CONCLUSION
One of the inevitable limitations of Raj fiction, attempting a portrayal of the human drama against the background of a turbulent but specific historical period, is that the closure of the narrative has to parallel that of the period. The Raj Quartet chooses the five years immediately preceding Indian independence as its political backdrop; as a result, the event of India's liberation from British rule brings to an end the various story-lines of the text. Ahmed's killing in the communal violence and Kumar's deliberate choice to hide behind wilful anonymity are powerful symbols that not only close A Division but also give effective meaning to the questions of communal and racial relationships. What the climax only hints at but chooses not to follow up is the fortunes of the British characters, especially the Laytons, who reflect through the network of their familial relationships the structure of the British society in India. To follow such eventualities is obviously beyond the brief of the novel. The Quartet deals with the period of the Raj. The end of the Raj, therefore, signals the cessation of the temporal and spatial concerns of the text. By withdrawing from India the Laytons, for example, are transported into another country and another time. As Swinden points out, information about them does not appear in The Quartet in a brief concluding chapter, as it would in a Victorian or Edwardian novel, tying up all the loose ends of the story; it appears, indeed, briefly and tantalisingly in the odd corners and antechambers of another novel.¹
Staying On is the novel that incorporates the post-Quartet histories of the Laytons through an exchange of correspondence between Sarah and Lucy. Lucy and her husband Tusker Smalley, who are almost walk-on characters in The Quartet, assume centerstage in Staying On. The only other character who is held over from The Quartet is Minnie. Now in her forties, Minnie is the ayah who saves Susan's baby from a fiery death in The Scorpion. It is on account of these textual linkings that Yasmine Gooneratne considers Staying On to be the real conclusion of The Quartet. Similarly, since the novel takes up the theme of India after its independence, Spurling sums it up as a postscript to The Quartet. More than either a finale or a pendant, Staying On may appropriately be regarded as a coda. In view of the musical framework of The Quartet coda seems to be doubly appropriate. In music coda refers to an autonomous but elaborate passage introduced after the natural conclusion of a movement; it produces through its rhythmic composition an effect similar to that of the original movement and thereby functions as an emphaser of the latter. In a similar manner, Staying On begins where A Division terminates. In following the lives of the Smalleys—an English couple who have elected to stay on in India after its independence—the novel highlights through its own independent thematic engagements the central concerns of The Quartet and proves it to be a series of novels about more than the Raj.

The events of Staying On, comprising the last three months of the Smalleys' life, take place in 1972, twenty-five
years after Indian independence. Tusker Smalley, who together with his wife Lucy Smalley appears briefly in The Towers, has decided to stay on in India after its independence. When Tusker retires from military service at the age of sixty, they permanently settle down in Pankot, and start living in the annexe of the Smith's hotel known as the Lodge. The hotel, old and rickety, is owned by a rapacious and obese woman Mrs Lila Bhoolabhoy and managed by her third husband Mr Francis Bhoolabhoy. Tusker and Francis are great friends and frequently meet on Monday evenings over a bottle of liquor; but with his wife, however, Tusker has hardly any good rapport. He enters quite often into rows with her over trivial matters and hurl derisive expletives and slang at her. The unreasonable rage brings about Lucy's first-ever outburst of outrage against Tusker leading her to demand of him a clear statement of her financial position were she to survive him, for she has discovered of late that he consciously adopts a flippant attitude to monetary matters. It has been his desire never to go back to his home country against her wishes. Lucy harbours the feeling that they should have gone home after independence and that things would have been different in England from what they are in India. In old age her greatest fear is loneliness in a foreign country in case Tusker predeceases her.

In the evening Lucy receives a clear statement that she has asked for from Tusker. She perceives that the letter which
itemizes her financial position is indeed "the only love letter she had had in all the years she had lived"(233). She realizes that she is loved despite the frequent breakdown of communication with him. In the meanwhile Mrs Bhoolabhoy, who wants to be a part of the business conglomerate of the area, forces her husband into serving a notice on the couple asking them to quit the Lodge in two-months' time so that she could pull down the hotel and construct a new one. To Tusker, who has by his own admission invested himself in India, the notice appears to be an announcement of not being wanted any more. The shock is so intense that it brings about a heart attack that kills him instantly. His death leaves Lucy alone, as she fears, "amid the alien corn"(255).

