THE JEWEL IN THE CROWN
As the opening movement, *The Jewel in the Crown* sets the tone and the focus of *The Raj Quartet*. Indeed, it is *The Quartet*'s thesis statement. Through the dramatization of the sunset years of the British presence in India, *The Jewel* achieves a fine fusion of history and fiction. The declining colonial presence of the British is presented in terms of a twin assault on two British women during the violent disturbances that accompany the Quit-India Movement of 1942. The Movement, itself the culmination of two earlier historical watersheds, namely, the Mutiny of 1857 and the Jallianwala Bagh Massacre of 1919, marks the final turning point in the tumultuous political relationship between Britain and India. In 1919, after World War I, instead of the promised progress towards greater independence and increased participation in the administration of their country leading toward Dominion status, the Indians were subjected to harsher rules governing their lives.\(^1\) The Government not only reneged on its war promises but also for all the Indian cooperation in its war efforts enacted such draconian laws as the Rowlatt Act and the Defense of India rules which provided for imprisonment without trial and conviction in a court of law of any person guilty of or even suspected of indulging in political sedition. Together, the laws authorized the Government to suspend the right of Habeas Corpus which had been the foundation of civil liberties in Britain.\(^2\)

Country-wide mass protests and civil agitations on a never-before scale greeted the dictatorial enactments. The Government
was equally determined to suppress the popular protest with repressive measures. It took frequent recourse to lathi-charge and firing. On 13 April 1919, a large but peaceful crowd had gathered at Amritsar in the Punjab in an enclosed space called the Jallianwala Bagh to protest against the arrest of their popular leaders. General Dyer, the military commander of the town, blocked the only exit point of the Bagh and asked his army unit to shoot into the crowd with rifles and machine guns. The massacre left 379 dead and 1137 critically wounded. Martial law was clamped down thereafter throughout the Punjab and the people were submitted to the most inhuman atrocities.

The massacre of 1919 revealed in a flash the brutality that lay behind the facade of civilization that imperialism professed. There was consequently a perceptible change in the Congress attitude to the British professions of political gradualism. It refused therefore to cooperate with the Government when the World War II broke out in 1939 and the British in 1941 found themselves face to face with the advancing Japanese troops on the Burma border. The World War II was in a sense the last decisive war between the fascist and the democratic forces. The Congress was willing to support the fight for democracy but only after effective power was put into Indian hands. The Congress needed tangible proof of British sincerity: the fight against the expansionist fascism had to be matched with the grant of real freedom to India. This the British Government was singularly unprepared to concede for fear that any decentraliza
tion of power at that juncture would only dilute its war efforts. At the most, it was ready to make a promise of a dominion status for India after the successful conclusion of the war. To that end, the Government sent the Cripps Mission to India. Embittered by its past experience and the cruel memory of the massacre of 1919 still fresh in mind, the Congress did not take the bait of some vague promise to be redeemed in some indistinct future. Moreover, it was no longer interested in some half-hearted measures grudgingly granted; it wanted complete independence before it would actively participate in the war. The Congress had earlier directed its provincial ministries to resign in order to protest against the unilateral decision of the Government to associate India with the declaration of war on Germany without consulting the Congress. After the failure of the Cripps Mission to satisfy the Indian political aspirations, the Congress decided to launch the Quit-India Movement under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi to compel British withdrawal from India. It passed on 8th Aug. 1942 a resolution deciding to start a mass struggle on non-violent lines on the widest possible scale. It was at this time that Gandhi exhorted the British to leave India to either God or anarchy.

To the British, the Movement was an open rebellion and an invitation to the Japanese to invade India. Acting on the belief that the overwhelming popular response to the proposed movement and the resultant anti-British feeling would peter out in the absence of leaders, the Government in a pre-dawn swoop arrested
all important leaders on 9th Aug. 1942 and declared the Congress illegal. The events that followed proved the British presumption wrong:

The news of these arrests left the country aghast and a spontaneous movement of protest arose everywhere, giving expression to the pent-up anger of the people. Left leaderless and without any organization, the people reacted in any manner they could.

The Movement inevitably turned violent and extensive damage was caused to government property. There was a total collapse of the law and order machinery at a few places. "Among the British colony there was a belief that something on the lines of a new Indian Mutiny was about to take place." The Mutiny of 1857 which had turned into a great Revolt had nearly swept the British authority off the Indian shore. The fear of a fresh mutiny together with the memories of the Indian atrocities and the disappearance of the British power in parts of India led the Government to crush the Rebellion of 1942 with a vengeance that matched its 1857 reprisals.

