subordinate, coloniser and colonised, that I will turn when analysing the interaction of the protagonists in the contact zone of the home. The idea of performances enacted in the sight of the Other (British and Indian) links to the power of the gaze in coloniser-colonised relationships which I return to in this chapter.

Within these shifting power structures of the contact zone/home, the coloniser and colonised negotiate difference. Identities, cultural practices and values may undergo change in the process of sexual and cultural interaction. In terms of racial identity, the fear of ‘going native’, discussed in Chapter 1, indicates that the British confidence in their own racial identity was not very strong, that the boundaries of Britishness were easily breached. Or perhaps one should say that the British confidence in their ability to sustain the performance of their own racial identity was not very strong. If they were able to glimpse the inauthenticity of the Indian performance of subservience and deference, they could do the same for their own performance of mastery and control, as George Orwell did in his often quoted essay, ‘Shooting an Elephant’.¹⁹ In fact, as Young says,

Today the Englishness of the past is often represented in terms of fixity, of certainty, centredness, homogeneity, as something unproblematically identical

¹⁸ Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, p. 139.

¹⁹ Orwell writes: ‘I could feel their two thousand wills pressing me forward, irresistibly. And it was at this moment, as I stood there with the rifle in my hands, that I first grasped the hollowness, the futility of the white man's dominion in the East. Here was I, the white man with his gun, standing in front of the unarmed native crowd – seemingly the leading actor of the piece; but in reality I was only an absurd puppet pushed to and fro by the will of those yellow faces behind. I perceived in this moment that when the white man turns tyrant it is his own freedom that he destroys. He becomes a sort of hollow, posing dummy, the conventionalized figure of a sahib. For it is the condition of his rule that he shall spend his life in trying to impress the “natives,” and so in every crisis he has got to do what the “natives” expect of him. He wears a mask, and his face grows to fit it. I had got to shoot the elephant. I had committed myself to doing it when I sent for the rifle. A sahib has got to act like a sahib; he has got to appear resolute, to know his own mind and do definite things.’ <http://www.online-literature.com/orwell/887/>. Accessed 25 August 2014.

with itself... Perhaps the fixity of identity for which Englishness developed such a reputation arose because it was in fact being continually contested, and was rather designed to mask its uncertainty, its sense of being estranged from itself, sick with desire for the other.²⁰

The notion of a fixed racial identity did not just apply to the British however. How were Indians who were essentially ‘English in tastes, in opinions, in morals and in intellect’ to be produced if race determined identity? If real change could not be produced, the civilising mission could never achieve its goals and one of the major justifications for the British presence in India would be removed. I address these issues as well as the anxiety and interest prompted by the idea of ‘going native’ in later sections of this chapter.

In terms of negotiation of cultural practices and values within the contact zone/home, this is represented as happening within the structure of power established by the novel. It is, for example, far more common for an Indian woman to adopt the cultural practices and values of her British husband than *vice versa*. A British wife may consider adopting Indian domestic practices under the threat of coercion but Indian values are rarely considered for adoption. The one exception to this is, inevitably perhaps, *Life of My Heart* by Cross.

Using the contact zone and interaction within shifting asymmetries of power, I now turn to the analysis of the repeated tropes mentioned in the introduction as producing Anglo-Indian knowledge in the ignorant British spouse.

²⁰ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.2.

The Return of the Native.

Nothing can exceed the habitual contempt which the Hindus entertain for their women.²¹

The Return of the Native paradigm, as I have called it, refers to the reversion of the Anglicised husband to his own cultural practices on return to his Indian home. Despite the fact that he has initially appeared to be British in tastes, opinions, morals and intellect (he looks British, sounds British, has a British education and expresses the need for the reform of Indian cultural practices), he proves to have remained Indian in essence which means that he demonstrates the stereotypical Indian traits of deceit, cowardice and irrationality. The British wife learns to her horror that she has married 'a native.' In addition, the British wife discovers that the Indian husband's Anglicisation does not extend to the adoption of British chivalric values towards herself or towards women generally who 'are held... in extreme degradation' in Indian households.²² The living conditions of the women in the zenana speak to the habitual contempt of the Indian for his womenfolk: Indians, says the author/narrator of Bray's *Chattel or Wife* are 'in the habit of shutting up their wives and other female belongings in a courtyard surrounded by a species of dog-kennel, each about ten feet square – called rooms, by courtesy – and [...] never let these unfortunate ladies out'.²³

As Scott describes, the impression-management of the subordinate in the presence of the dominant group is dropped in the social space where the hidden transcript may be enacted without risk. In other words, once within the Indian household, a space in which the British remit did not run, the performance of Britishness is abandoned by the Indian husband and his British wife finds herself

²¹ Mill, I, p.366.

²² Mill, I, p.367.

²³ Bray, p.31.

expected to live according to his traditional domestic and social practices. This is not to suggest that the performance was simply cynical impression-management by the Indian husband. The loss of his Anglicisation is occasionally shown to require a struggle within the Indian between the pressures of sliding back into 'inferior' ways and retaining British cultural practices and values which he 'knows' to be superior to his own.

A thoughtful representation of the return of the native occurs in the Askew's *The Englishwoman*. Jotindra, returning home with his English wife, Lucy, learns that he and his brother are in a contest for the throne. The Anglicised Jotindra is thrown into a quandary. 'I've learnt how to play the game, but of what use is that knowledge going to be to me; who plays the game here?' he asks.²⁴ Jotindra knows that behaviour based on British values will not be effective in this Indian crisis where the price of his Anglicisation will be his own assassination and the risk that Lucy will 'fall into dark, lustful hands'.²⁵ In this crisis of indecision, Jotindra 'lost his polished Oxford manner; he looked a mere shivering native'.²⁶ In other words, Jotindra has ceased to perform Britishness and has become himself again. Lucy assures her husband that "[a]n Englishman would never, never have his brother slain in cold blood; he would rather perish himself".²⁷ To which Jotindra replies in a moment of self-discovery, 'I am not an Englishman... I have been educated in England, and I have married an English wife, but I am not an Englishman'.²⁸

The return of the native is not easily realised in Jotindra, however. Much later in the narrative, he confesses to Lucy that he is still on 'a see-saw, betwixt the East

²⁴ Askew, p.73.

²⁵ Askew, p.74.

²⁶ Askew, p.74.

²⁷ Askew, p.77.

²⁸ Askew, p.78.

and the West'.²⁹ *The Englishwoman* offers an interesting perspective on the mimic man as a hybridised product of colonialism despised not only by the coloniser as Bhabha argues but also by the colonised. I have quoted the following lengthy passage from the novel for it is a rare instance of British writers acknowledging that the process of Anglicisation may make the Indian subjected to it disliked by both races:

It's a shame, ...for the West to come and disturb the East. For it's not as if they had transplanted us to root us in another soil, but they take us away from ... all that is primitive and hot and burning and fierce, and they put us down in a European forcing house. They keep us there for a few years—they practically turn us into Europeans; we mould ourselves on the European pattern, we profess European sentiments, we wear European clothes, and then, after this, we are flung back to the East again—the West will have none of us. And what happens when we get back to our own land? We have lost caste, for one thing; we are unclean in the eyes of most of our countrymen; we have consorted with infidels. They despise us because we wear European clothes; they hate us because we profess European sentiments. The ideas on morality we have acquired in Europe amuse them. We struggle to maintain our new principles for a time—we strive to be Europeanised Asiatics, but by degrees we realise the hopelessness of the task. The East drags us back to her bosom; she is our great brown mother...³⁰

The ambivalence that the British felt towards the blurred copy of Britishness that was the mimic man is not the only disadvantage felt by the Anglicised Indian as the passage makes clear. Indians look on the returned native with something worse than ambivalence: the returned Indian is alienated and unclean, Indians '*despise*' their clothes, '*hate*' their values, laugh at their ideas on morality. The passage argues that the returned native has no choice but to revert to his Indian ways under heavy pressure to conform. This Jotindra eventually does. His final return to the native is signalled by his resumption of Indian clothes:

²⁹ Askew, p.249.

³⁰ Askew, pp.246–7 As noted, the Askews were not Anglo-Indians. It would be interesting to know where this more nuanced representation of the situation of the Anglicised Indian on his return home derives from. .

There was little of the Englishman about him now. He was dressed in a simple white robe, and he wore a necklace of uncut rubies round his throat—his fingers were loaded with rings. A cap of rose silk rested on his head, pearls hung from his ears. He was like a fairy prince, some unreal and fantastic character. His eyes had even been lengthened by lines of paint, and Lucy felt that she was gazing at a stranger. ...This was not the Oxford undergraduate to whom she had pledged herself...This was an Asiatic monarch...³¹

Clothing is frequently used as a sign of identity in the novels of interracial marriage; I refer to several instances of change of clothing signalling change of identity in this chapter, building on Colley's comments on the importance of clothing in this respect. Colley writes: '[b]eing stripped of western dress could seem a metaphor for the danger that one might indeed go native. Conversely, resuming European clothes was often a crucial emblem of return'.³² In these novels it is the resumption of Indian clothes by the Indian protagonists that is one of the 'emblem[s] of return' and represents the estrangement of the Other. The painted and bejewelled Jotindra is a stranger to Lucy.

Jotindra experiences difficulty in recovering his Indian identity. In *Brenda's Experiment*, *Chattel or Wife?*, *Warning* and *The Daughter-in-Law* the return of the native is complete and immediate on return to India, the English manners and behaviour, it is implied, having been impression-management by the Indian for the metropolitan British. The British wives, forced into submission by their invariably brutal husbands, quickly realise why they were advised against the mixed marriage. These texts insist that the abusive and violent male tyrant of the Indian home is the 'right understanding of how a native of India regards his wife and daughters'.³³ 'The slavery and worse than slavery that [women] suffer, the lives

³¹ Askew, p.297.

³² Linda Colley, 'Going Native, Telling Tales: Captivity, Collaboration and Empire', *Past and Present*, 2000, 170–93 (p.178).

³³ Bray, p.120.

they are condemned to lead in Mahomedan establishments,³⁴ that is in store for Brenda Mogadore in Ameer Ali's household in *Brenda's Experiment* is similar to the 'Oriental brutality' shown by Mohammed Khan towards his British wife, Joan, violent behaviour that reduces her to abject submission, 'until she fell a whimpering nothing at his triumphant feet.'³⁵ Maude Ashley, married to Mowlah Bux in *Chattel or Wife?*, discovers that he is 'only a greedy, sensual, narrow-minded bigot, to whom she herself was but a chattel to be used, broken if need be, and then thrown away'.³⁶ She is kidnapped and imprisoned in her husband's zenana. In *The Daughter-in-Law* the Hindu Hurri Mohun Dey is a 'despot' who forces submission, not just from his British wife but also from the women who live in seclusion in his house. Kathleen regards herself as 'tied to a jealous and exacting male animal whose low instincts and suspicious nature were as apart from hers as the East was from the West...'³⁷

The violence inflicted on the British wife in *Warning* and *The Daughter-in-Law* is sexual. In *Warning* Joan Mansfield is first raped on her wedding night and repeatedly thereafter when forced to join her husband in India. Mohammed Khan is represented as a stereotypical Indian husband, determined to be master of his wife. Joan's life was 'one long, hopeless degradation'.³⁸ Hurri Mohun Dey also forces sex on his unconsenting wife. Kathleen more than once finds her husband waiting 'to bully favours out of his proud English wife'.³⁹ She refused to let him touch her, so he 'reduced her to submission'.⁴⁰ In *Brenda's Experiment*, Ameer Ali thinks to give the English Brenda to the Nawab of Rownpore in return for favours.

³⁴ Greenhow, p.14.

³⁵ Wynne., p.240.

³⁶ Bray, p.150.

³⁷ Savi, p.67.

³⁸ Wynne, p.246.

³⁹ Savi, p.60.

⁴⁰ Savi, p.60.

He has already brought an Indian wife into his household to supplement or replace Brenda.

Not only are these Indian domestic tyrants, unfit husbands for English women, but the English wife (and the British reader) discovers, too, that they are involved in subversive activity against the British government. The hidden transcript of sedition is enacted within the social space of the home where the imperial gaze cannot penetrate but the imaginative eye of the novelist and her/his protagonist can. In *Brenda's Experiment*, which is set in 1857, Ameer Ali is involved in the 1857 'Mutiny'; 'you English,' he tells Brenda, 'have had your day out here, and India is now to be governed as her own people desire'.⁴¹ Similarly, Mohammed Khan has private discussions with 'other natives, who came in loose coats made of stuff like coarse linen and wore white caps shaped like a convict's'.⁴² The implication is that these 'other natives' are wearing clothes made of *khadi* and Gandhi caps, the uniform of Indians involved in the struggle for Swaraj. Hurri Mohun Dey also uses the privacy of his home to talk with his companions about agitation against the British to gain their political ends. These novels thus suggest that British education of the male Indian is failing to produce the desired results. Instead of turning these husbands into Indians who are English in tastes, opinions, morals and intellect, it is suggested that their education has left their racial identities intact but given them the power to deceive and subvert more effectively. They can perform Englishness, they have intimate knowledge of the British and thus the ability to attack the ruling race with their own weapons. Sir Alfred Lyall in his Introduction to Chirol's *Indian Unrest* (1910) which analyses the recent anti-British activity writes that '[i]t is now seen that our Western ideas and

⁴¹ Wynne, p.202.