Staying On has clearly two story-lines; one concerning Tusker and Lucy and the other Mrs and Mr Bhoolabhoy. The distinctive feature of the overall design is that the second story-line is a mirror image of the first. In fact, it is quite possible to see the deep structure of the novel consisting of a correlation of two binary categories. Tusker's decision to stay on in India is the outcome of his lack of ambition. Since his only ambition is "to survive as comfortably as possible"(88), he calculates that his retirement benefits would stretch further in India where he has spent the best part of his working life than they would in England. Tusker's non-ambition is binarily opposed to the ambition of Lucy; this opposition provides the cause of much of their mutual antagonism. In England Lucy has a deprived life.
By marrying Tusker and sailing to the fantastic Orient, she hopes to lead a life that befits her dreams. In India, however, she finds her life unchanged; the British Raj defining itself strictly in accordance with class stratification. For her the English social scene that has relegated her to a marginal place is repeated all over again in the absolute class division in India. Although she feels fettered by the system, she ratifies the very basis of the system because she hopes one day to go to the top. Her grievance issues from the fact that Tusker refuses to grab opportunity when it presents itself and that the whole system collapses with the Indian independence.

Like Tusker, Francis is non-ambitious; his desire for a retiring and laidback lifestyle conflicts with the aggressively acquisitive attitude of his wife. With her insistence on the monetary ethic, Mrs Lila Bhoolabhooy is 'a female figure with the phallus'. She uses her sex as a weapon to wield power over her husband and to coerce him into obeying her law. The traiting of Lila in terms of the typically male paradigm is no doubt one of the highpoints of *Staying On*, but the individuation that it confers on the female characters is a hang-over of the importance that *The Quartet* attaches to its women characters in an effort to commemorate, perhaps, the role that they have really played in fostering much of the colonial attitudes. It is fitting in the context that the recriminating anti-British feelings should also be expressed by a woman character. Lila's hostile stance can be alternatively interpreted as a rationalisation of her predatory motives.
Staying On has a tightly woven plot based on pairs of opposed homology: ambition is to non-ambition what change is to stasis. The non-ambition of Tusker and Francis contradicts the ambition in different degrees though of Lucy and Lili in the same way that the change welcomed by Lili negates the desire for stasis by Lucy and Francis. The picture that emerges through these binaries refers to the primary question of human contact and interpersonal relationship. As has been noticed, the relationship between Francis and his wife serves to foreground the relationship between Tusker and Lucy. The surface structure of Staying On signifies the predicament of an old, childless British couple in independent India who find it increasingly difficult to make both ends meet on limited resources and on the face of hostility from some Indian quarters. The death of Tusker adds poignancy to the pathos of a woman who finds herself alone in a foreign land. At a deeper level, Lucy's loneliness is of a personal nature; although her perception of India as an alien country in spite of a lifetime spent there indicates the failure of the British to relate themselves to Indians as individuals. The Quartet explores many of the reasons of such a perception and the resultant failure of a fruitful relationship.

The incompatibility that underlies the public image of Smalleys is due chiefly to the essential difference in their world views. Tusker's language, replete with sexually abusive phrases, is a psychological compensation of his indifferent sexual inclinations, but the violence suggested in them is directed at Lucy,
although it is actually used against Ibrahim. Lucy as a woman represents the continuities and the inheritances of the society. Tusker's unreasonable anger with her is one individual's muted rage at a frustrating system. The Raj is in a sense fossilized in Lucy. She takes the role of the British during the Raj far too seriously. In _The Scorpion_ Lucy becomes the focal point of attention by pronouncing Sarah unsound of mind precisely because she has made light of the British presence in India. Lucy's communal view of herself has been threatened by Sarah's attitudes; the apprehension that Tusker has always entertained similar notions deprives her of even her past relevance, a relevance that lends some meaning to the present marginalisation.

Sometimes she seemed to be laughing at us, and it suddenly occurs to me that this may have been why she got on well with Tusker when she worked for him at Area Headquarters because if you listen to Tusker now you begin to suspect that he was laughing too because really he hasn't a good word to say nowadays about anything connected with the past and this sometimes makes me feel... that my whole life has been a lie, mere play-acting(111).