In The Jewel, Scott recreates accurately this atmosphere of violence and suppression of the 1942 Movement in the fictive town of Mayapore. References to the events of 1857 and 1919 keep coming up in various parts of The Quartet. Two of the important characters in The Quartet are modelled on real-life prototypes who figured prominently in the 1919 events.
Marcella Sherwood, an English missionary, who was beaten and wounded by the Indians in the 1919 violence, provides historical intertext to the creation of a character like Edwina Crane. Crane is the "supervisor of the district's Protestant Mission schools" (10) and is the first victim of the riots that engulf Mayapore soon after the arrest of the town's important Congress leaders on the eve of the Quit-India Movement. Similarly, Brigadier A.V. Reid who assumes military command of the riot-ridden Mayapore town shoots, as Dyer did, into a large gathering of unarmed crowd.

In order to get right these historical facts, Scott "immerses himself for over twenty-five years in the study of Indian history, consulted and checked facts with experts in the India office of the British Museum, made three trips to the subcontinent ..."9 Scott himself acknowledges the painstakingly researched quality of his historical knowledge: "The framework (of The Quartet) was as historically accurate as I could make it."10 Although the importance of history in Scott's scheme of values is repeatedly underscored, yet he is not a historical novelist. Most of the characters in The Jewel and indeed in the entire Quartet are created as much through their personal histories as through the forces of political history that surround their working lives. Even the central narrating agent of The Jewel—variously called "the traveller" (200) and "the stranger" (204) has a "known interest in this period of British-Indian history" (400). For Scott, history is the means of exploring" the
actual business, rebarbative and mysterious, ironic and upsetting, of living with other people." The choice to situate the novel on the events of 1942 springs thus from his fascination of studying "human nature under stress in a period of violent and traumatic change". AS N.W. Ross comments,

For dramatic paradox and the clash of destinies on a personal and world scale, this particular period can hardly be equalled in contemporary history.

That the tension of human contact, of relationships, is the semantic thrust of The Jewel is made clear in the privileging of its fictional component in the text: "This is the story of a rape, of the events that led up to it and followed it and of the place in which it happened. There are the action, the people, and the place; all of which are interrelated but in their totality incommunicable in isolation from the moral continuum of human affairs" (9). Patrick Swinden in his insightful analysis of The Raj Quartet observes that while some of the pressing historical questions are best explained in human terms they soon give way to the more urgent ethical and metaphysical issues: "Though the surface of (the) novel is historical, and a great deal of its attractiveness lies in its firm grasp of the details of the period in which it is set-at its core it is metaphysical".

It is the stranger who pieces together the story of the rape and brings this leitmotif of the novel to signify a whole range
of British-Indian relationships—historical, political and interpersonal. The stranger gets to read the unpublished memoirs of Brigadier Reid which arouse his interest in the Bibighar Gardens case. Bibighar is the place where Daphne Manners, one of the principal characters of the novel, is raped on the evening of 9th August 1942. The rape follows the criminal assault on Edwina Crane in the morning of the same day. Crane, who had been returning to Mayapore after the inspection of a school at Dibrapur on the fateful day, is caught up by a riotous mob. The mob is composed largely of village men whose main preoccupation in times of civil disturbances is the prospect of loot (67). Crane gets away with minor injuries while her Indian companion D.R. Chaudhuri, a teacher in the Dibrapur school, is clubbed to death. Unaware of either the scale of the violence in the town or the condition of Crane, Daphne rendezvous with her Indian lover, Hari Kumar, in the abandoned Bibighar Gardens. Their love-making is suddenly terminated when a group of hooligans appear on the scene. They gag Kumar and rape Daphne. Ronald Merrick, the district superintendent of Police, who has always fancied himself in love with Daphne, promptly arrests Kumar. Merrick has been angry with Kumar because he feels snubbed by Daphne's turning down his love in preference to Kumar's. But unable to pin the charges of rape on Kumar, Merrick puts away Kumar and five others on the trumped-up charge of political sedition. Daphne who refuses to implicate her assailants—the ones the police have arrested are not the real ones—later dies in childbirth.
The events in *The Jewel* do not occur in the sequential movement as the brief synopsis of the plot may suggest. In fact, with the absence of a chronological progression of events, the distinguishing mark of the novel is directly dependent on the narrative style of *The Jewel*. The ingenious use of the stranger as the primary narrator, who gathers information from a host of secondary narrators without seeking to place them in a contiguous relationship, not only explains such absence but also directs attention to the discursive peculiarity of the novel. The narrator visits India in 1964 (200), seventeen years after Indian independence, and stays with Lili Chatterjee, a character-narrator of *The Jewel*. He relies on letters, memoirs, journals, depositions, personal interviews and verbal transcript of recorded talks for his reconstruction of the Bibighar Gardens case. On one occasion, he even goes with an Indian lawyer, Srinivasan, to the Mayapore club that has played a vital role in Anglo-Indian social life during the Raj. Even though inscribed into the novel thus, by his direct interface with the characters, the narrator is not a character himself. The novel posits him above the diegetic level of *The Jewel*: he is not a part of the events he narrates and his narration is posterior to the time of the events.