⁴² Wynne, p.253.

inventions, moral and material, are being turned against us by those to whom we have imparted an elementary aptitude for using them'.⁴³ Lyall takes the view that the British have made a mistake in educating Indians along British lines, a view that is also advanced in *The Englishwoman*, as noted above, although in that text there is sympathy for the hybridised Indian.

Political subversion coincides here with sexual, physical or emotional violence directed by the colonised man towards the colonising woman, again in a space where the British remit does not run. This is reminiscent of the rape script that featured in so many popular 'Mutiny' novels, according to Paxton in *Writing Under the Raj*. The rape script which was broadly disseminated after the 'Mutiny' of 1857 cast Englishwomen as 'the victims of abduction, imprisonment, intimidation, and rape by violent and lawless Indian men'.⁴⁴ Some 200 British women and children were killed at the well of Cawnpore by Indians and their deaths prompted what Paxton describes as the 'most martial phase of British imperialism, between 1870-1914', justified partly by the proclaimed need to protect British women and children from violence, rape and murder by Indian men.

Ann Stoler in *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power* argues that the linking of political subversion and sexual threat that happened in India during and after the 'Mutiny' served as a 'template' for the same linking in different geographical and historical situations. Thus, she notes, the term 'Black Peril' which was used in Africa as well as more widely in the British empire, 'referred to sexual threats, but it also connoted the fear of insurgence, and of perceived non-acquiescence to

⁴³ Chirol, p.xv.

⁴⁴ Paxton, p. 5.

colonial control more generally'.⁴⁵ Stoler proposes that 'concern over protection of white women intensified during real and perceived crises of control'.⁴⁶ As discussed previously, the British had always been aware of the unstable nature of their rule in India where so few British governed so many millions of Indians. Fielding-Hall in *The Passing of Empire*, as mentioned in the Introduction, argued that it had never been possible to govern India without 'a tacit and generally an active consent' from the Indian population.⁴⁷ When he wrote, this consent was being eroded, there was 'a real and perceived crisis of control' in India and this, I argue, is reflected in the anxieties of loss of authority and control represented in the novels of interracial marriage.

These anxieties are evident in the way in which the rape script of the 'Mutiny' is altered in these novels. First, the British woman is not abducted by the lawless Indian against her will. The Anglicised mimic man woos her, seduces her, and she agrees to marry him because he offers something that she wants.⁴⁸ No crime is committed; there is no justification for chivalric rescue or retaliation by the British. In the altered rape script there is actually no role for the British chivalric hero as no rescue of white women from brown men is possible. The violence/rape is directed at the British wife by her *husband* within the hidden space of the *home*, thus making her doubly inaccessible to the British and their protection. Bray's *Chattel or Wife?* does feature the rescue of Maude Ashley from the house in the bazaar in which she has been imprisoned by her husband and his mother. It is made clear in the text that, in effecting her rescue, the British officers are acting

⁴⁵ Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), p.58.

⁴⁶ Stoler, p. 58.

⁴⁷ Fielding-Hall, p. 7.

⁴⁸ Cf. Frantz Fanon's observation in *Black Skin, White Masks*: 'When a white woman accepts a black man there is automatically a romantic aspect. It is a giving, not a seizing.' Frantz Fanon, *Black Skin, White Masks*, trans. by Charles Lam Markmann (London: Granada Publishing Ltd., 1970), p.34.

illegally and risking their careers. Colonel Eustace is urged not to undertake the rescue: 'You will be convicted [...] of taking the armed forces of the Crown to violate the sanctity of a native gentleman's house'.⁴⁹ As in England, the Indian man's home was his castle. What happened inside – whether that was subversive plotting against the Raj and/or British wife-beating - was impenetrable to the British controlling gaze and thus became a source of anxiety.

Loss of British Racial Identity

Along with the recovery of the Indian racial identity on return home goes the threat of the loss of British racial identity away from home. Brought into close contact with the Other and isolated from members of her own race, the British wife has to defend herself against assault on her racial/cultural identity; she refuses (at least initially) to 'go native' in any way until subdued by the often violent attempts of the Indian husband and his family who isolate or even imprison her to force her to adopt Indian practices. Brenda Mogadore, isolated from the British community in a house in the Indian bazaar by Ameer Ali, Lucy Travers, imprisoned in Jotindra's labyrinthine palace, Joan Mansfield, kept in the remote bungalow of her husband Mohammed Khan and ostracised by the British, Maude Ashley, imprisoned in the zenana of a house in the bazaar by her husband Mowlah Bux, Kathleen Dey, isolated in a house in the bazaar by Hurri Mohun Dey, all attempt to refuse the cultural crossover that is demanded of them by their husbands. In Scott's terms, being members of the dominant group, the 'ruling race', they are not practised in the impression management that is the survival skill of the subordinate; the scene is set for a prolonged and intractable struggle in

⁴⁹ Bray, p.310.

which the women are beaten emotionally or physically into submission in a recalling of the rape script with its focus on white women's vulnerability to the lusts and excesses of Indian men.

In *The Englishwoman*, as Jotindra discovers that he is not an Englishman, so Lucy, brought into close contact with Indian practices and values, discovers that she *is* an Englishwoman. She realises that she should have listened to the warnings from the OIH and right suitor, Hugh, against marrying an Indian. Faced with the evidence of her mistake in the form of Jotindra's essential difference from herself, 'an immense pride came over her – a pride of race'.⁵⁰ When he comes to her after the murder of his brother, drunk, she 'knew at last what race prejudice means, and she flushed to think that she had married a native'.⁵¹ In the context of the novels of interracial marriage, 'race prejudice' (a phrase that appears several times in different texts) has a different meaning from the current one where prejudice signifies an unfavourable opinion based on insufficient and inaccurate knowledge or irrational feelings. The novel shows that Lucy has discovered the truth about Jotindra the Indian from her intimacy with him. Her 'race prejudice' rests on accurate knowledge and signifies her understanding that she is superior to him racially.

Lucy, the Englishwoman, resists cultural crossover, identifying herself with a discourse of Englishness more usually characterised as male in a situation where racial characteristics are made to take precedence over those of gender. It prompts her to make statements such as 'Englishwomen do not love cowards – it is against their nature to do so, against their creed';⁵² "I belong to the conquering race,"

⁵⁰ Askew, p.86.

⁵¹ Askew, p.140.

⁵² Askew, p.87.

Lucy retorted proudly. "I am an Englishwoman";⁵³ 'I gave him my word—and Englishwomen don't break their word, do they?'⁵⁴ Here Englishness is raised almost to the status of a religion: Lucy is reciting her 'creed' of militant Englishness. Her refusal to condone the murder, represented as a principled and commendable stand in the novel, is perceived by Jotindra negatively: he finds her 'hard and fault-finding, a rigid and uncompromising Englishwoman'.⁵⁵ The novel thus reveals the essential difference between the moral values of the Briton and the Indian while placing Jotindra as the inferior Other while Lucy's moral stance against fratricide, even if it means death for Jotindra and herself, is privileged against his failure of principle and courage. The British refusal to compromise is characteristic of Lucy: the text makes it clear that 'having made a bargain she must stick to it...she must be true to [her husband] to the day of her death – just because she is an Englishwoman'.⁵⁶ Against this, the text argues that, for the very reason that she is English and therefore principled, she cannot condone her husband's crimes by her silence: 'is an Englishwoman to bow her head quietly and acquiesce in all that her Asiatic consort may be pleased to do?'.⁵⁷ Lucy has been placed by the text in a moral dilemma by her racial identity and decides that she must make

a colossal and supreme sacrifice. She had married an Eastern prince, and she must accommodate herself to her husband's views and theories... she would have to renounce all her Western views... she must cease to remember that she is an Englishwoman.⁵⁸

⁵³ Askew, p.172.

⁵⁴ Askew, p.265.

⁵⁵ Askew, pp.154-5.

⁵⁶ Askew, p.210.

⁵⁷ Askew, p.210.

⁵⁸ Askew, p.254.

This is the resolution of the dilemma posed earlier in the text. The text represents Lucy as performing her renunciation of Englishness to save Jotindra – ‘her husband’s fate lay in her hands’ – because she, being an Englishwoman, must not renege on her commitment to her husband, whatever the cost to herself. By her renunciation she may help her husband to recapture some of the Englishness that he is losing. Paradoxically, therefore, in deciding to abandon her racial identity she is at her most English, according to the text’s idea of Englishness. The text does not actually describe the effect of her decision to ‘go native’, however, for Jotindra is killed in a hunting accident shortly after this and Lucy is whisked back to England to marry the right suitor, Hugh. At the heart of this novel lies the problem of the moral compromises that the coloniser, the English(wo)man, may have to make in order to pursue the imperial mission in India and the personal cost to their identity of doing so.

Unlike Lucy, Frances Wilson, in Cross’s *Life of My Heart*, welcomes the opportunity to transgress the boundaries of her racial identity. In succumbing to active sexual desire for the statuesque Hamakhan, living intimately with him, she sees the Other from a different and sympathetic perspective to the other British wives of the novels of interracial marriage. I think it is important to stress here, however, that Hamakhan is a Muslim, meaning that he belongs to a monotheistic religion, as well as a Pathan, one of the martial races admired by the British as possessing qualities of courage and straightforwardness which they admired in themselves. It is hard to imagine the indomitable Frances eloping with a stereotypical effeminate and cowardly Bengali babu.

After their elopement, Frances immerses herself in life as a Muslim Pathan wife; she does not ‘go native’ but moves towards the native, changing not only her

English practices but also, to a certain extent, her English beliefs while retaining aspects of her British racial identity.⁵⁹ Here is an example of Young's 'sense of fluidity' in identity which he compares to the 'fixity of identity for which Englishness developed such a reputation,' arguing that the fixed identity was 'designed to mask ... its sense of being estranged from itself, sick with desire for the other'.⁶⁰ Although Frances is represented living as a Muslim woman domestically, this traditionally subordinated way of life does not eradicate the qualities that are considered to derive from her racial identity. This is partly made possible by the power-structure of their relationship in that the male Hamakhan cannot entirely dominate the female Frances. Frances has been constructed as a New Woman in terms of her open exploration of her sexuality but she is also: '[s]elf-reliant and strong-willed, with a great deal of intelligence and knowledge, she had always held the reins of her own life and actions'.⁶¹ She is not a woman who can be easily intimidated, in other words, like some of her British counterparts in the novels mentioned above who cannot resist their Indian husband's violence. Faced with Hamakhan's murderous rage, Frances faces up to him – 'her blue eyes met his glittering balls'(sic) - as he towers over her, knife in hand,⁶² and this saves her life for Hamakhan, member of 'a fierce, wild race' admires her courage which is attributed to her 'true British blood'.⁶³ Race intersecting with a new construction of femininity combine to make Frances formidable.

⁵⁹ She is not actually a wife, however. Another transgressive aspect of this novel is that Frances is never married to Hamakhan.

⁶⁰ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.2.

⁶¹ Cross, *Life*, p.195.

⁶² Cross, *Life*, p.198.

⁶³ Cross, *Life*, p.198.

Where Lucy Travers refuses to compromise and then absolutely renounces her racial identity because she is an Englishwoman, Frances displays a fluidity of response to her new situation. The first indication that France is adjusting comes when she swaps her English clothes for Indian ones. She stands before Hamakhan 'as a beautiful Mohammedan woman instead of the pretty English girl. Bare white feet on the mud floor, full dark blue trousers, muslin chemise and square Zouave, and above, the fair face and blue eyes and light hair of England'.⁶⁴ I have already remarked on the importance of clothing as a sign of identity; the only other novel in which an English wife changes her English for Indian clothing is *Chattel or Wife?* where it is a sign of Maude Ashley's *enforced* incorporation into her husband's world.⁶⁵ The fact that Frances freely changes her clothing is the sign of a voluntary and desired crossing of the racial boundaries. Next the text, in 'manners and customs' mode, describes her new home: She lives with Hamakhan in one of a row of

little huts possessing three hard mud walls and a sloping roof; the fourth side was absent, the whole front of the hut being open to the road; and each hut possessed a light hurdle ... that could be drawn over the front of the hut at night or in the blaze of noonday... The interiors of the huts are picturesque; most of them very clean, with matting on the floor, and a charpai or rugs in the corner.⁶⁶

Frances come to this simple hut from a European bungalow where 28 servants wait on her and her father. The text, in describing some of the furnishings of this bungalow, highlights the difference between the racialised spaces in which Frances lives:

⁶⁴ Cross, *Life*, p.128.

⁶⁵ Maude Ashley, kidnapped by her husband's mother and brought to the zenana, is forced to put on Indian clothing when her tea-gown is stolen. Her husband's mother thinks that this adoption of Indian clothing signifies an acceptance of her situation but in fact this coercion in the manner of her dress, the removal of the outward signs of her British identity, has only 'served to put Maude on her guard.' Bray, p.266.

⁶⁶ Cross, *Life*, pp.133-4.

Three swinging lamps of great size and power were suspended by bronze chains from the distant ceiling... the red bowl of glowing Venetian glass and antique bronze-work could be seen between the pillars grouped round with palms. ... the rich curtains and carpets were quite English... the great vases and silver cashmere work ... quite Eastern.⁶⁷

This is a hybridised space of great magnificence – Venetian glass and English carpets alongside Eastern vases and cashmere work – indicating Frances’s appreciation for beautiful objects from both East and West. In the mud hut to which she removes, she cooks Hamakhan’s food sitting on the floor, the English lady who used to dine on seven courses at a ‘damask-covered table with silver epergnes full of roses [and]... one white-clothed, red-turbaned servant’ standing behind her chair and two others waiting to serve her.⁶⁸ She performs other menial services for Hamakhan, washing his feet when he arrives home tired, for instance. In the European bungalow Hamakhan is often represented as sitting below her, looking up into her face. Now, in the hut, the positions are reversed. The text repeatedly drives home the point that Frances is happy in this life because she is with Hamakhan. Locked up in the hut when Hamakhan goes to work, Frances ponders the difference between her old and her new lives.