The painstaking grooming of himself as an average and dull man is Tusker's subversion of the English seriousness, whereas Lucy's competence at her desk job is an affirmation of it. Tusker's attitude, as Lucy realizes, is linked to his fundamentally anti-British stance:
... Slowly it had been borne in on her since that Tusker had never intended to go home. It was as though he bore a grudge against his own country and countrymen (96).

The emergence of Tusker in this new light leads Gooneratne to observe that "Staying On ... gives Scott's picture of the British in India an important new dimension by suggesting, through its portrait of Tusker Smalley, that even in outwardly conventional, pukka Pankot there had been some (and could possibly have been more) British people who, like Daphne Manners, loved India enough to invest their all in her". Daphne's love of India is particularized through her relationship with Kumar but Tusker's is of a general nature. Lucy detects this strand in the mental make-up of her husband early in their marriage: "Tusker liked working alone and he liked working with Indians" (167). In her old age this tendency becomes a source of irritation and cause of worry:

'... all our friends are your friends, Tusker, not mine, and - yes, I will say it - they are all black and I want you to realize that it has been much on my mind recently that if you had not recovered from your attack I would have been alone here, alone, Tusker, and having to rely for human sympathy and moral support upon people who frankly do not care for me, not deeply, and for whom I do not deeply care either.' (103).
A racist pride is transparent in the segment. Lucy thus comes to typify the British responses that have put obstacles in the way of a successful British-Indian relationship during the Raj. Tusker's irascibility is an indictment of his inability to fight the system: it is systemic frustration expressed in domestic violence. The childish pranks in which the Smalleys frequently indulge can be regarded as a kind of game-playing through which they not only escape from reality but also find each other acceptable.

Yet what lies at the heart of the novel is not anger but love. The statement that Tusker writes explaining Lucy's financial position turns out to be a contrite love letter. The event of Lucy's sudden deprivation of love of which she has had a momentary and grudging acknowledgement is the turning point of Staying On. It highlights the thematic concerns of the novel in a significant way. Tusker's bequest leaves Lucy with enough means to take her home, but she wonders 'What then?' The fear of loneliness in a foreign country that has initially prodded her to seek clarification with regard to her financial position grips her once again, for with her husband gone life in England would be no less lonely than it would be in India. Such a realization brings her uncomfortably close to Tusker's observation that "people who have never... real money have to (hang on) wherever they happen to be, when they can't work any more" (23). The question of companionship irrespective of place is
reemphasized in the novel when people turn up in large numbers to offer condolences to Lucy, leading her to realize: "He has so many friends, really" (249)

That *Staying On* is primarily about love and relationship serves to underline the thematic thrust of *The Raj Quartet* by putting its concern with the Raj in a new light. By setting *The Quartet* in its true perspective, thus, *Staying On* also highlights Scott's ideological position with regard to colonialism. To the extent that the events and the characters of *The Quartet* are fashioned out of Scott's ideology, it works as an expression of his liberal-humanistic vision of egalitarian love. Scott is concerned less with the morality of the colonial system than with the fulfilment of the colonial ideal which justifies the British presence in India in the first place and gives it any legitimacy. The colonial mission has been defined as a benevolent paternalism; England as an advanced and powerful nation is responsible for governing the weaker and backward countries like India. The mission finds its fullest expression in equipping the natives with the capacity for self-governance and providing them with peace, order and unity.

Scott laments the failure of the professed imperial goal. The intensity of the 1942 Quit-India Movement is the consequence of the indefinite postponement by the British of its promise of giving greater power into Indian hands. The arrest of the leaders on the eve of the Movement provides a local explanation
of the unprecedented violence. The phenomenon is explicable only within the context of the pent-up anger and frustrations of the Indians with the continual British retraction of its promise of freedom. Edwina Crane in *The Jewel* dwells upon this aspect:

For years, since the eighteenth century, and in each century since, we have said at home, in England, in Whitehall, that the day would come when our rule in India will end, not bloodily, but in peace, in-so we made it seem—a perfect gesture of equality and friendship and love. For years, for nearly a century, the books that Indians have read have been the books of our English radicals, our English liberals... For years we have been promising and for years finding means of putting the fulfilment of promise off until the promise stopped looking like a promise and started looking only like a sinister prevarication, even to me, let alone to Indians who think and feel and know the same as me (*The Jewel* 84-85).