The overt presence of the narrator places the narratee at the opposite pole of the overarching narrative communication situation. Extradiegetic like the narrator, the presence of the primary narratee is betrayed whenever he is addressed directly.
Even the very opening passage of *The Jewel* is a direct address to the narratee seeking to involve him in a meaning-making process.

Imagine, then, a flat landscape, dark for the moment, but even so conveying to a girl running in the still deeper shadow cast by the wall of the Bibighar Gardens an idea of immensity, of distance, such as years before Miss Crane had been conscious of ...(9)

This conversational tone recurs whenever the narrator is himself responsible for the transmission of narrative message. Of the seven textual segments that comprise *The Jewel*, the first, fourth and the fifth entitled 'Miss Crane,' *An Evening at the Club* ' and ' Young Kumar' respectively are a part of the narrator's attempt at a reconstruction of the life of Crane and Kumar and the ambience of the club that symbolizes, even after the dissolution of the Raj, the racial exclusiveness which has, during its heyday, placed the British and the Indians in watertight compartments. The mediation of the story in these segments as well as of the second and the third segments entitled 'MacGregor House' and 'Sister Ludmila' occurs in the third person mode of narration. The authority of the narrator is, however, seriously limited in the later segments. In the 'Sister Ludmila' segment, especially, the role of the narrator is confined to making a brief introductory comment on the sister and then making way for her to conduct the rest of the narration. As a result, the whole segment, but for the initial presence of the narrator, functions as a first-person account of an intradiegetic narrator. 'The
MacGregor House' is, however, narrated through a repeated alternation between these two modes of narration. Since the segment consists of an interview of Lili Chatterjee conducted by the narrator, the discourse of Lili interferes with that of the narrator. Moreover, the letters of Daphne that Lili offers to the narrator modulate, to a certain extent the discourse of the narrator. It may be noted in this connection that letters have a great structural significance in not only The Jewel but also the entire Quartet. The Jewel uses, apart from the two letters of Daphne which put together run into some seventeen pages, the letters of Lady Manners written to Lady Chatterjee to unfold events as well as to give figural insights into the minds of other characters. Moreover, letters provide their writers with the capacity for the formation of subjectivity in the same way that a discourse helps a speaker to posit himself as a subject. Letters figure most prominently in what Chatman calls the nonnarrated types—the least narrator—mediated story. The later volumes of The Quartet, especially The Day of Scorpion and The Towers of Silence, rely to a considerable degree on letters to constitute the subjectivity of characters writing them and to minimize the presence of the external narrator. The use of epistolary narrative is strongly reminiscent of Richardson's Pamela and Mark Harris's Wake of Stupid.

As The Jewel graduates in the effacement of the narrator's legibility, purely figural accounts replace the discourses of the primary narrator, so much so that the last two segments of
the novel - 'Civil and Military' and 'The Bibighar Gardens' - are first-person narrations by four intradiegetic narrators: Brig Reid, Robin White, Vidyasagar and Daphne. In these accounts the primary narrator is reduced to being a mere collator. It is not that only in accounts such as these does the narrator endeavour to retreat behind the character-narrators: even in purely third-person narrative modes he seeks to conceal his viewpoints by the use of figural focalizations. Consequently, in nearly all anonymous narrative situations the narrator either desires the active participation of the narratee or takes him on a tour of the town of Mayapore without subjecting him to any value judgement. He introduces Daphne thus:

Picture her then: Daphne Manners, a big girl (to borrow a none too definite image from Lady Chatterjee) leaning on the balcony outside her bedroom window, gazing with concentration (as one might gaze for two people, one being absent, once deprived, since dead and now regretted) at a landscape calculated to inspire in the most sympathetic western heart a degree of cultural shock (117).