“Am I really Frances Wilson, who used to live in a big bungla and have her dresses from Paris and dine with the Commissioner?” She had not seen a single white face nor heard a word of any European language since her flight ...The old life seemed to have receded utterly from her; no letter, not a line, not a sign of any kind reached her from her own people, nor from any European; the life of the native bazaar had enfolded her and drawn her into it completely. But she was happy; she would have said to any one who had come to her there lying in the darkness behind the chick: “Yes; I am happy.”⁶⁹

Her values undergo a further change from association with her Indian lover. Seeing Hamakhan uncomplaining despite his gruelling work, Frances muses on

⁶⁷ Cross, *Life*, p.69.

⁶⁸ Cross, *Life*, p.21.

⁶⁹ Cross, *Life*, pp.171–2.

how '[t]he sublime, uncomplaining submission of the Asiatic to the inevitable makes European fretfulness under evils seem contemptible and childish'.⁷⁰ To a certain extent the text constructs the Indian as the opposite of the British man, but here unusually the Indian is valorised:

The Englishman's logic of "My commanding officer reproved me this morning, therefore I kick my bearer through the verandah when I come home"; or, "My bank affairs have gone wrong, therefore I swear at my wife", is unknown to the Asiatic. When he is angry it is for some definite reason with a definite person.⁷¹

So Frances, admiring this quality of resignation to the inevitable, adopts it herself and learns to live without complaint in the stifling hut. 'She packed away all her European prejudices and opinions in an upper storey of her brain, and threw herself into this form of life'.⁷²

It is not only Frances who discovers in this intimate relationship to value the culture of the Other. Hamakhan also undergoes change in his association with his English lover. When Frances reaches 21 years old she will be rich. She and Hamakhan then plan to go to England where he 'would adopt English clothes, English ways'.⁷³ With this in mind, Frances starts to instruct Hamakhan in British cultural practices. She teaches him, for example, to use a knife and fork and a separate plate. He learns to use them very quickly so that 'the descendant of Pathan kings ate as if he had been carefully brought up as an infant in an English nursery'.⁷⁴ She also teaches him English and to read and write in preparation for his new life. He completes 'a course similar to that of the English public schoolboy' in six months, instead of the usual ten years.⁷⁵ And for love of

⁷⁰ Cross, *Life*, p.173.

⁷¹ Cross, *Life*, p.173.

⁷² Cross, *Life*, p.175.

⁷³ Cross, *Life*, p.95.

⁷⁴ Cross, *Life*, p.301.

⁷⁵ Cross, *Life*, p.316.

Frances, he also adjusts his values and beliefs. The birth of a daughter is a serious disappointment to them. Both had hoped for a son and Frances is distraught that she has failed Hamakhan in this, a sign of her changing cultural values. As a sign of his, Hamakhan does not care about the sex of the child for, 'heretical as it was, he was thinking then of the woman and of nothing else'.⁷⁶ His declaration to her that he would rather have her than a son is heresy, says the text; it is 'contrary to his race instincts, his upbringing, his religion, his very nature,' but 'all his traditions, beliefs, ingrained desires, ambitions, hopes' are centred on his passion for Frances.⁷⁷

Life of My Heart represents the only text in this study in which the protagonists of different races, represented as open to cultural difference through their desire for each other, are able to negotiate successfully the difficulties of living intimately with the Other, even to adopt new beliefs and values learned from the other's culture. It is also the text that shows that, within the relationship, a more equal balance of power between colonised and coloniser, female and male, is possible. But '*amor non vincit omnia*' in this instance. Frances and Hamakhan do not live happily ever after. They die together at the end of the novel, leaving the reader to speculate whether this ending indicates that Cross could not envisage a future for these transgressive lovers. A sequel showing Frances and Hamakhan living in London society as they had planned would have been well worth reading.

⁷⁶ Cross, *Life*, p.220.

⁷⁷ Cross, *Life*, p.312.

Inside the Zenana

In all the homes the purdah is strictly kept, and alas! who can tell what dark deeds are occasionally done in these secluded homes.⁷⁸

Another area of knowledge to which the British wives in particular, as well as the British reader, is introduced in the novels is the life of the zenana and the horror which lies at the heart of unenlightened India. The range of domestic and cultural practices to which the British female protagonist is exposed – polygamy, child-marriage, enforced widowhood, seclusion – were widely discussed in late-19th-century Britain as the targets of reform by missionaries and feminist reformers as mentioned previously. Through the gaze of the British female protagonist who enters the zenana, these practices are revealed in all their ‘primitiveness’ to the reader. What the novels often add to the exposure of Indian domestic practices, however, is an insistence on the resistance of Indian woman to their own emancipation. They are represented as resenting the entrance of the British female protagonist, resisting her efforts at reform of their domestic practices, and occasionally seeking to do her harm to protect their way of life and their home in its traditional form. Thus the British female protagonist finds her life threatened in the hidden space of the Indian home with no prospect of rescue by a chivalrous British male. Indeed, in this inaccessible space, the British wife may find herself under the controlling gaze of the Indian, forced to modify her behaviour in order to negotiate the difficulties placed in her way to her goal, or even to survive. The hidden transcript, ‘[t]he offstage dissent’ of the women of the zenana to ‘the

⁷⁸ *Our Moslem Sisters: A Cry of Need from Lands of Darkness, Interpreted by Those Who Heard It.*, ed. by Annie Van Sommer and Samuel M. Zwemer (New York: Fleming H. Revell Company, 1907), p.374.

official transcript of power relations',⁷⁹ offers the British wife 'ineradicable hostility' but this time without the pretence of an 'apparently frank exterior.'⁸⁰

Nair's essay on the different constructions of the zenana offered by British writers over a period of nearly 130 years underlines my argument that the zenana was viewed both as a site of degradation for Indian women ('dens of iniquity') and as a site of resistance to British modernising reform. Three constructions cover the period in which the novels of interracial marriage were written.⁸¹ The first of these constructions which she calls 'the zenana as symbol of the collective past', was, Nair argues, popular between 1850-1895, and envisioned the zenanas as 'those cavernous depths of "idolatry and superstition" which the blinding light of reason had not yet reached'.⁸² In this zenana the Indian woman lived in polygamous bondage. Overlapping with this construction chronologically is the construction Nair describes as 'the zenana as the symbol of female power', dating its popularity to 1880-1915. Diver, in *The Englishwoman in India*, had argued that Eastern women were far more influential than their Western sisters gave them credit for: 'from the ... hidden corner, and by the natural primal power of her sex, the eastern woman moulds the national character far more effectively than she could hope to do so from the platform or the hustings'.⁸³ It is this construction of the zenana that Diver presents in *Lilamani*, with her representation of the power that the feminine Lilamani wields in contrast to the New Woman, Audrey Hammond. A third construction that is pertinent here was of the zenana as a site of resistance to

⁷⁹ Scott, p.12.

⁸⁰ Bruce, p.49.

⁸¹ The dates in which these constructions were dominant are, of course, not exact. Irene Barnes, whom I have quoted above was talking about the degraded home life of the Indian woman in 1898 while Claude Bray's zenana in *Chattel or Wife?*, written in 1899, has elements of both constructions. The zenana in which Maude Ashley is imprisoned is both a den of iniquity and a site of resistance to the reforms which Maude had hoped to accomplish for Indian women.

⁸² Nair, p.17.

⁸³ Maud Diver, *The Englishwoman in India* (London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1909), pp.100-1.

civilisation, which, Nair argues, was dominant between 1900 and 1940. This construction links to the zenana as site of female power and assigns the responsibility for the failure of female reform movements in India to the Indian women themselves.

Nair suggests that British failure to effect reform of Indian domestic and social practices ‘could at least in part be pinned on the immutable strongholds of Indian society which were impervious to any British effort.’⁸⁴ She quotes the Anglo-Indian ‘authority’, Diver, on the failure of the British to help Indians to progress towards civilization: ‘It is not the man, that reputed tyrant, who most effectually barred the way to progress,’ according to Diver. ‘It is the gentle, invisible woman whose reserve of obstinacy, all the wild horses in the Empire would fail to move.’⁸⁵ Other writers put the blame for the failure of reform on the tyrant man, however; Sybil Smith in *Woman and Evolution* argued that in primitive times when physical force prevailed, woman ‘sank into a condition of complete subservience to man—she became his slave, his absolute possession, as we still see her among savage tribes and *in most Oriental countries*’ (my italics).⁸⁶ In fact, both the male Indian tyrant and female Indian obstinacy feature in the immutable households of these novels where, as the quotations at the beginning of the section suggest, dark deeds could be done in the uncolonised spaces of the Indian home, hidden transcripts performed by the colonised in unpoliced Indian homes where the colonial power structure failed.

⁸⁴ Nair, p.21.

⁸⁵ Quoted in Nair, p.21 The Indian women in the zenanas of the novels of interracial marriage are not in general ‘gentle’. Diver constructed Indian women as Sita types but Penny, Bray, Bruce and other writers saw Indian women as murderous viragos in their resistance to changes in their way of life attempted by the British. But given that they were ‘invisible’ to the British, both constructions of the Indian women can be blamed for the failure of modernising reform. .

⁸⁶ Quoted in Burton., p.74.

Home, as Tim Cresswell defines it, is where ‘a person can withdraw from the hustle of the world outside and have some degree of control over what happens within a limited space. Home is where you can be yourself.’⁸⁷ The home as a personalised space expresses a subject’s personal preferences, their cultural and domestic practices, influenced as these are by environment and climate. The British wife finds herself in an alien environment over which she has little physical control and where she may struggle to keep her racial identity intact. Two novels in particular illustrate this struggle within the Indian home for the dominance of the female coloniser in the face of the resistance of the colonised woman – Penny’s *A Mixed Marriage* and Savi’s *The Daughter-in-Law*.

Lorina Carlyon, the ignorant British wife in *A Mixed Marriage* whose confidence in the correctness of English cultural practices is unquestioning, enters the harem of her husband Mir Yacoob with the avowed intention of reforming it.⁸⁸ She has ‘a mission to overcome prejudices’ in the harem and will not be thwarted⁸⁹ despite the fact that her ‘knowledge of Eastern nations and their ways was absolutely nil’.⁹⁰ She does not understand, for example, that Mir Yacoob’s mother, the Begum, will not accept her as her son’s wife because of her own ‘pride of race.’ Lorina is not a Muslim, she has not been chosen by the Begum to be her son’s wife as custom dictates; she is also a foreigner. Therefore the Begum will not sanction the form of marriage that Mir Yacoob desires, the ‘shahdee’ which would require his mother’s presence and consent, so that Lorina will be accepted by the people. She will agree only to the ‘nikah’ form of marriage which does not

⁸⁷ Cresswell, Tim, *Place: A Short Introduction* (London: Blackwell Publishing, 2004), p.24.

⁸⁸ Penny always refers to the ‘harem’ rather than the ‘zenana’ as would be more appropriate in a novel about India. The word ‘harem’ is of Turkish/Arabic origin and means a ‘forbidden space.’ Perhaps Penny thought the connotations of the word more suggestive than ‘zenana’ which is occurs in Urdu and Hindi and simply means ‘of the women.’

⁸⁹ Penny, p.64.

⁹⁰ Penny, p.84.

require her consent or presence and which can be terminated by either spouse. Although legally married in England, Mir Yacoob and Lorina will not cohabit until the Muslim marriage ceremony has been performed. This in the end works to Lorina's advantage. It also undercuts the transgressive potential of the interracial marriage by ensuring it is not consummated.

The unwelcome foreigner finds herself virtually imprisoned in the harem of the Begum which is a 'rabbit-warren... room after room, close, ill-smelling, unaired, empty, except for cushions, mats...' ⁹¹ The conflict between Lorina and the women in the harem is represented through their different uses of the space of the house. Lorina spends a great deal of time outside in the walled garden of the harem and her windows are kept 'wide open... there was no necessity to close the venetian shutters. [She] loved fresh air and light'. ⁹² In contrast, 'the other inmates of the harem... rigidly closed every shutter' and rarely venture outside. ⁹³ The space of the home is used here as a metaphor, comparing the open, enlightened, straightforward English self and the closed (to the British), tangled Indian self. Through Lorina, then, the coloniser's gaze enters the harem but the text implies that it cannot find a physical vantage point from which to operate, from which to process and fix the colonised identity. Lorina's gaze cannot uncover the secrets of this 'rabbit-warren', cannot make anything of dark rooms which have not been marked by their inhabitants' personalities – the rooms are 'empty, unaired'. In fact, if sight confers power, it is the Indian women who hold it, for Lorina is aware of almost constant surveillance by the servants within the household.

Not only is Lorina denied privacy but she cannot lessen her ignorance of Indian domestic and social practices for she is denied information about the household.

⁹¹ Penny, p.217.

⁹² Penny, p.154.

⁹³ Penny, p.155.

‘As soon as she showed a desire to know anything, the inmates of the harem tried to hide the facts, no matter how simple they were’.⁹⁴ The text, in representing Lorina as under constant surveillance in the shuttered house, places her in an unusual position for a member of the colonising race in that she is not in a position of unchallenged mastery and control in this hidden Indian space. Her gaze can penetrate only where it is allowed to by the Indian inhabitants of the zenana.