Similarly, the British claim of organizing an unwieldy country comprising feuding princely states into a unified entity is proved wrong by the eventual division of the country. Writing to her friend Lili Chatterjee, Lady Manners comments that "The creation of Pakistan is our crowning failure,... Our only justification for two hundred years of power was unification. But we have divided one composite nation into two..." (*The Jewel* 567).
The hollowness of the professed colonial ideal is presented again in the British refusal to accept responsibility for the communal violence that attends the independence of the Indian subcontinent. The refusal negates the British claim of having established order in a society divided against itself. More importantly, it undercuts the basis of the imperial philosophy that makes it morally obligatory for the British to guide the future of India. The political life of the nation has thus been determined by a delicate and not infrequently hostile encounter between the British pursuit of its colonial policy and the growing Indian demand for self-determination. In any case, the British have been the catalysts in a situation which they dominate. By refusing to own obligation for the changes and the consequences that they themselves bring about, the British undermine the justification of their presence in India and expose their goal as something other than missionary. The Quartet presents the final British position on two levels. Politically, the killing of Ahmed is a metaphor of the serious differences between the two major communities of India; it signifies, therefore, a failure of the civilizing mission of the British. What, however, makes the British stance questionable is their enforced neutrality in the communal situation that rocks the country to its foundation. Perron, who sees history in the making, finds in the emigrating English a tendency to treat the communal problem as of no concern to them. In human terms, the British refusal is presented through Kumar. As a character, Kumar symbolizes the accomplishment of what the British set out to do in India— to
inculcate in Indians Western ideals and English values. By disowning the thoroughly anglicized Kumar, the British prove the illusory nature of the colonial ideal.

The Quartet seeks to uncover the socio-psychological motivations of the individual characters who are finally responsible for this multi-layered failure; for, as Grella rightly observes, the history of England's encounter with India is, above all, a human story. Major Clark in The Scorpion and Captain Purvis in A Division represent the new breed of military administrators who view India only as a financial burden on England. Clark maintains that India is a time-expired sore, a suppurating mess (The Scorpion 511). This view is corroborated in that of Purvis:

Purvis... would almost certainly be a member of the school of thought which held that the flow of benefit had petered out several years ago and a law of diminishing returns set in so that now the flow was operating in reverse (A Division 46).

The total relegation of moral considerations in these economic arguments also reflects the mindsets of people in England—dramatized in The Quartet in Perron's aunt Charlotte—who exhibit a singular ignorance and indifference to the Indian affairs. In writing The Quartet, one of Scott's concerns has been to reduce the weight of this ignorance and consequently of prejudice that mark the British response even in the post-independence phase.
It has seemed to me subsequently that no record of the history of the British-Indian relationship can be complete unless the ignorance of India of a vast majority of the British living on their own island is taken account of. You could say that British electorate, taken as a whole, was in the anomalous position of exerting influence on a country of which it knew nothing and often had no way of finding out about—because Indian affairs, except in the broadest possible sense, simply never came up for discussion in domestic electoral programmes.

The strength of the text, however, lies in the presentation of characters who are actually engaged in the workaday business of maintaining the empire. To a few of them the indifference at home provides a negative sustenance of prejudice and insularity. These character traits apply readily to both Reid and Merrick. An intensely narrow view of the political reality leads Reid to fire into an unarmed crowd. In his rejoinder to Reid's memoirs, White sums up the Briqadier as one of those "Englishmen who disliked or feared or despised them (the Indians), or, just as bad, were indifferent to them as individuals, thought them extraneous to the business of living and working over there, except in their capacity as servants or soldiers or as dots on the landscape" (The Jewel 404). In case of Merrick, the prejudice takes the form of a strong belief in his racial superiority. This partly explains his life-long conviction of Kumar's guilt.
in the Bibighar Gardens case. The social conditions do not, of course, fully explain the actions of either Reid or Merrick; indeed, The Quartet repeatedly underscores the psychological make-up of the characters as having an important bearing on their actions. The sadness of Teddie is thus an off-shoot of the combination of the social conditioning and the individual frustrations. Teddie's naturalized values of paternalism become untenable in the face of the changed moral climate represented by Clark and Purvis. As a result, his death for the cause of a non-existent ethos is regarded as wasted rather than noble. Doubts about the paternal role of the Raj also invade the actions of John Layton, who feels himself responsible for the death of his havildar and yet cannot bring himself to console the bereaved family.