This textual portion is worthy of notice because of several reasons. The narrator requests the primary covert narratee to formulate an image of Daphne—but in the light of what Lady Chatterjee thinks of her. To that end, he borrows her description. Although he does not feel satisfied at the vagueness of the description, he does not offer any alternative himself.
He not only acquiesces in what Lady Chatterjee says but also requires the narratee to subscribe to it. The narration then shifts from the external appearance to the naming of a character-trait 'sympathetic'. At first sight, it may seem to be an authoritative definition and hence an imposition of the narrator's viewpoint. But since the given passage signifies by its syntagmatic positioning in the total segment in which it occurs, the signification of the trait is to be found in Daphne's attempt to know India. Lady Chatterjee tells the narrator immediately prior to the above passage: "There were times when I thought she worked doubly hard at knowing India..."(116). It now becomes clear that Daphne's character-trait has been suggested by Lady Chatterjee herself and her culture-shock by her own admission in her letters that the narrator gets to read.

Similarly, in discussing the relief features of Mayapore, the narrator resorts to value-free, neutral language:

At half past six in the evening the sun has set behind and strongly silhouetted the trees that shelter the club buildings on the western side of the maidan. The sky above the maidan, colourless during the day, as if the heat had burnt out its pigment, now undergoes a remarkable transformation. The blue is revealed at last but in tones already invaded by the yellowing refraction of the sun so that it is awash with an astonishing, luminous green...(201).
The passage not only affords the narratee the feel of a sunset in the Mayapore town but also underscores the narrator's eye for the detail, a faculty which is commensurate with his status as an investigative historian. The primary narrator's attempt to uncover an historical event, i.e. the story of the rape, turns him into an intradiegetic narratee. As an investigator, he has to conduct interviews, meet people, read letters and diary. The people who give him interviews in respect of the central incident of the rape and its surrounding events include Lili Chatterjee, Sister Ludmila and Srinivasan. Since all three of them have been a part of the narrative that they narrate, they are a set of intradiegetic narrators positing the primary narrator as a narratee on the same level. Similarly, the letters, memoirs, diaries and depositions that the narrator utilizes confer narrateehood on him because although they are addressed to different persons, the narrator becomes in the novel their virtual addressed correspondent. In case of Robin White's letters, the narrator is indeed the intended narratee. The sequencing of the letters makes it clear that they are occasioned by the narrator's request - he sends the unpublished memoirs of Reid and a portion of Daphne's diary meant for her aunt Lady Manners soliciting his comments in his capacity as the then deputy commissioner of the district on the Bibighar Gardens case. Robin White's account is conveyed entirely by an exchange of letters and a brief interview. The questions that evoke White's reactions are inferable from the answers themselves because White's discourse keeps reiterating them. Structurally, these letters
function as an interview: both place the interviewer at the opposite end of the narrative situation, i.e., as a narratee. Each shift in the mode of narration in the novel from the third-person to the first-person marks out a corresponding shift in the status of the enunciating agency from an overt extradiegetic narrator to a covert intradiegetic narratee. By implicating the functions of both the narrator and the narratee in the same agency, The Jewel achieves an unconventional artistic design.

Thus, the novel directs attention to the stranger whether as a narrator or a narratee. In either case, however, the novel tends to limit his authority, doing justice thereby to his status as a collector of information. He is, by his stated mission, restricted in his knowledge of events; he gets progressively knowledgeable as the multiple character-narrators recount for him their versions of the events that occupy the fictional foreground of the novel. This they do, as has been noted, directly in interviews or letters or indirectly by letting the narrator penetrate their minds. The representation of figural consciousness is central to the structuration of the next two volumes of The Quartet. The conflation of narratorial idiom and figural focalization is no less important in The Jewel.