Under the gaze of the Indian women in the household and unable to return it, Lorina is not in the position of control which would enable her to effect the emancipation she has married Mir Yacoob to achieve. Her struggle to create a personalised space for herself in which she may feel at home is met with resistance and pushes her towards Indian ways in order to gain her ends. Lorina is given the use of a sitting room, for example, which ‘was large and airy, and of fine proportions, but ... not in the least like an English drawing-room’.⁹⁵ It is filled with ‘a strange collection of rubbish and works of art’.⁹⁶ The Begum has given orders that the furniture is not to be moved. Lorina rearranges it into something more like an English drawing-room, a home-like space for herself, but next day finds everything has been replaced to its original position. She learns from this and other failures to impose control that ‘[t]hey [the Indian inhabitants of the harem] have a trick of coercing one without resorting to physical force, which is clever’.⁹⁷ Eventually, in order to gain some control over her life in the harem, Lorina is forced into behaving in the same devious way as its Indian inmates. She realises that she will have to ‘meet the Begum... with the same system of secrecy as had

⁹⁴ Penny, p.86.

⁹⁵ Penny, p.63.

⁹⁶ Penny, p.63.

⁹⁷ Penny, p.83.

been adopted towards herself'.⁹⁸ In other words, Lorina will have to mimic Indian behaviour in order to resist their 'trick of coercing one',⁹⁹ thus posing a threat to her open and straightforward British identity. Lorina, who continues the coloniser's performance of mastery in the face of constant surveillance and resistance, has been positioned by the text in a social space where official dissent, the hidden transcript of resistance to the coloniser, is openly voiced and she is powerless against it.

The resistance of the women of the zenana culminates in an attempt to murder Lorina. Despite knowing that her life is threatened, however, Lorina refuses to leave the zenana to ensure her safety. This she describes as 'rank cowardice... We are running away just as the battle is won... I hate to show the enemy my back. It is not British.'¹⁰⁰ Her struggle with the women in the zenana, couched in metaphors of war and soldiery, is reminiscent of Lucy Travers's militant stance on her Englishness. These are instances of the way in which the British women in these novels may cross gender lines to take on British attributes usually regarded as masculine, especially in circumstances where no British chivalric hero can ride to their rescue.

Ultimately, however, Lorina must admit defeat and is forced to agree with the Anglo-Indian Collector, Mr Cunliffe, when he suggests that 'reform must come from within, and not from without. At present they don't want the purdah lifted.'¹⁰¹ But Lorina does not regret her time in the harem:

⁹⁸ Penny, p.93.

⁹⁹ Penny, p.83.

¹⁰⁰ Penny, pp.189-190.

¹⁰¹ Penny, p.241 I suspect that, in Lorina Carlyon, Penny was holding up to inspection the British men and women who arrived in India with little knowledge of Eastern ways and pronounced on what was best for Indians. This type of ignorant and temporary visitor to India is satirised by Diver, for example, in *Candles in the Wind*, where there is a character called Garstin MP, presumably modelled after Kipling's Pagett M.P. who needs only 6 months in India to solve Imperial Problems.

I have learnt things which it is absolutely necessary that I should know before I linked my fate with Mir Yacoob's, and I could have learnt them by no other means. Yet I know now that the harem, with all its intrigues, is no place for me.¹⁰²

It is a sentiment similar to that quoted from Claude Bray's *Chattel or Wife?*: one can only know the Indian home and its practices by living in it and experiencing them. Penny, through the plot device of the two suitors, has placed her British female protagonist inside the Indian home but allowed her an escape route. Thus Lorina and the British reader have been able to learn things about the harem and its intrigues: they find out that the blame for failure of British reforms rests on the resistance of the Indian woman.

While *A Mixed Marriage* concentrates on the resistance of the Indian women to the rather vaguely represented reforms that Lorina hopes to bring in, *The Daughter-in-Law* concentrates on representing the primitive domestic and marital practices of the Indians to which the British female protagonist Kathleen Dey is a witness in a construction of the zenana as a symbol of the collective past. Kathleen is not an active reformer like Lorina: condemnation of the practices within the zenana is focused through her outrage and incomprehension as her daydreams of exotic India are replaced by knowledge of the people and practices with 'so much that was vulgar and unclean'.¹⁰³ Kathleen has resisted her husband's wish that she should live in the zenana but visits it regularly for she and her mother-in-law are united by the tyranny of 'the despot who ruled their lives', in a rare instance of gender transcending racial difference in the literature of this period.¹⁰⁴

Unlike Lorina Carlyon and Lucy Travers, the fear of 'going native' does not appear in *The Daughter-in-Law*, where the immutability of the British and Indian

¹⁰² Penny, p.241.

¹⁰³ Savi, p.55.

¹⁰⁴ Savi, p.52.

racial identities as well as the mutual incomprehension of the races is figured through clothing. For example, Kathleen's stockings, darned many times, are a sign of her refusal to adopt Indian practices while the mother-in-law regards Kathleen's stockings as useless in the Indian climate as bare legs and feet are much more comfortable.¹⁰⁵ She is not averse to trying out English clothes, however, despite her doubts about their suitability for the Indian climate. A parcel arrives for the women of the zenana which contains European corsets as well as lace curtains which the Indian women intend to wear as saris. The mother-in-law tries on a corset (upside-down initially) and decides that 'Englishwomen must be crazy when they submit to such means of bringing themselves into shape'.¹⁰⁶ British cultural practices are gently undermined by this act of mimicry on the part of the Indian women. The corset is rejected as too uncomfortable (worn either way up) while the British lace curtain to be worn as a sari is reminiscent of the episode in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* where Marlow sees a piece of white worsted about the neck of an African. Bhabha comments on 'the odd, inappropriate, "colonial" transformation of a textile into an uncertain textual sign' in the essay, 'Signs taken for Wonders'.¹⁰⁷ Mockery and misuse of elements of the British 'uniform' by the Indian woman can be construed too as resistance on their part to the adoption of British practices.¹⁰⁸

Keeping her racial identity intact along with her darned stockings, Kathleen turns her British gaze on the zenana to describe and denounce a number of

¹⁰⁵ Savi, p.90.

¹⁰⁶ Savi, p.121 In this the mother-in-law agrees with Frederick Shore who announced: 'I think the climate of India is quite debilitating enough without our giving it adventitious aid by wearing a dress unsuited to it; and I act on that principle.' (Frederick John Shore Collection (OIOC), /5, 10 July 1828).

¹⁰⁷ Bhabha, p.149.

¹⁰⁸ Another episode slyly points to parallels in the two cultures: to amuse the zenana women, Kathleen tells them the stories of Goldilocks and The Three Bears, Cinderella, etc. The mother-in-law then tells a story which, the text comments with (possibly conscious) irony, is 'a tissue of absurdities.' Savi, p.90.

unenlightened Indian domestic practices. She is faced with polygamy when Hurri Mohun decides that he needs the heir which Kathleen is not providing. To some of the women in his household, in fact, Kathleen is not Hurri Mohun's wife because a Hindu cannot marry a foreigner and this opinion is echoed by the British magistrate. The British do not interfere in Indian religious affairs and thus Kathleen 'is his wife so long as he chooses to recognise the tie. Should he contract a Hindu marriage, she cannot touch him for bigamy, for he is a polygamist.'¹⁰⁹ Not only can the British physically not reach her inside the zenana but British law would not grant her a divorce from Hurri Mohun if he took another wife as Kathleen accepted 'his domiciliary customs' when she married him. Kathleen is represented as having, through her ignorance, placed herself beyond rescue.

Another Indian practice which the British attempted to reform, child-marriage, appears in *The Daughter-in-Law*. Kathleen is summoned to the zenana to see her mother-in-law who is distressed that her niece Sukia is likely to die in childbirth. Sukia is 13 years old.¹¹⁰ 'Kathleen felt sick with pity and indignation. Oh, the barbarism of a race that had no respect for the innocence of childhood! How long would such customs prevail and what was England about?'¹¹¹ The child Sukia does die in childbirth as, being not fully grown, she cannot deliver the baby by herself and is denied medical treatment. The text questions the effectiveness of the British civilising mission which has not intervened to end the practice of child-

¹⁰⁹ Savi, p.140.

¹¹⁰ The Age of Consent Act of 1891 made it illegal to have sexual intercourse with a girl under 12 years old, married or unmarried. Sukia's marriage was therefore, strictly speaking, legal. The Criminal Law Amendment Act was passed in Britain in 1885, only 6 years earlier. This act raised the age of consent for girls from 13 to 16 years. Dagmar Engels writes in her article on the Age of Consent Act of 1891 that the passing of the Age of Consent Act was 'an attempt to display British moral superiority in India.' As to British moral superiority, however, Engels also notes that 'at the heart of the matter was an antagonism between two gender systems, in both of which men held control of the processes of production and reproduction.' (Dagmar Engels, 'The Age of Consent Act of 1891: Colonial Ideology in Bengal', *South Asia Research*, 3 (1983), 107-34, p.107.)

¹¹¹ Savi, p.58.

marriage but at the same time also apports blame to Indian women for not resisting a practice from which they themselves have suffered. Kathleen asks the mother-in-law, 'Why don't you women combine and fight for more freedom and the right to keep your children until they are fully grown and developed? Humanity and common sense would show that it would be better for the generations!'¹¹² Combining and fighting for their own emancipation may be a rather impractical suggestion to make to a woman who lives in a zenana but, through Kathleen's presence in the house of Hurri Mohun and her example, the mother-in-law is represented as beginning to question the seclusion and dependence in which Indian women are forced to live:

we live the life of snails, and you, the life of birds. What intelligence or satisfaction is there in the life of a snail? - forever burdened with the weight of our own helplessness and for ever hiding ourselves from view when the sun shines on all alike! ... We alone are made to live differently, cooped up like sheep in a pen with a shepherd to see we come to no harm, while we increase the generations and please our men! What else is our life? Chi! We are little better than slaves!¹¹³

Her dissatisfaction with her life does not last very long. In the next breath she is reprimanding one of the younger women for expressing a desire for a freer life: 'Young people have to respect the customs of their caste and be discreet in their speech.'¹¹⁴ The text in this way draws attention to the tensions between modernity and tradition in the women's situation in the zenana and the obstacles in the way to reform by the British. Ultimately the mother-in-law settles for tradition: 'We cannot go against generations of custom, and to this life we are inured,' she says.¹¹⁵

¹¹² Savi, p.58.

¹¹³ Savi, p.145.

¹¹⁴ Savi, p.145.

¹¹⁵ Savi, p.144.

The Daughter-in-Law is more explicit in its denunciation of Indian domestic practices than *A Mixed Marriage*. It is also interestingly less confident about the superiority of some British practices: I noted above the observations of the Indian women on the unsuitability of European women's dress for the climate. Nair, in discussing the construction of the zenana as a site of resistance, argues that by simultaneously constructing the zenana as a 'center of female power' as well as a place in need of urgent reform, 'Englishwomen successfully displaced the responsibility of the Raj for its stupendous failures and shifted it to the Indians themselves,' thus preserving intact the myth of the British civilising mission.¹¹⁶ *A Mixed Marriage* certainly effects this displacement of responsibility onto the murderous Indian women of the zenana. Savi is a little more even-handed in her placing of responsibility. As mentioned above, she questions what the British government were about when they allowed the practice of child marriage to continue while also attributing the failure of reforms to the disheartened acquiescence of women to their traditional way of life.

Children of the Mixed Marriage

One of the most powerful reasons against intimate relations with the Indian was the possible birth of a mixed race child which then becomes a focal point of fears of British racial degeneration. The turn of the 20th century saw a rising concern about the quality of the British racial stock, partly prompted by the problems of recruiting men who were fit to fight in the Boer Wars.¹¹⁷ The discourse of eugenics, ideas of racial purity and fears of racial pollution through sexual

¹¹⁶ Nair, p.21.

¹¹⁷ See Chapter 1 for a more detailed discussion of the difficulties of recruiting British troops who were not of 'inferior racial stock.'

intercourse with other races, were widely debated in scientific texts as well as in fiction, and compounded the existing British distaste for the mixed race population they had themselves created. Dr Rentoul, writing in 1906, says of interracial marriage:

The inter-marriage of British with foreigners should not be encouraged. A few of us know the terrible monstrosities produced by the inter-marriage of the white man and black, the white man with the redskin, the white man with the native Hindu, or the white man with the Chinese.¹¹⁸

He does admit however that this has happened rather frequently. He notes that

[t]he last India census shows that there were 87,030 Eurasians in India - a cross between an Englishman and a native woman - a "product of civilization" which does not present any good features.¹¹⁹

The mixed race child is a very powerful symbol of both racial degeneration and racial pollution in the novels of interracial marriage and the British spouse who becomes the parent of such a child has to acknowledge the truth about the in-betweenness of the Eurasian. It is commonly said of them, as by Rentoul, that they inherit the worst of and are disliked by both races. The following passage from Diver's *Candles in the Wind* is a typical description of the Anglo-Indian attitude to Eurasians:

The half-caste out here falls between two stools... He has the misfortune to be neither white nor brown; and he is generally perverse enough to pick the worst qualities of the two races and mix them into a product peculiarly distasteful to both. The Anglo-Indian's contempt of him is a mild affair compared with the scorn of the high-caste native.¹²⁰

The British dislike of the Eurasian derives from the fact that, as Sen writes, they bridge 'that vital social distance between the ruler and the ruled, and eventually

¹¹⁸ Rentoul, pp.4-5.