Muddarabad was the village Havildar Karim Muzzafir Khan came from. We stopped there because father couldn't bring himself to ride on and enter it and confront the havildar's wife and family. Each morning, I think, he set off with the intention and then, reaching the halting place, found the intention collapsing under the weight of his notion of its futility. Man-Bap- I am your father and your mother (A Division 418).

These figural attitudes expose in various ways the dichotomy between the imperial profession and its practice. White, who refutes many of the imperial ideas, strikes an attitude himself,
but because there is a textual privileging of White's analysis of the colonial situation, such attitude comes to reflect that of Scott. White maintains that

We were in India for what we could get out of it. No one any longer denies that, but, I think there are two main aspects of the British-Indian affair which we prefer to forget or ignore. The first was that we were originally able to exploit India because the first confrontation... was that of an old, tired civilization that was running down under the Moghuls and a comparatively new energetic civilization that had been on the upgrade ever since the Tudors.... The moral issue is bound to appear to take precedence in any long-standing connection between human beings, especially if their status is unequal... I think the English, however unconsciously or unintentionally, created the division between Muslim India and Hindu India (The Jewel 405-406).

Perron in A Division shares with White the idea that mercenary motives occupy primacy in the English possession of India and that the question of morality is inescapable.

It was in Perron's mind to say that he'd always been under the impression that certain material benefits had followed from the imperial possession, enriching
Britain if not demonstrably impoverishing India (but somehow widening the gap in the two standards of living?) and that moral considerations could surely not be totally ignored by economists and accountants (A Division 46).

Notwithstanding his recognition of the real intention of the Raj, White fails to do anything positive to frustrate actions that are directed to serve the intention. He has only been a tiny and reluctant cog in a gigantic wheel. He entertains serious doubts in his discourse to the narrator about the efficacy of arresting the Congress leaders in order to pre-empt the proposed Quit-India Movement. For the Indians the Movement is an effort to coerce the English who are at the moment engaged in a battle with the Japanese and hence are disadvantageously placed in granting real freedom; whereas for the English the suppression of the Movement is essential to hold on to the declining empire. White believes that the violence that ultimately comes to characterize the Movement is due to the arrests of the Congress leaders: "If we had not banned the Congress committees and imprisoned their leaders at the centre and in most of the provinces, I'm convinced that there would have been no rebellion of the kind that occurred" (The Jewel 416-417). But he cannot even stop the arrest of the leaders of his own district.

The reasons for White's failure are traceable to the fact that he has been working for a robot. The image of the robot indicating the Raj system occurs first in the speech-act of
Daphne. Indeed, some of the most perceptive commentaries on the nature and functioning of the Raj occur in the speeches of the various women characters of *The Quartet*. Daphne observes in her journal addressed to her aunt that "I thought that the whole bloody affair of us in India had reached flash point. It was bound to because it was based on a violation" (*The Jewel* 512). Barbie, too, in one of her quoted monologues holds on to an identical feeling.

The ideological position of Scott in using these utterances of women who hardly play any role in the imperial administration has already been noted earlier. In literary as well as socio-psychological texts, the colonial white women are depicted as concretising the racial biases in the colonized country. As an author well-read in imperial history, Scott makes use of this fact in the presentation of the nondescript British women who people the fictional worlds of Mayapore, Pankot and Ranpur. Even the rape of Daphne is made to signify an Indian retaliation for the racist division. But Daphne is not racist herself, nor are the major women figures of *The Quartet* uniform in their responses. The orchestration of their varied responses not only individuates them each uniquely but also gives Scott a chance to undermine in some degree the conventional picture of the colonizer women. The foregrounding of the women characters in *The Quartet* serves another purpose: it turns a text dealing apparently with fictionalized social-political history into a text concerned with love and relationship.
Each important action of The Quartet involves a woman character. The self-immolation by fire, the attempt to kill a baby within a circle of fire, the insistence that Mildred honour the last wishes of her step-mother-in-law: each originates with a woman. But it is the rape of Daphne that forms the thematic core of the text. She is raped only because she falls in love with Kumar in the first place and ventures to come out of the cocoon of her protected and sheltered life. In the syntagmatic arrangement of events she is raped immediately after she has made love to Kumar. The rape not only follows but also results from this love-making. The Indians dare rape a white woman because they find in her love-making the collapse of the barrier dividing the communities socially. Daphne is herself aware of the logicality of the occurrence.