In retracing the focal events of the 1942 Quit-India Movement, the narrator reconstructs the life of Crane through accounts about her. She comes of a humble family, distinguished neither by station nor calling, and is assigned a low rung in the
English social scene of India. Even in her moderate profession of a missionary school teacher, she entertains independent and often "anti-British because pro-Indian" (14) political opinions. But Gandhi's call for the Quit-India Movement so upsets her political calculations that she pulls down the portrait of Gandhi from her wall even while retaining the Jewel-in-the-Crown picture. The narrator describes her political feelings thus:

She was sorry about the ladies whom she had always encouraged to be frank with her, but not at all sorry about Mr Gandhi's portrait. The ladies had an excuse. Mr Gandhi did not. She believed he was behaving abominably. She felt, in fact, let down. For years she had laughed at Europeans who said that he was not to be trusted, but now Mr Gandhi had extended what looked like an open invitation to the Japanese to come and help him rid of the British—...(11).

The profusion of such mental verbs as "believed", "felt" makes it clear that the passage is focalized through Crane. What is more, it follows Crane's apprehension of herself to the point of actually reproducing her syntax and vocabulary. Instances of such consonant psycho-narration pervade the entire segment. Crane's view of Gandhi, uninfluenced in any way by the narrator, finds its sharpest opposition in the account of White who extols Gandhi's creative contradiction.
...(Gandhi) said exactly what was in his mind, without worrying how many times he seemed to contradict himself, and certainly without thinking of his own reputation, in a genuinely creative attempt to break through the sense of pre-arranged emotions and reactions that automatically accompanies any general gathering of people (409-410).

White's account occurs in the first-person mode and therefore least presupposes the narratorial mediation. This seemingly effaced presence of the narrating agency is noticeable in the description of the social life of Mayapore. After providing a list of the important personalities of the local Anglo-Indian society, the narration turns on Lady Chatterjee:

She thought Lady Chatterjee over-westernized, a bit of a snob, socially and intellectually; amusing enough to listen to at the DC's dinner table but not in the drawing-room afterwards, when the women were alone for a while and Lady Chatterjee asked questions of them which Miss Crane thought were calculated to expose them as lacking in social background at home or cosmopolitan experience abroad,... For Miss Crane she seemed to have no feelings whatsoever; ... (48).

The narrator faithfully reports Crane's state of mind without trying in any way to colour it with his own idiom. Even the events in the passage are seen through Crane's eyes. The
reciprocal feelings of indifference between the two ladies assume increasing structural significance in view of the fact that Lili Chatterjee is one of the foremost intradiegetic commentators in the novel. The binarily opposed views of the characters weave an interlocking pattern that constitutes the structure of the novel. The overlapping of figural discourses not only halts the linear unfolding of the events but also raises the question of the reliability of the narrators.

The novel follows through Crane's point of view the traumatic experience that she undergoes during the violence-ridden day. Unable to do anything positive to avert the tragedy of her companion's death, she sits down beside him, in pouring rain, holding the hand of D.R. Chaudhuri. The rains land her in hospital. The recovery from physical ailment finds her strangely withdrawn into herself. At this time she takes down the Jewel picture from the wall, locking it away, "in the chest, against the time when there might, remotely, be an occasion to put it back up again" (85). It is Lili Chatterjee who supplies not only the information of Crane's committing suttee but also an explanation of her actions. As she commends her courage, she reduces her political liberalism to a few charitable ideas.

She was an old school English liberal... someone who as likely as not had no gift for broad friendships. In Miss Crane's case I think it went further than this. I think she has no gift for friendship of any kind. She loved India and all the Indians but no particular Indian (137-138).
Holding Chaudhuri's hand after his death symbolizes for Lili a belated recognition of how "all her good works and noble thoughts had been going on in a vacuum" and a compensatory gesture of dirtying her hands and getting" grubby for the sake of the cause she'd always believed she held dear"(138). She compares her suicide to "sanyasa", the fourth and final phase of the ideal Hindu living, when a person gives up all worldly possessions to earn religious merit. More than anything else, the comparison reveals a metaphysical facet of Crane's actions.

It is Lili, again, who introduces to the narrator the three principal actors of the Bibighar Gardens case—Daphne Manners, Hari Kumar and Ronald Merrick. She describes Daphne variously as "good natured but inept", "Big and rather clumsy"(96), and "shy"(115); and expresses mixed feelings about Kumar (140). In so far as Merrick is concerned, Lili refrains from making any comment herself and turns to the letters of Daphne instead. The letters offer an evaluation of Merrick as a character and sketch a tentative picture of the triangular love relationship between the three. Daphne finds Merrick "kind and considerate" (128), "passingly affectionate", "fair-haired and youngish", "awfully good-looking" (132). At some point of time, however, she decides that she feels repelled by him despite his good looks, and consequently turns down his proposal of marriage. The letters additionally supplement the picture drawn by Lili of the racist apartheid prevalent in Mayapore.