¹¹⁹ Rentoul, pp.4-5.

¹²⁰ Maud Diver, *Candles in the Wind* (Edinburgh & London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1909), p.37.

threaten[...] the stability of colonial identities'.¹²¹ They were the living evidence that the British had not always kept their distance from the colonised population.

Most of the children born in the novels of interracial marriage do not survive infancy so have no opportunity to display the perverse nature of the Eurasian. There is a suggestion that, as the crossing of two races, they are of inferior racial stock, too frail and sickly to survive. Their English parents also have to acknowledge the fact that neither the colonisers nor the colonised accept the mixed race child and his/her mixed identity. Lucy Travers in *The Englishwoman* 'could not really regret her little son's death... a child cursed with two natures'.¹²² She is glad when he dies shortly after birth that he 'had not lived long enough to regret existence'.¹²³ Similarly, Sarasvati's son in *The Daughter of Brahma* is too frail to survive infancy. His mother welcomes his death: 'He must not suffer — and in this world there is no place for him,' she says.¹²⁴

In Perrin's *Waters of Destruction*, the child born to Stephen and Sunia is healthy but there is a suggestion of the mutant, the monstrosity, about him: 'the first sight of the little black and yellow creature had stabbed [Stephen] with dismay'.¹²⁵ Part of the problem for Stephen is that he has to endure the congratulations of his Indian servants on the birth of a son as they present 'sympathetic salaams and offerings of fruit and flowers' to him as if he were one of themselves.¹²⁶ Not only does the birth of the child consolidate his marriage to Sunia, but it seems also to integrate Stephen more closely into the Indian community, 'bridging that vital social distance.' The child, Maru, drowns as a

¹²¹ Sen, *Woman and Empire*, p.48.

¹²² Askew, p.259.

¹²³ Askew, p.259.

¹²⁴ Wylie, *Daughter*, pp.311-2.

¹²⁵ Perrin, *Waters*, p.158.

¹²⁶ Perrin, *Waters*, p.159.

baby. Again, like the British female protagonists, Stephen greets this news with mingled sensations. He reproaches himself for leaving the child to Sunia to raise, feeling he has avoided his responsibilities to his son. Nevertheless, he feels the child is better dead:

The future for such as Maru must, even under the most favourable circumstances, be ambiguous and unsatisfying. Reared as a native, he would have been tortured by the blunted but conflicting energies of his English blood; brought up as an Englishman, his native tendencies and instincts would have hampered him at every turn.¹²⁷

The idea that the Eurasian child will be unable to reconcile the two sides of his/her identity is a product of the theory of racial naturalism discussed in Chapter 1. This posited that certain races were inherently inferior and unable to change. In the Eurasian the racial characteristics of the English – courage, rationality, honesty – would have been constantly warring with the racial characteristics of the Indian – cowardice, irrationality, deceit – to produce the vacillating and ‘morally weak’ stereotypical Eurasian who cannot be relied on in a crisis.¹²⁸ The inevitable death of a mixed race child to the British protagonist is one of the most powerful lessons they learn about the dangers of intimacy with the Indian.

The Happy Ending: A Study in Possibilities

There is one novel which does posit the possibility of a happy married life for the British protagonist who learns to value the Otherness of his wife. The novel is *Lilamani* and in it Diver offers knowledge of Indian matters and Indians which make possible this fruitful and permanent relationship. I would argue, however, that this

¹²⁷ Perrin, *Waters*, p.187.

¹²⁸ Glenn D’Cruz, *Midnight’s Orphans: Anglo-Indians in Post/colonial Literature* (Bern ; New York: P. Lang, 2006), p.38.

happy ending rests on a number of premises which undermine completely its claim to be a Study in Possibilities.

In the early days of the marriage, Nevil muses that East and West while ‘mighty opposites’ are not irreconcilable.¹²⁹ ‘East and West are not antagonistic, but complementary: heart and head, thought and action, woman and man. Between all these “pairs of opposites” fusion is rare, difficult, yet eminently possible.’¹³⁰ The privileging of the masculine in the pairs of opposites gives an indication of how the East and the West are to be reconciled in Nevil’s opinion - and on whose terms. The reconciliation of the ‘mighty opposites’ is to be done within radical asymmetries of power.

The text makes clear that the merging will indeed be ‘rare, difficult’ for it can be performed only by two extraordinary individuals. At once the possibilities for the reconciling of the ‘mighty opposites’ lessen. ‘[T]he poetic temperament common to both implied a certain imaginative insight and flexibility, favourable to the bridging of gulf.’¹³¹ Nevil has ‘little of the average Englishman beneath his Park Lane surface’.¹³² Nor is Nevil an Anglo-Indian like the other British male protagonists of the novels of interracial marriage with all the ‘knowledge’ of Indian matters and India which is attributed to them. He reveals to Sir Lakshman, Lilamani’s father, that he is ignorant of the difficulties entailed in a mixed marriage and has completely overlooked the ‘most obviously stumbling-block of all’ – the possibility of ‘half-breed’ children born to himself and Lilamani.¹³³

It is important to note, in relation to *Lilamani*, that the novel is as much about contemporary debates on the Woman Question as about the possibility of an East-

¹²⁹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.171.

¹³⁰ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.171.

¹³¹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p. 171.

¹³² Diver, *Lilamani*, p.171.

¹³³ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.117.

West rapprochement. Lilamani is constructed in opposition to other female characters in the novel as ‘the essential woman’ – husband-worshipping, submissive, devoted to her family, she privileges the masculine.¹³⁴ This essential womanliness is indissolubly bound to her Indianness. She declares herself ‘sati’: fearing that, as a widow, she might not have been strong enough to follow her dead husband to the pyre, she has made a test as girl-brides do: she has stirred boiling rice with her bare hand.¹³⁵ Her submissiveness and worship of her husband are represented as making her attractive to men. George Sinclair, Nevil’s brother, remarks of her that she is ‘[a] woman all through as they still make ’em in the East; though we’re losing the art this side, worse luck’.¹³⁶ Lilamani prostrates herself before Nevil in a radically asymmetrical relation of power.

Finally, this reconciliation of ‘mighty opposites’ takes place outside India – the protagonists meet in Europe and settle in England on Nevil’s estate – so that many of the difficulties experienced by mixed couples living in India are avoided. Nevil does not encounter India and its domestic and social practices and he is only once confronted by the real Otherness of Lilamani on a visit to Egypt:

There were moments of unreasoning, yet invincible revulsion, when he could scarcely endure the sight of those other Eastern women who, in a dozen trifling ways, so subtly reminded him of his wife; robbing her, thus, of the unique quality that was for him an essential part of her charm.¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.243.

¹³⁵ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.159..

¹³⁶ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.244 This is the power which Audrey Hammond, the feminist doctor, and Phillippa [sic] Weston lack, the power to exert control over a man through the power of natural, submissive femininity. Their stance on the Woman Question is figured as a ‘perverted spirit of antagonism against all that man stood for in the average woman’s life.’ Phillippa is ‘[a] good shot, a straight rider, and mistress of a clear five thousand a year’ and like Audrey Hammond, an advocate of women’s suffrage. It is, however, a cause that she would give up in a moment in orders if she wishes to become Mrs George Sinclair: ‘the which she did as heartily as any unit of the unenlightened mass.’

¹³⁷ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.225.

Thereafter he restrains her difference. He allows her, however, to keep a few outward signs of her Otherness. She continues to wear Indian dress – which is of significance in terms of her identity as noted above - and cooks Indian food for her husband several times a week. That is, she is allowed to retain some of her exoticism and unique charm in her appearance and her cooking which is trivialised as ‘an Indian lady’s whim.’¹³⁸

Nevil, always the dominant partner, demands that Lilamani learn some of his English ways, much as he likes her husband-worship. Lilamani has to be trained to be Lady Sinclair. She must learn to be the mistress of a large English country house, full of friends and relatives during the shooting season in which she herself can take no part.

Little Lady Sinclair, with never a germ of social or sporting instinct in her composition, must needs adapt herself to a sacred form of ritual that seemed to take the place of religion in the West. ... it was with unfeigned relief that she received the last handshake...she had not produced quite the effect [Nevil] had hoped for...But he had sincerely hoped things would go better next time...¹³⁹

Nevil allows for Lilamani’s difference but it is Lilamani who must learn, adapt and accommodate and the text makes clear that this is not an easy task. Misunderstandings arise between the couple until the final scene when Nevil describes how he sees the son they are expecting: ‘as one who will have the strength of his handicap, as one doubly endowed with the best that two great races can give – the spirituality of the East, the power and virility of the West’.¹⁴⁰ Yet, despite being a mixture of the best of both races (rather than being represented as possessing ‘the worst qualities of the two races’ as Diver above notes is usual with

¹³⁸ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.151.

¹³⁹ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.259.

¹⁴⁰ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.335.

the Eurasian), the child will still suffer from a *handicap*, 'the sigma of mixed blood.'

Ultimately the 'study in possibilities' of reconciling the 'mighty opposites' of East and West, of demonstrating their mutual interdependence, is so hedged around with conditions in the text as to make it virtually meaningless. The relationship is to be one where the privileged terms of the binary opposition West/head/ action/male, totally dominate the East/ heart/thought/female while simultaneously defining each other. The novel avoids coming to grips with the issues of Indo-British relations, placing the burden of acculturation on Lilamani, and failing to live up to its subtitle, 'A Study in Possibilities.'

The End of the Affair

The novels of interracial marriage, apart from *Lilamani* and *Life of my Heart*, finally extricate the British spouse from the ignorantly undertaken mixed marriage, leaving them free to return to Britain to marry the right British suitor. Their narrative function as observer and explorer of the secrets held in the dark heart of India is thus brought to a conclusion. Order is restored, East and West swerve apart again.¹⁴¹

The end of the marriage is often brought about by the violent death of the Indian spouse and it is significant, considering the period in which the novels were written, that the Indian so often dies as a result of his/her subversion. There is a suggestion that the treacherous Indian is getting his/her due punishment.

Mohammed Khan in *Warning* and Ameer Ali in *Brenda's Experiment* both die

¹⁴¹ cf. E. M Forster, *A Passage to India*, ed. by Oliver Stallybrass (London: Penguin, 2000), p.316: '[i]f it's fifty or five hundred years we shall get rid of you... and then... you and I shall be friends.'

violently as a result of their actions against the British, one blown up in an attempt on the British Residency, the other shot during a failed uprising during the 'Mutiny.' The widowed British spouse then marries the right British suitor.

The Indian wife may redeem herself in her last moments, however, by sacrificing her life for the British husband. In the last scenes of *The Native Wife*, the unheroic hero Stubbs stands up to an Indian mob which has been incited to violence by the terrorists operating in Tulsipur. In this crisis, he finds himself without guns and ammunition as these have been stolen by the Indians who have had free access to his house following his marriage to Tara. Stubbs realises belatedly: '[a]ll mischief comes from the infernal native connection'.¹⁴² Tara, however, redeems herself in this crisis. Having been implicated in the plotting against the Europeans, she now feels something of 'that light of devotion that leads a Hindu wife to die upon the same funeral pyre as her husband' and saves Stubbs's life at the sacrifice of her own, an act which acts as affirmation of the wrongness of acting against her British benefactor.¹⁴³ The final words of the novel are 'East and West must part' for, as Tara tells Stubbs on her deathbed, 'It is hard for your people to live with our people.'¹⁴⁴ Stubbs returns to England, symbolically maimed by his intimacy with India by the loss of his right hand. In *Seeta* too, the eponymous Seeta dies saving Cyril during an attack on the British community orchestrated by a ring-leader of the 'Mutiny.' She, unlike Tara, has not been implicated in any subversive activity for she has been a faithful Hindu wife throughout. It is another reconfiguring of Spivak's idea of 'white men saving brown women from brown men'; here 'brown women [are] saving white men

¹⁴² Bruce, p.373.

¹⁴³ Bruce, p.374.

¹⁴⁴ Bruce, p.378.

from brown men'.¹⁴⁵ It is possible to read the women's sacrifice here, I think, as the imagined British reward for their chivalrous treatment of their wives, so much better than they would receive from an Indian spouse. It is the final reassurance that 'white men saving brown women from brown men' is morally valuable in the midst of the anxieties raised by the subversive tendencies of brown men.

Seeta's death leaves Cyril free to marry the right suitor, the English Grace Mostyn, and return to England to take up his place as Lord Hylton of Hylton Hall. He enters the House of Lords where he is 'looked up to as an authority in Indian questions.'¹⁴⁶ Stephen Dare in *The Waters of Destruction* similarly leaves India to take up his position on his country estate and to marry the right suitor, Georgie Dalison, after Sunia is swept away in the flooding of the Waters of Destruction along with the aqueduct which has been Stephen's main responsibility, his house and all his possessions. At the end of the novel, Stephen is left contemplating 'a vast sheet of silent water reflecting the vivid moonlight,' his work and his wife swept away completely.¹⁴⁷

Thus the journey to the heart of India undertaken by the British protagonist ends with order restored on an English country estate and with the racially correct suitor. The journey from distance to intimacy and back to distance, from ignorance to knowledge, ends happily for the British protagonist at least. And it has produced the desired effect however: the British protagonist who entered the mixed marriage through a mixture of ignorance and desire has learned for him/herself the Anglo-Indian 'knowledge' s/he refused before and, in the process, revealed to the British reading public, the hidden spaces of the Indian home, those 'dens of iniquity'

¹⁴⁵ Williams and Chrisman, p. 93. I noted in Chapter 3 that the desire of the British female protagonist to emancipate might be regarded as an instance of 'white women saving brown women from brown men.'