... the gang of bloody wogs would have been made short work of by their own fear of white people. Miss Crane was hit a few times, but it was the Indian teacher with her who was murdered. They assaulted me because they had watched an Indian making love to me. The taboo was broken for them (The Jewel 524).

Just as Daphne's rape symbolizes the break-down of one kind of barrier so her love stands for the break-down of another. The male British characters of The Quartet with the singular exception of White do not relate to Indians on an equality basis. The usual reaction is usually one of either contempt or condescension. As against this the female characters— at least quite a
few of them—react positively and equally to the Indians. Whereas Crane's relationship with the Indians is general and rather cerebral, Daphne's is distinguished by its emphasis on the particular. Referentially, a white woman and black man relationship is a taboo subject. Daphne's love of Kumar is thus a conscious attempt at forging an alliance on the forbidden ground. It is as much an effort of touching a human being as reaching out to members of the colonized race. On either count it is an acceptance of the other onapar with oneself. For Daphne, though, friendship begun in a conscious frame of mind culminates in love. It is not a cultivation of a special liking for his black colour. In fact, the very blackness of Kumar turns her on: "I don't mean that I loved him in spite of his blackness. His blackness was inseparable from his physical attraction" (The Jewel 526).

Scott's concept of love is at once physical and spiritual. For him the spiritual is not a quest for an indefinable essence or a higher order of being, but the attainment of a unity of self through a resolution of dichotomies. The fullness of life envisioned in The Quartet is possible only through a celebration of 'here' and 'now', the evanescent, the body. To that end The Quartet puts a premium on the physical. Both Crane and Barbie, themselves missionaries, are traited in part through an absence of the temporal joy. They hanker after a disembodied love. Crane's eventual suicide is a form of awakening to the futility of her consistent effort at maintaining a hiatus between the spirit and the body. Barbie's failure to resolve these differences lands her in madness. The sexually abusive and profane
language that she uses in her demented state is a channeling of her repressed sexual feelings. Contrasted with them, Daphne's approach to life is holistic because it gives primacy to the body.

With Hari I can't connect a word such as 'like', because my liking was hoplessly encumbered with the physical effect he had on me, which turned liking into love....(The Jewel 495).

Only Sister Ludmila, who achieves herself a resolution of dualities, comes close, as an intradiegetic narrator, in apprehending Daphne's search for a wholeness. Weinbaum associates India with the human body and England with the soul. Daphne's identification with the insecure black area in the Mayapore town, her love of Kumar and the fact that she has "a titillating fear of his colour" (The Jewel 476) must therefore be seen as deep responsiveness to the demands of the body. The Quartet signifies through Daphne's response a movement towards the achievement of a sense of joy and of unity between England and India. Ludmila, who admits to have lacked the courage to enter into a living relationship, finds a symbolic wholeness in the statue of Shiva that adorns her room.

You know of course the image of the dancing Siva?... You can see it there, behind you on my wall, carved in wood, my Siva dancing. The dance of creation, preservation and destruction. A complete cycle. A wholeness....(The Jewel 179).
Another major woman character who craves for the joy of the body and of unity is Sarah. Her intense physical needs are satisfied by Clark and John Bellenger. Although she comes alive through such satisfaction to the joy and grace of the body, she does not fall in love with either of them: "The need (for satisfying her physical desires) was preeminent. An almost unbearable ache.... it is only.... desire without love" (A Division 432). Sarah’s relationship with Ahmed is not love either. It is companionship nurtured deliberately; it is bridging the cultural gap between two human beings. The Sarah-Ahmed relationship is a spiritual bond that transcends the earthly divisions that come to characterize, viewed within the context, the British Raj in India. At the same time, Sarah’s love of the land reaffirms her identification with the country and hence with the body. Put together, these two types of relationships—one symbolizing the spiritual and the other the physical—create an image of wholeness.