After her account about Kumar, Lili switches over to the
night when Merrick waits for Daphne to turn up and she does turn up brutally assaulted and shaken beyond measure. Sister Ludmila, who is referred to only in passing in the letter of Daphne, further elaborates on the relationship between the three principal characters. She is a witness to the first confrontation between Kumar and Merrick as well as the frequent rendezvous of Kumar and Daphne. As a result of her close association, Ludmila has an intuitive understanding of the minds of the three of them and an apprehension of the Bibighar tragedy six months before its occurrence. She corroborates Lili’s summation of Daphne as a courageous girl who, because of her love of India, is motivated to do something unconventional. Her love of Kumar is as much a desire to belong to India as an expression of her attraction to his dark handsomeness, a darkness that also turns Merrick but for a different reason.

(Merrick) had long chosen Hari Kumar, chosen him as a victim,... to observe more closely the darkness that attracted the darkness in himself. A different darkness, but still a darkness. On Kumar’s part a darkness of the soul. On Merrick’s a darkness of the mind and heart and flesh (188).

For Kumar, his darkness signifies his roots, a condition of being which he cannot escape notwithstanding his English upbringing. The natural advantages of the colonizer, that Kumar’s father has sought to confer on him through providing him with the best of education in England are suddenly cut short when he
commits suicide after going bankrupt. Kumar finds himself back in his country of origin, as an ordinary member of the colonized race proving true his father's worst fears. Ludmila notices his pain in being an exile, his grief at becoming invisible to the white women of India, his desire to be a part of the English ambience.

... I know for him there must have been a terrible longing to go into them, to become again a part of them, because of their Englishness, because England was the only world he knew, and he hated the black town on this side of the river as much as any white man fresh out from England would hate it (191).

The tenuous link with his Englishness snaps on the day when Kumar's best friend Colin Lindsey with whom he has taken temporary shelter after his father's death, refuses to recognize him. This refusal convinces Kumar of his invisibility to the English. He gets drunk in the company of a couple of casual acquaintances to celebrate the cessation of his English inheritance. He is "found lying as if dead in the waste ground near the river" and is brought to the sanctuary by Ludmila (157). The next day he confronts Merrick; his insubordination and his better accented English mark him out as Merrick's chosen victim. For Ludmila the confrontation between the two has been the real harbinger of the ensuing Bibighar tragedy.
... sometimes we brought home hurt and wounded. When we did this, we sent the police a message. Sometimes they came here on their initiative, as they did on the morning after we brought young Kumar back. But never before had the District Superintendent come himself. If he had come the day before, the day after, there might never have been Bibighar (162).

Ludmila holds herself partly responsible for the tragedy because she has unwittingly directed Merrick to Kumar's residence when he comes to look for Daphne on the Bibighar day. Ludmila's discourse, as may be seen, is limited to the extent of her marginal participation in the diegesis. This is a limitation from which the discourse of each character-narrator suffers. No one is in the know of the chain of events in its totality. This explains why Ludmila in her rendering of the Bibighar affair has to fall back on surmises and conjectures. She does not, for example, know what has actually taken place in the Bibighar Gardens or where Kumar has been put away or whether the child that Daphne bears is really Kumar's.

That young Kumar was in the Bibighar that night. Or on some other night. Because the child she bore was surely Kumar's child? Why else should she look, carrying it, like a woman in a state of grace? Why else should she refuse to get rid, refuse to abort, to throw the disgusting embryo to the mongrels? Why else? Unless having leapt she accepted the logic of
her action, and all its consequences? Including the assault in darkness by a gang of ruffians. And believed that from such an assault she carried India in her belly? (194)

The series of questions that Ludmila puts forth point to a possibility rather than to any certainty. This absence of certainty characterizes other discourses too. Of the fate of Kumar after his arrest, no one seems to know. There are only gossips. The deposition by Vidyasagar is the only textual segment that gives a picture of Merrick's brutalization of Kumar and five other boys arrested on the charge of Daphne's rape. Vidyasagar has been succeeded by Kumar in the Mayapore Gazette and is known as a political activist. One of the boys accused of the rape who has undergone caning relates to Vidyasagar how he has been made to witness the brutalization of Kumar at the behest of Merrick. During the course of interrogation the DSP has examined his private parts and sought to extract a confession to the effect that Kumar is the man who has organized the rape. Failing to get any confession, the DSP threatens the five boys whose only crime has been drinking illicit liquor inside a hut by the riverside on the night of the 9th Aug. 1942 with dire consequences should they hint to anybody of their harsh treatment. The six of the accused— all Hindus—have been then fed beef.