¹⁴⁶ Taylor, *Seeta*, p.439.

¹⁴⁷ Perrin, *Waters*, p.308.

which are, as the review of Bray's *Chattel or Wife?* in *The Tablet* suggested, a 'legitimate field for the imagination.'¹⁴⁸

¹⁴⁸ <http://archive.thetablet.co.uk/article/1st-september-1900/14/chattel-or-wife>

CONCLUSION

Introduction

Throughout my examination of the novels I have alluded to the way in which the novels may be read as offering an exploration of relations between the British and Indians at a political as well as at a personal level during the period of their production. I consider, in this concluding chapter, three questions that my study has raised. First I consider the political connotations of the novels, reading the stereotypical protagonists as representations of Britain and India, the marriage as the union of the two countries under the Raj and events within the marriage as symptomatic of the political situation existing in India at the time of the novels' production.

I next turn to a question related to my argument that the novels of interracial marriage were written to educate as well as to entertain the British reading public. How successful were the novels in forming public opinion about India and Indo-British relations and thus possibly influencing policy-making? The response to this question raises issues of critical anachronism which I debate but cannot pretend to resolve.

Finally, I examine the loss of popular interest in the work of Anglo-Indian writers as well as their neglect by critics, despite the ubiquity of postcolonial studies within the academy. In regard to the decrease in popular interest, one question here relates to my earlier concern with the potential differences in the treatment of India and matters Indian by male and female writers and I investigate whether the minor male writers on empire survived longer than the female. I also return to an issue raised in the Introduction where I noted the lack of critical work on the novels of interracial marriage; now I widen the discussion of critical neglect

to Anglo-Indian fiction in general. I suggest that not only literary critics might profitably investigate this body of literature, but that historical work which uses fiction as source material might also look at Anglo-Indian fiction in examinations of the British in India at the turn of the 20th century. The neglect of this body of fiction has implications for the accuracy of critical judgements on, for example, the involvement of women in the administration of India and in Anglo-Indian discourses, as I demonstrate below.

Marriage as a Metaphor

I have suggested throughout this thesis that the novels of interracial marriage intervene in Indo-British relations at a personal as well as a political level. As Kerr writes:

[i]f all Western writing... about Eastern places and people is understood, and read, at one level as being about the relation between East and West, then every representation has potentially a quasi-allegorical dimension, as a trope in that Western discourse of the East.¹

The interracial courtship and marriage as a metaphor for the political and economic union of Britain and India has a long history: in 1772 Edmund Burke described the increasingly close relationship between Britain and India ‘as poised between courtship and rape’.² Britain, in the shape of the EIC, ‘were guardians to a very handsome and rich lady in Hindostan.... [it] became a suitor, and took the lady into its tender, fond, grasping arms’.³ Britain in this metaphor is the masculine and dominant partner while India is feminised and passive; this

¹ Kerr, p.60. Similarly Darby in *The Fiction of Imperialism* ‘examines the personal as a metaphor for the political in fiction depicting the imperial connection between Britain and India.’ He aims to ‘consider the particular ways in which fiction can advance our understanding of the politics of imperialism’ [p.34].

² Paxton, p.1.

³ Paxton, p.1.

configuration of the protagonists in the union of Britain and India has become the customary metaphor of the relationship. The next section examines the roles and relations of the protagonists of the novels of interracial marriage in the metaphor of the Indo-British marriage.

Political Partners within the Site of Struggle

In *Lilamani*, as noted in the previous chapter, Diver describes the relationship between East and West as a binary opposition: respectively ‘heart and head, thought and action, woman and man’ where the privileged terms (head, action, man) belong to the West.⁴ Britain, represented as masculine and dominant in the relationship between coloniser and colonised, is understood as the director and protector of a feminine and subordinate India. The stereotypical British and Indian characters of the novels of interracial marriage can be read as working not only at a personal level, as embodiments of their racial characteristics, but at a political level too as representations of their respective nations. Literature allows for this kind of reading. As Darby writes:

Fiction focuses on people: the way they behave, the questions of their motivation and the nature of their relationships, both to each other and to society. In so far as the novel offers a broader social or political commentary, it usually does so by working outwards from the lives of the characters.⁵

This slide from the personal to the political can be seen in the novels when Britain or British rule is represented by a British male protagonist. As I show, this representation of the British male protagonist changes over time in response to political changes in Indo-British relations.

⁴ Diver, *Lilamani*, p.171.

⁵ Darby, p.39.

The earliest novel examined is Taylor's *Seeta* which, in the marriage of Cyril to Seeta, demonstrates his belief in the civilising mission which was inspired by the ideals of liberalism then current. The British male protagonist, Cyril, is the model of the sympathetic and benevolent paternalism which Taylor and his contemporaries believed to be the way to govern pre-‘Mutiny’ India. In the character of Seeta, Taylor created a feminised India who, after her ‘rescue’ from widowhood, subordinates herself willingly to chivalrous and protective British rule. Seeta/India does not just subordinate herself, however; she is represented as collaborating with Cyril/Britain in the task of government because she recognises how it benefits India. Seeta as India is also represented as open to the culture of the British, proclaiming it to be worth more than the culture of her own country.⁶ Her education in British culture is undertaken by Cyril and, by the time of her death, she is moving towards Christianity as a religion ‘superior’ to her own Hinduism in accordance with the goals of the civilising mission. The novel constructs Cyril/Britain as teacher and protector of Seeta/India, a parent-child (*ma-bap*) relationship. The love affair of two partners is figured as grounded in mutual respect and admiration for the virtues of the other, albeit always within asymmetries of power.

British male protagonists in the novels written around the turn of the 20th century are less obviously symbols of benevolent, just and rational Britain and British rule. Stephen Dare, engaged in irrigation works in *The Waters of Destruction*, is driven to doubt his own sanity in his isolation, hates India, and does not have the self-control to withstand the desire he feels for the Indian girl, Sunia. David Hurst, in *The Daughter of Brahma*, unable to pass the exams to join

⁶ Cf. Taylor, *Seeta*, p.319.

the ICS, crippled and bitter, is a misfit who rejects the Anglo-Indian community which he feels has rejected him; James Stubbs, a tradesman, isolated from the Anglo-Indian community, is degenerating to the point of 'going native' in *The Native Wife*. These are not 'active, dominant, heroic, rational, self-controlled' colonisers like Brandon although, in the course of various crises, they do exhibit British decisiveness and courage in action.⁷ These British male protagonists, produced between 1905 (Stephen Dare) and 1912 (David Hurst) represent, perhaps, their author's response to changes in political relations in India during these years. Their wives, too, are not idealised Seeta characters who are both pro-British and educable. Sunia, after her marriage to Stephen, proves resistant to his attempts to teach her British ways despite her love for him and pride in her position as his wife. She continues to live in 'Indian' squalor in her own quarters, unable to be the companion Stephen desires. Sarasvati, rescued by David Hurst and taken to England, loves him but cannot learn to assist him in his career as a politician. Tara, the wife of the Indianised Stubbs, who similarly loves her husband and is proud of her status as his wife, nevertheless becomes involved in anti-British activities. Love for and submission to the British husband/Britain remains in these Indian wives/India but they prove not only less tractable than Seeta but also impossible to reform.

The differences of these marriages from the one envisaged by Taylor are, I suggest, rooted in contemporary Indo-British relations. In 1909 the 'Morley-Minto' reforms which aimed to increase the number of Indians in the government of India passed into law as the Indian Council Acts. These reforms, as Misra notes, were not universally popular among the British officials: many disagreed with the

⁷ McLeod, p.45.

‘idea of sharing real power with the Indians...’⁸ Gandhi too had transformed the Indian National Congress in 1920, turning it into what Stein calls ‘a genuine mass political party’, and had announced that Swaraj would be achieved within one year.⁹ I suggest that the crazed, embittered and Indianised British male protagonists of the novels of Perrin, Wylie and Bruce in particular may be read as a comment on the perceived weakening of British control in India at the time.

The ‘active, dominant, heroic, rational, self-controlled’ male protagonist returns in Wynne’s *Warning* in 1923 in the character of the right suitor, Peter Heriot. Heriot ‘writes beautifully and he is a magnificent soldier...’ like Brandon, a man of action as well as an artist.¹⁰ It is, I propose, no coincidence that this type of British male protagonist returns in the novels of interracial marriage at a time of increased nationalist agitation in India, although I am aware, of course, that too much reliance cannot be placed on a single novel. I have noted previously that the Indian male protagonist of *Warning*, Mohammed Khan, from his first appearance at a party in London, is represented as calculating and subversive, unlike other Indian wrong suitors who are able to demonstrate their Anglicisation until they return to India. His representation is reminiscent of that of the villain of *Seeta*, Azrael Pandé, who is a principal instigator of the ‘Mutiny’, while the multi-talented Peter Heriot who commands great loyalty from his Indian troops, is similar to Cyril. Both are represented as the type of active, dominant coloniser who can defend India against the nationalist forces that seek *Swaraj*.

Turning now to the question of how the British female protagonist might represent her nation, I have argued previously that her marriage to the wrong Indian suitor is a device to allow imaginative access to the zenana, to expose its

⁸ Misra, p.107.

⁹ Stein, p.306.

¹⁰ Wynne, p.151.

horrors. The desire to scrutinise the zenana and Indian domestic practices is, in part, responsible for the novels of interracial marriage around the turn of the 20th century that represent British women married to Indian men. In terms of a ‘quasi-allegorical’ political reading of the novels, the British woman does not represent British rule in India. Instead, I read her as a personification of British political anxieties about the vulnerability of their rule to the threat posed by the Indian husband/subversive India. Ann Stoler’s argument that ‘concern over protection of white women intensified during real and perceived crises of control’¹¹ was cited above, but I also argued that, in a twist on the rape script, the British women are often placed in situations in which they cannot be protected by British men.¹² As with the British male protagonist, however, the representation of her vulnerability changes over time responding not only to events in Indo-British relations but also to a shifting discourse of femininity. The New(ish) Woman of some of these novels may be vulnerable to Indian violence but she is capable too of being ‘active... rational, self-controlled’ like the British male protagonists.¹³

Thus, most of the British women in the novels of interracial marriage produced at the turn of the 20th century are able to defend themselves to some extent from the violence of the Indians among whom they live. Wynne’s *Warning*, the latest of the novels, offers the most vulnerable of all the British female protagonists. Totally without agency, Joan Mansfield is raped, intimidated and rescued throughout the novel until united with the hero Heriot at the end. In Cross’s *Life of My Heart*, on the other hand, the New Woman, Frances Wilson, is not represented as vulnerable to a brutal Indian partner and does not require rescue or protection.

¹¹ Stoler, p.58.

¹² See the discussion on Paxton’s rape script and the variation offered in the novels of interracial marriage in Chapter 4.

¹³ For example, Lorina Carlyon in *A Mixed Marriage* and Lucy Travers in *The Englishwoman* as discussed in Chapter 4.

When faced with his murderous rage she confronts him and thus wins his admiration as a member of another martial race. She and Hamakhan learn the practices and values of their respective cultures in a relationship of mutual respect. It is possible to read *Life of My Heart* as proposing another way for the British to behave in relation to the colonised, one which might lead to more equal and harmonious relations. The extremes of vulnerability and heroism represented in these characters suggest, as mentioned above, the anxieties which current events in Indian nationalist politics were raising among the British.

Turning now to the 'site of struggle', I read the home in the novels of interracial marriage as representing India. The metaphorical association between the Anglo-Indian home and India has been noted before in Anglo-Indian writing; Steel, for example, opined that '[a]n Indian household can no more be governed peacefully, without dignity and prestige, than an Indian Empire'.¹⁴ The Indian households in the novels of interracial marriage are not, however, generally 'governed peacefully'.

Taylor's *Seeta* represents the cohabitation of the two protagonists as a more harmonious affair than most of the novels that followed. Following their union, Cyril builds Seeta a cottage to live in which he does not enter out of respect for Hindu fears of pollution. The partners thus do not live together but side by side, each following their own domestic practices while Brandon/British rule works to educate and modernise Seeta/India. She may enter British space, Cyril's bungalow, and marvel at the cultural wonders it contains. This access by Seeta to British space and its wonders increases her desire to assimilate to British culture and religion. Cyril/Britain does not need to penetrate the space of the Indian other

¹⁴ Steel and Gardiner, p.18.

for that space will be transformed by the reform and modernisation of the colonised.

On reading the Indian home of the novels as the site of struggle in Indo-British relations at the turn of the 20th century, however, the impenetrability of that space becomes a constant and striking feature of the novels of interracial marriage. The lack of access to the home becomes a metaphor for the unknowability of India so often commented on by Anglo-Indian writers. The labyrinthine nature of the space in which the Indo-British union takes place is disorientating for the British partner, a maze which s/he cannot negotiate without help from its inhabitants, help which is not often offered. In addition the labyrinth metaphor applies equally to the character of the Indian residents; it is not only a spatial metaphor but a psychological one. To do the work of reform that is needed to modernise India the British partner must negotiate spatial and psychological mazes and attempt to know the unknowable, penetrate the impenetrable. My reading reveals how this seems like an impossible task.