The image of wholeness is, however, assailed by the counter forces of division. Daphne is raped immediately after she has solemnised her love relationship with Kumar, and Ahmed is killed not much later than Perron’s intuition of the cause of Sarah’s happiness. Frustration at the peak of fulfilment which thus becomes the distinguishing mark of the British-Indian relationship puts forth the problematic of the text. It poses the question whether a love relationship between individuals separated by colour, culture and power is possible in a situation dominated by racial prejudice, antagonism and inequality. It has
been seen that the racist attitudes of the British typified in the character of Merrick are largely responsible for the segregation of Daphne and her Indian lover. The racial prejudice that makes it impossible for an abiding inter-personal relationship is repeated in the insularities and general insensitivity represented by Brigadier Reid that impede a relationship on the communal basis. Ahmed's death is an outcome of this communal failure. Daphne's rape and Ahmed's death, however, occur at the hands of Indians. The Quartet as such makes the Indian intolerance one of the contributing factors of the failure of the British-Indian relationship. But The Quartet is basically an English text. It tries to understand the English psyche and their view of themselves as colonial rulers. The Quartet depicts not only the racial relationship but also the basic man-man, man-woman and woman-woman relationships in the British society in India. These sets of relationships find an exhaustive treatment in The Towers. Many of these relationships, it is true, are determined and modified by the colonial values, leading Sarah, the most conscious point of The Quartet, to comment that: "In India, yes, one could travel great distances. But the greatest distance was between people who were closely related. That distance was never easy to cover" (A Division 158). Such sentiments are echoed again in the views of Clark:

'Extraordinary, isn't it,'... 'that the people in this country who feel most like foreigners to each other are English people who've just arrived and the ones who have been here for several years....' (The Scorpion 508).
Scott's interest, thus, goes beyond the Raj; his fascination with history stems from his desire to give effective expression to the tension of living with other people. As a humanist, he is concerned with the fundamental conditions of love and friendship. Love for him is the essential prerequisite of the human soul. The British colonialism which brings two nations into a close encounter with each other becomes an ideal ground to test whether the requirement of the soul can be satisfied even in an unequal situation. In *The Quartet* he examines the possibilities of the cultivation of personal relationship in the face of glaring cultural and racial differences. He has in fact been trying to satisfy himself whether the forces of love as the primordial substance of human consciousness can triumph over the forces of destruction symbolized in the man-made divisions of colour and creed. The rape of Daphne, which operates as the dominant metaphor in the story-line of *The Quartet*, provides a negative answer. Indeed, the text begins with this answer instead of unfolding the events in a chronological order to come upon this painful realisation as its hermeneutic closure. Perhaps, the kind of non-fictional materials such as the real, historically authentic Indo-British relationships that the text inscribes forecloses such an answer. As a result, the reasons for the failure of what would have been an ideal union of England and India assume the focal point in *The Quartet*. It points out that given the psychological make-up of the rulers, the union is impossible. The ultimate picture of the failed love is reminiscent of Forster's vision of the fate of personal relationship in colonial India. *A Passage to India* ends thus:
"Why can't we be friends now?' said the other, holding him affectionately. 'It's what I want. It's what you want.'

But the horses didn't want it—they swerved apart; the earth did not want it, sending up rocks through which riders must pass single file; the temples, the tank, the jail, the palace, the birds, the carrion, the Guest House, that came into view as they issued from the gap and saw Mau beneath: they didn't want it,...(317).

It would be misleading to press too far the parallel between Scott and Forster. Failure does not negate the values attached to love in Scott's world view. Therefore, it is the rape victim Daphne Manners who is the centre of values of The Raj Quartet. The importance of love in Scott's scheme of things is underscored by Philip Larkin who has the following observations to make in respect of Staying On. They apply to The Raj Quartet only too well:

Although seemingly a delineation of failure, the book resolves triumphantly into a study of love—inarticulate and unfashionable love, perhaps—but a study in which the end by death of a marriage is linked to the end by history of an empire, and the love that informs both... seems for this reason all the stronger and more enduring.
For Scott the attempt at a relationship of love and the effort to satisfy the essential requirements of the inner being are more urgent than the necessity to come to a fruitful completion. The greatness of Scott's art lies not in the portrayal of failure but in mapping out areas of human possibility and the infinite resilience of the human spirit. The embodiments of these insights help *The Quartet* transcend the limitations of its post-colonial format and become, truly, a saga of love and relationship.
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5 Gooneratne 3.


12 Weinbaum,"Paul Scott's" 106.

13 Philip Larkin, speech, Booker Prize dinner, New Fiction, Spring 1978. As quoted by Hilary Spurling.