Anxieties of Colonial Rule

Reading the novels in this way highlights the political anxieties and tensions of the British about their rule in India during the period from 1872 (when *Seeta* was published) to 1923 (when *Warning* was published). While the didactic function of the novels endorses the manifest need for a continued British presence, the novels also offer other 'latent' meanings as they reveal the anxieties and fears of the colonisers, represented as centred on the hidden space of the Indian home. Again, as noted above, literature shows its importance as a medium in which, sliding between the personal and the political, it can interrogate the power relations between the British and Indian

protagonists or between Britain and India, revealing anxieties that revolve around the role of the British in India, the threats to British dominance and the permanence of the work of the British in India. These anxieties have been noted before in work on the British in India. I wish to demonstrate here how this neglected body of Anglo-Indian fiction provides a rich archival source that reveals how colonial, racial and gender discourses are both endorsed and challenged.

I start with the anxieties about the role of the British in India which is evident in the novels of interracial marriage over the period from roughly 1870 to 1925. The possibilities of the civilising mission which *Seeta* supports are no longer seen as achievable in the later novels. A number of reasons contributed to this. First, the essentialism which characterises racial theory at the turn of the 20th century is problematic in terms of the goal of the civilising mission. The racial naturalism which constructed Indians as fixed in their racial inferiority had prevailed over the racial historicism which proposed that they could progress towards civilisation with British assistance.¹⁵ The civilising mission depends on the theory of racial historicism; racial naturalism undermines its goal of achieving the modernisation of the colonised. The confidence in the eventual success of the mission which *Seeta* demonstrates had turned into the heavy burden on the white man (and woman) by the end of the 19th century as attempts at reform and modernisation were met with ‘sloth and heathen Folly’ which brought all ‘British hopes to nought’.¹⁶ The return of the native in the novels of interracial marriage after his initial Anglicisation and his turn to anti-British activities speaks to the failure of the civilising mission represented in the texts as do the

¹⁵ See the section on 19th century racial theory in the Introduction where I define the terms ‘racial naturalism’ and ‘racial historicism’.

¹⁶ Kipling, *The Works of Rudyard Kipling*, pp.334-5 The quotation is from the poem ‘The White Man’s Burden’.

unreformable Indian women in the zenana who prefer their traditional domestic practices.

Opinion in the novels is divided over whether this was a failure on the part of the British government or successful resistance on the part of the Indian population. The reforming zeal of the ignorant British female protagonist might be read as sending her/Britain not so much on a civilising mission as on a fool's mission to an India which is unknowable and decidedly resistant to reform of its cultural practices. Wherever blame is placed, however, the failure of or resistance to modernising reforms of Indian social and domestic practices may be used as an argument supporting continued British rule in India. The link between the treatment of women has been mentioned previously: as Crane and Mohanram explain '[t]he misogyny of Indian men... was perceived as evidence of their inability to embrace democracy'.¹⁷ Until such time as reform was achieved, British rule was necessary.

Moving on to threats to British dominance of various kinds, this had always been a focus of anxiety. I discussed British anxieties about dominance in Chapter 4 at some length and touched on it again in my discussion of the allegorical roles of the British and Indian above. This insecurity is clearly present in the novels of interracial marriage where the British protagonist is female for, in a patriarchal society, she/Britain becomes subordinate and vulnerable to her husband/India. The anxiety about British dominance was grounded in material conditions as well as psychological ones. The increasingly violent agitation against British rule in the early decades of the 20th century amplified British anxieties about their dominant political and military position: the British in India numbered in the thousands around the turn of the 20th

¹⁷ Crane and Mohanram, p.47.

century while the Indian population was 255 million according to the census of 1881. I have quoted the opinion expressed by Fielding-Hall in 1913 that the British could not hold India by force alone. The British had held India through the consent of the Indians but this situation was changing. The number of subversive Indians in the novels of interracial marriage written around the turn of the 20th century attest to this growing recognition.

The final anxieties centre on the collapse of the marriage and the return of the British protagonist in England, presaging the departure of the British in 1947. In this separation I read Anglo-Indian endorsement for the policy of racial segregation. There is another feature of the end of the marriage which is striking. The British leave India with much learned about the need for keeping their distance but with none of their goals achieved. Taylor in 1872 was optimistic about Britain's political and economic achievements in India and Cyril leaves a legacy of good colonial government. He is in a minority of one, however. None of the other British protagonists achieve anything in India. Stephen Dare in Perrin's *Waters of Destruction* fares worst of all: he loses aqueduct, wife and baby when all are swept away in the waters of destruction. Perrin's story is reminiscent of Kipling's 'The Bridge Builders' although there the bridge does hold. Kipling's story has been read as conveying doubt about the lasting impact of the British on India. As the Elephant God says in the debate of the Hindu gods over the fate of the bridge: 'It is but the shifting of a little dirt. Let the dirt dig in the dirt if it pleases the dirt.'¹⁸ In the Elephant God's estimation the impact of the British on India technologically is unimportant and will disappear. The novels also suggest that the impact of Britain on the cultural practices of the Indians has been very

¹⁸ 'The Bridge Builders', in *The Man Who Would Be King*, by Rudyard Kipling, ed. by Jan Montefiore (London: Penguin Books, 2011), p.262.

slight. The failure to access the heart of India, the refusal of the Indian women to allow even their furniture to be rearranged, let alone their domestic traditions, points to an anxiety on the part of the British about what they might really accomplish, if anything, in India and what their legacy might be.

The novels of interracial marriage, thus, prove their value as a source of statements about colonial rule and relations. They provide insights into some of the tensions and anxieties that existed within colonial discourse. They proclaim British racial superiority, they ‘prove’ that a continued British presence is needed, that the separation of the races is necessary (and, sometimes, as with Cross’s *Life of my Heart*, they disprove it). Simultaneously, however, they fail to control the anxieties which result from being numerically overwhelmed and physically vulnerable, of being restricted in what they may know by the colonised, of being forced into public performances by the colonised, of being forced, perhaps, to become a little Indian in order to survive. These anxieties slide out from under the rock of proclaimed British superiority and destabilise its foundations.

Critical Challenges

I now turn to the second issue raised in the introduction to this concluding chapter which relates the reading of the texts to the didactic purposes of their authoritative Anglo-Indian authors and thus to their potential influence on public opinion and on policy-making. The discussion of this issue raises questions of critical anachronism inherent in the historical materialist approach I have adopted. I hold to the belief that literature, as Brannigan puts it, is an ‘active agent of a particular

historical moment... the object of study ... literature in history'.¹⁹ I would add that it is an active agent of a particular *geographical space* too. This belief was problematised in the course of writing this thesis, however. The historical materialist approach tries to demonstrate how texts are shaped by, contribute to and, perhaps, diverge from dominant contemporary discourses. In the case of the novels of interracial marriage, I was particularly interested in discourses of colonialism, race and gender; the intersection of these discourses in the novels has been a central concern of this thesis.

One challenge to the historical materialist objective of situating the novels in their cultural context is that I am, of course, a member of a very different interpretive community from the original, early 20th-century readers. Writing at the beginning of the 21st century, I know that the British left India in 1947 and that the empire on which the sun never set had all but disappeared a mere 20 years after that. Despite my awareness of the dangers of hindsight, this has inevitably influenced my understanding of, for example, the anxieties of colonial rule which I have identified. Again, positioned in the early 21st century, I am aware of how the Western theories of race and of racial degeneration as well as the eugenics movement played out in Nazi Germany from 1939. Again, with that knowledge, it is, for example, difficult to read of the welcomed deaths of the frail and sickly children born of the interracial marriage with critical detachment.

Another problem is that I am aware that the use of colonial discourse theory has focused my attention on certain aspects of the texts which may not have had the same hold on the attention of the early 20th century reader. Since Said published *Orientalism* in 1978, much has been written by academics of different disciplines

¹⁹ Brannigan, pp.3-4.

on the colonial, racial and gender discourses dominant in the period of British rule in India. Colonial discourse theory directs attention, among other concerns, to the construction of racial identities in the coloniser and the colonised, the possibilities of resistance by the colonised to the political, cultural or social dominance of the coloniser, and the operations of cultural difference. I have taken the work of post-Saidian critics and historians who have written about these discourses and analysed the novels according to their endorsement of or challenge to the academically produced discourses of colonialism. Colonial discourse theory, however, is a late 20th century approach to reading texts of the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

This problem of critical anachronism came into sharper focus when I attempted to address a question that I felt needed to be asked as a corollary to the argument that the novels had a didactic purpose: what cultural work might they have performed in shaping opinion, opening up debate, directing action, on Indo-British relations, British imperial rule or on questions of race, for the metropolitan reading public?

That the novels had the capability to shape opinion on matters Indian and colonial is demonstrated by their popularity in the early 20th century. As noted above, *Anna Lombard* was the bestselling novel of 1901, for example, and Perrin on occasion outsold Arnold Bennett.²⁰ In addition to this, the large number of Anglo-Indian writers (and non-Anglo-Indian writers) producing fiction about India implies a British reading public avid for stories about Indian and Anglo-Indian

²⁰ Alice Perrin, *East of Suez*, ed. by Melissa Edmundson (Brighton: Victorian Secrets, 2011), p.9. Melissa Makala Edmundson in her Introduction to Perrin's collection of short stories, *East of Suez*, writes that Perrin was offered £150 for her novel *A Free Solitude* by Chatto and Windus in 1907. Bennett calculated that this indicated that the publishers believed they could sell the 7,500 copies of the book required to recoup their money while the price offered to Bennett for *The Ghost* showed that the publishers expected to sell far fewer copies. In fact, *A Free Solitude* sold more than twice as many copies as *The Ghost*.

life. And, if Hipsky is correct in his assessment, it was a market which included readers of both sexes. Hipsky argues that ‘the “romance” form inherited by the women romancers of 1885-1925 cannot be identified as a distinct, ideologically “feminized rhetoric”’.²¹

The challenge, it seems, is in assessing how these popular novels shaped the opinions of the early 20th century reader. Allen Greenberger in *The British Image of India* quotes Edmund Candler (1874–1926) who lived and worked in India and wrote fiction about the country. Candler, in his autobiography, recounted that

before he went out to India as a teacher, he read all about that country from the viewpoint of authors like Kipling. With this background, he believed not only that he understood the country, but also that he would find there exactly what had been described in the stories.²²

More startling perhaps, is Greenberger’s account of an elderly Englishwoman living in India after Independence who told a visitor ‘that if he really wanted to understand India he should read the works of Maud Diver’.²³ Greenberger writes ‘there can be little doubt that the images that came to England through fiction had their effect’ and quotes Edward Thompson who credits the ‘mistreatment of Indians’ in the fiction of Kipling, Diver and Dell as ‘one of the major reasons for the lack of understanding between the British and Indians which led to political conflicts’.²⁴ The effect of Anglo-Indian fiction was evidently not always positive.

Clearly the Anglo-Indian authors were capable of forming understandings of India in their contemporaries as well as creating misunderstandings in Indo-British relations. The remarks of Edward Thompson suggests that he found Diver’s ‘tone

²¹ Hipsky, ll.198–199.

²² Allen J. Greenberger, *The British Image of India: A Study in the Literature of Imperialism 1880-1960* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p.2.

²³ Greenberger, p.3 Unfortunately Greenberger does not give a reference for this anecdote.

²⁴ Greenberger, p.3 Thompson’s opinion is expressed in his book, *The Other Side of the Medal*, published in 1925.

of pride in the British as a master-race' as strident as Parry did while the old lady in post-Independence India possibly shared Diver's pride.²⁵ A salutary lesson in the difficulties of assessing the contemporary cultural work done by these novels is furnished by the responses of reviewers to Cross's *Anna Lombard* when it was published in 1901. This shows clearly the danger to the 21st-century critic of assuming that their own focus on racial and colonial issues was shared by contemporary readers. I have discussed the colonial and racial discourses of the novel and examined how Cross, as she does also in *Life of My Heart*, sometimes challenges these. Her hero Gerald Ethridge, posted to a lonely station in Burma, is expected by the other British officials to take a temporary Burmese wife as the best way 'to kill the oppressive silence and keep a rational head on one's shoulders'.²⁶ Gerald is not tempted, remaining faithful to Anna; in fact, he is disapproving of his colleague Knight who has a Burmese wife and three children to whom he acknowledges no responsibility. To him they are only 'amusement' and he will return his wife to her parents when he is posted elsewhere'.²⁷ Returning to India and Anna, Gerald discovers that she has married her Indian servant and loves him in addition to himself. Contemporary reviewers, as Cunningham observes, placed 'much less emphasis on the novel's treatment of race (and indeed several reviewers entirely ignored the fact that Anna's marriage is to an Indian)'.²⁸ Nor is the disposable Burmese family mentioned in reviews. What the reviewers concentrated on was Cross's reversal of the gender roles and the representation of transgressive sexual conduct on Anna's part. It was described as 'quite gratuitously offensive' by the *Daily News*, and a book 'which no man

²⁵ Parry, p. 78.

²⁶ Cross, *Lombard*, p.30.

²⁷ Cross, *Lombard*, p.31.

²⁸ Cross, *Lombard*, p. xvii.

should read immediately before dinner unless he wants to lose his appetite' by the *New York Times*.²⁹ Similarly, a review in the *Guardian* in 1905 of Perrin's *The Waters of Destruction* does not even mention the central trope of the interracial marriage, saying only that

Mrs. Perrin has achieved a remarkable success in this novel of Anglo-India. . . the local colour and surroundings are admirably rendered; the characters, English and native, are described with humour and sympathy, and without exaggeration; while the whole is grouped into a homogeneous, truthful picture.

Does one take the absence of comment on racial issues in contemporary reviews to imply that the 'knowledge' of the racial inferiority of the Indian, for example, was so firmly rooted in British thinking that the novels of interracial marriage had nothing to offer their readers in this respect and that, therefore, it did not need to be mentioned in discussions of them? Or does it, on the contrary, imply that the metropolitan reading public did not have strong views on the racial inferiority of the Indian, despite the didactic efforts of the Anglo-Indian authors and that they were more interested, like Rosabel, in the escapist fantasy of exotic India? This implies that in focusing on the issues of race in the novels of interracial marriage I fail to situate the novels in some respects in their contemporary cultural context.

I agree with Darby, however, when he writes 'it is probable that we will never be able to assess in any hard-edged way the extent to which imperial writers shaped opinion and thereby influenced action' ... [although] 'it can scarcely be doubted that in some measure they did'.³⁰ The attempt to make this assessment, however, has forced me to acknowledge the challenge of steering a path between a critical approach informed by recent postcolonial theory and a historical

²⁹ Quoted in the introduction to Cross, *Lombard*, p.xvi.

³⁰ Darby, p.25.

materialist framework which asks the critic to understand a text as the product of a particular time and place.

Marginalisation of the Anglo-Indian Authors.

In this section of the Conclusion, I address briefly the marginalisation of the novels of interracial marriage and their authors. The novels of the Anglo-Indians examined in my thesis disappear from critical studies in the course of the 20th century as interest in the empire dwindled along with the empire itself. Today only Kipling is still read. Surprisingly to my mind, however, the Anglo-Indians writers have not reappeared to any great extent in the work of contemporary postcolonial critics. In this section I question whether there may have been a gendered aspect to the decrease in the popularity of the Anglo-Indian novels (were female authors marginalised more readily than male authors?) and discuss whether the lack of literary merit in the novels also contributed to their neglect. I go on to discuss the negative consequences this marginalisation may have on critical work on Anglo-Indian fiction. The section, then, argues for greater critical attention to be given to this body of literature.

The marginalisation of Anglo-Indian authors for reasons of lack of literary merit started early. In 1908 Edward Farley Oaten published *A Sketch of Anglo-Indian Literature* and, in his introduction, stated the terms on which he judged the literary worth of this literature. The expression of the spirit of the Anglo-Indian community as well as that of India should be ‘the predominant aim and chief *raison d’être* of [Anglo-Indian] literature’ he wrote.³¹ It should focus on ‘the

³¹ Edward Farley Oaten, *A Sketch of Anglo-Indian Literature* (London: Kegan Paul, Trench Trubner & Co., 1908), p.5.

beauty, the mystery, and the tragedy of life in India'³² and when it failed to do so, as it did often in Oaten's opinion, it became mediocre. Acknowledging that 'the part which women played in the fictional literature of India was very remarkable, Oaten gave brief attention to only Steel, Croker and Mrs Everard Cotes before devoting a chapter to Rudyard Kipling, whom he regarded as the principal documenter of Anglo-Indian life: in his writing 'is to be found depicted with wonderful vividness almost all the detail of everyday Anglo-Indian life, its routine, its comedy, its tragedy, its marvels and its heroics'.³³ No mention is made of Penny, Perrin, Cross or the other female authors mentioned in this thesis. This critical marginalisation of the female Anglo-Indian author seems not to be motivated by their gender, however: Bray and Bruce are also absent from Oaten's discussion of late-19th-century Anglo-Indian fiction.

In Bhupal Singh's 1934 work on Anglo-Indian fiction the female authors examined in this thesis are discussed but generally in negative terms: 'Most of the Anglo-Indian novels are written by women. Most of them show little sense of style, are poor in characterization and plot construction, and occasionally suffer from propagandist tendency.'³⁴ Singh gives space to all the female writers discussed here with the exception of Wylie.³⁵ Bray and Greenhow are not mentioned which implies that, despite the deficiencies of the Anglo-Indian novels written by women, some male writers produced even poorer efforts in Singh's opinion.

By 1970 Anglo-Indian authors (with the exception of Kipling) were out of print and forgotten. Writing of the 'critical dismissal of Alice Perrin' which happened

³² Oaten, p.9.

³³ Oaten, p.179.

³⁴ Bhupal Singh, *A Survey of Anglo-Indian Fiction* (London: Curzon Press, 1975), p.4.

³⁵ *The Englishwoman* (wrongly called *The Englishman*) is mentioned by Singh so Wylie's exclusion is not due to the fact that Singh is excluding non-Anglo-Indians from his Survey. [p.156]

together with that of other Anglo-Indian writers, Edmundson notes that the first two editions of *The Concise Cambridge History of English Literature* (1907 and 1941) mentioned Perrin and other Anglo-Indian women writers, but in the third edition of 1970 there is no reference to them. The introduction to the section on Anglo-Indian literature discusses writing produced by 'a small body of British administrators, soldiers and missionaries' and gives most attention to Kipling.³⁶ The Anglo-Indian authors of both sexes were thus dismissed along with the empire they had served or married as popular interest in India waned.

An intriguing question is *why* the Anglo-Indians authors examined here have by and large disappeared from critical view while Kipling survives as the chronicler of Anglo-India.³⁷ Oaten's analysis offers a number of reasons. First, he considers most Anglo-Indian fiction to be mediocre in literary terms, an opinion that he shares with Singh writing 26 years later. There is a tendency, as Ashley notes, to equate popular fiction with second-rate fiction, 'a kind of cultural detritus, left over when literature of permanent value has been identified'.³⁸ He adds that popular fiction is dismissed as 'harmless entertainment... More likely it will be ignored'.³⁹ My own view is that this 'harmless entertainment', highly responsive to the temporal and geographic conditions of its production, is an unrecognised source of contemporary discursive formations. As George Dangerfield in *The Strange Death of Liberal England* argues:

Important writing, strange to say, rarely gives the exact flavour of its period... Very minor literature, on the other hand, is the Baedeker of the soul, and will guide you through the curious relics, the tumbledown buildings, the flimsy palaces, the false pagodas, the distorted and fantastical and faery vistas

³⁶ Perrin, *East of Suez*, p.18.

³⁷ I have not forgotten E. M. Forster but as he wrote only one novel about India (albeit a great one) I do not regard him as a novelist of the Raj.

³⁸ Ashley, p.3.

³⁹ Ashley, p.3.

which have cluttered the imagination of mankind at this or that brief period of its history.⁴⁰

Oaten's second point offers another reason for the dismissal of the female Anglo-Indian, in particular, as a chronicler of empire. Writing of the civilising mission in India, Oaten describes Anglo-Indian literature as the 'record of the thoughts, emotions, joys and sorrows of those who are guiding one-fifth of the human race.'⁴¹ This implies that Oaten regards Anglo-Indian literature as the work of 'British administrators, soldiers and missionaries' mentioned in the 1970 edition of *The Concise Cambridge History*: men who are engaged in the administration of India and who therefore 'know' India, who may be authoritative on the subject of India in a way that Oaten suggests women cannot.

In the work of more recent critics of Anglo-Indian literature this denigration of the female Anglo-Indian authors on the grounds of their lack of engagement with the work of Empire persists.⁴² I mentioned Parry's categorisation of the work of Diver, Penny, Wylie, Perrin, Steel and Croker, the Lady Romancers as she called them, as 'novelettes' and as 'light fiction'. The light fiction of these women could offer, in Parry's estimation, only 'a meretricious account of cultures they could not comprehend'.⁴³ Parry appears to base her valuation of the work of the Lady Romancers on their experience of India: she singles out Steel from the other Ladies as a better novelist for her 'experience of India was less vicarious.'⁴⁴ If lived experience of India is a criterion for better writing on India, then many of the Lady Romancers had more experience than Kipling (or Steel). Famously, Kipling

⁴⁰ George Dangerfield, *The Strange Death of Liberal England, 1910-1914* (New Brunswick, N.J: Transaction Publishers, 2011), p.433.

⁴¹ Oaten, p.197.

⁴² It should be noted however that critical work on Bray, Greenhow and Bruce seems to be non-existent.

⁴³ Parry, p.102.

⁴⁴ Parry, p.104.

left India at 5 years old and did not return for 11 years. He remained 7 years in India working on *The Civil and Military Gazette* before returning to England in 1889 at the age of 24 years. Perrin, on the other hand, also born in India and partly brought up there, spent 16 years there as an adult before returning to England. Married to an engineer, she claimed in an interview with the *Lady's Pictorial*, 'I was a young bride in the jungle, the only English woman in the station... Here I studied the natives and their customs.'⁴⁵ Her obituary in *The Times* on 15th February 1934 claimed

that she delighted her countrymen and women with her novels of Indian and British-Indian life, and she instructed them also. For she was steeped in the political and social history of the English in India, and to that foundation she added an intimate knowledge of their daily life, their troubles and their joys. Her books are in fact a valuable contribution to an understanding of Indian history... [one] can learn more from her novels than from most political and polemical writings.⁴⁶

Diver and Cross were also born in India and they, Savi, Bray, Taylor, Bruce and Penny all spent many years as adults working in military or administrative capacities or 'married to the empire'. Based on 'experience', Kipling's Anglo-Indian comprehension of 'the intricacies of Indian thought and society' was not necessarily any more profound than theirs. The comprehension of Indian thought and society exhibited by the novelists discussed here in fact complements Kipling's. Kipling, the journalist, obviously had a different experience of India and Indians from Bruce and Taylor, the administrators, from Bray, the soldier, and Greenhow, the army doctor. Certainly Kipling's experience of India was very different from that of the memsahibs, Diver, Perrin, Penny, Cross and Savi.

I turn now, briefly, to a discussion of the consequences of ignoring this large body of literature when writing about the empire. Doing so may lead to

⁴⁵ Published in the *Liverpool Echo*, Saturday 02 May 1914.

⁴⁶ Cited in Perrin, *East of Suez*, p.16.

questionable conclusions because of their basis in incomplete evidence. I have mentioned the gender-blindness of Young's argument in *Colonial Desire*, in which he claims that 'many colonial novels in English betray themselves as driven by desire for the cultural other; the novels and travel-writings of Burton, Haggard, Stevenson, Kipling, Allen or Buchan are all concerned with forms of cross-cultural contact, interaction, an active desire, frequently sexual, for the other'.⁴⁷ It is an argument, I suggested, which needs to be qualified by the inclusion of the novels of Perrin, Penny, Cross, Diver, Steel, Savi or Croker and their very different desires for cross-cultural contact. Again, Darby in *The Fiction of Imperialism* argues that, in literature about the empire, what is 'immediately striking is the current of masculinity that swirls around the treatment of metropolitan intervention in Asia and Africa'.⁴⁸ Building on this statement, he argues that 'women are either absent, marginalized or neutered' in imperial romances.⁴⁹ I have demonstrated in this thesis that women are not absent; women wrote about their own experience of India in novels which feature British female protagonists. Fictional women were neither marginalised nor neutered in the novels of interracial marriage. Following this, in a chapter on the Indo-British relationship in which he makes use of interracial marriage as a symbol of political union, Darby claims that, at the turn of the 20th century, 'very occasionally [British] novelists openly ventured across the divide and speculated on the problems and possibilities of interracial union'.⁵⁰ Again, I have demonstrated that the venture across the divide was far from occasional. This 'studied refusal to personalize relationships across the colour line' before the First World War, Darby argues, was necessary, for 'to open the door to

⁴⁷ Young, *Colonial Desire*, p.3.

⁴⁸ Darby, p.67.

⁴⁹ Darby, p.70.

⁵⁰ Darby, p.92.

any such possibility threatened to bring down the house of imperialism'.⁵¹ The door was opened, in fact, and yet the house of imperialism remained standing.

These are just two examples of the consequences of excluding the work of Anglo-Indian authors, male and female, from analyses of fiction on the empire in India. Ignorance or dismissal of this body of literature may lead to partial, if not entirely false, conclusions.

Last Words

The Anglo-Indian female novelists, the memsahibs, tend to focus on the domestic. They represent, from their own knowledge, the lives of Anglo-Indians as they ran their households 'with dignity and prestige' under the surveillance of the colonised population, participated with their husbands in the work of administration and coped, generally, with being 'married to the empire'. This thesis offers some answers to the 'series of questions' on the Anglo-Indian novelist, particularly the female novelists, posed by Crane and Mohanram at the beginning of their book *Imperialism as Diaspora*: 'how does living elsewhere, making a home overseas, being powerful and wealthy in another country, belong to the foreign minority, but wielding incredible power and authority over the native majority... change you as well as impact on your writing'.⁵²

As well as offering a historical view of the Anglo-Indian community, the novelists of both sexes offer a view on Anglo-Indian attitudes through their writing. I have argued that the novelists did not know the secret heart of India and that their accounts of life in the zenana were highly imaginative; that they were written with the didactic, even perhaps a propagandist, purpose to endorse the

⁵¹ Darby, p.100.

⁵² Crane and Mohanram, p.1.

continued need for British rule and for the British administration of which they themselves were a part. Perhaps, as Parry says, they did not comprehend Indian culture, but they knew *Anglo-Indian* culture and opinion, they were embedded in colonial discourses of race and gender and offer cultural interventions in the tensions and conflicts of those discourses from the perspective of both genders. Placing the novels of Cross against those of Diver, or those of Bray against Taylor, for example, demonstrates the lack of a fixed and unified position for the Anglo-Indian authors writing within discourses of colonialism, race and gender.

As an archive of Anglo-Indian life and thought at the turn of the 20th century the works I have discussed here are an invaluable resource. My thesis has demonstrated the importance of this neglected body of work and I have gestured very briefly towards the consequences for literary critical and historical work on the empire if this body of work is ignored. I hope that more positive critical and historical attention will be directed to it in the future.

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