In his rejoinder to Reid's memoirs, White questions the reliability of Vidyasagar's statement.
Vidyasagar ranks as a self-confessed lawbreaker...
In his deposition he is noticeably unforthcoming about the names of his associates. So to what extent we can rely on his statement that Hari Kumar was not one of his fellow-conspirators neither of us can judge accurately (422).

He also questions the peculiar silence of the accused in front of the lawyer appointed to probe the rumours of police brutality and forcible beef-feeding. Even while he admits to their ill-treatment, he does not believe that there has been a miscarriage of justice (423). Nor is he ready to pronounce Merrick guilty of misconduct: "... I expect my objections ... are really based on my inner unwillingness to accept the unsupported evidence of Merrick's behaviour - "(424).

While White gives Merrick the benefit of doubt, Reid on the other hand, not only instinctively likes him but also acquiesces in what he presents of the Mayapore case. He agrees, for example, that "the safety of English people, particularly of (the) women, was in grave peril" (364) in view of the atrocities committed on two British women. For that purpose he even offers to collude with him in glossing over certain discrepancies in the case that Merrick has brought against the six youths arrested in connection with Daphne's rape. White's rejoinder is otherwise a point by point refutation of Reid's political views as well as his assessment of the situation on the eve of the Quit-India Movement. This dialectical mode of narration
apparent in the White/ Reid controversion pervades in fact the whole of the novel. A point made by one character finds its counterpart in another. Reid feels a certain pride in the years of British rule (344) and a certain bitterness that "the country which had benefited in so many ways from British rule appeared determined to hinder our efforts to save it from invasion at a time when we could least spare the strength" (345). He relates the Indian hindrance of British war efforts to their incapacity for self-governance:

Whatever our faults in the past, I as a simple soldier with only rudimentary political views could not help feeling that the sincere efforts we made in the years before the war to hand over more power to the Indians themselves had revealed nothing so clearly as the fact that they had not achieved the political maturity that would have made the task of granting them self-government easy (342).

White scoffs at "Reid's simple soldier attitude" (402) and finds his political simplicity almost childish (404). Ridiculing Reid's run-of-the-mill belief in the white man's burden, he traces British presence in India to mercenary reasons. As against Reid's naturalized values of the historicity of British presence in India, White finds Indians capable of self-government. To that end, he questions the wisdom of British repression in the wake of the 1942 Movement. Apart from an analysis of the British colonialism right from its inception to the Movement of 1942, White's narration also provides an account of Reid's motivations.
...he was sensitive, broadly, only to major issues and grand emotions. In his daily contact with other human beings he did tend to bear pretty much the proportional weight of a sledgehammer to a pin.... if the Indians didn't start a rebellion Reid would be forced to invent one just so that by suppressing it he would feel he'd done his whole duty (403).

The discourses of Reid, White and Vidyasagar provide a tangential account of the fate of Kumar after his arrest. In a sense they resolve, though in an oblique manner, one aspect of the suspense of the story. Some other parts of the suspense, especially what has actually taken place in the Bibighar Gardens on the fateful night and what does the silence of Kumar signify, find a solution in the diary of Daphne. As a written discourse, Daphne's diary includes a rehash of events already referred to and narrated by other character-narrators. Only the events are seen afresh through a different perspective. It includes, for example, her relationship with both Merrick and Kumar. She has genuinely liked Merrick even though she is conscious of his racist prejudices. He warns her of her association with Kumar during a verbal interaction in the club. For Kumar, her liking is hopelessly encumbered with his physical attraction. On the night of the 9th Aug. 1942 as they meet in the Bibighar Gardens and make love for the first time, a group of hooligans descend upon them. They gag Kumar and rape Daphne. Seeing that Kumar will be implicated in her assault, she enjoins upon him a promise of silence. Merrick, who has felt peeved by Daphne's refusal
of his proposal of marriage, arrests Kumar and five other boys. He even goes to the extent of planting evidence in order to incriminate Kumar. Meanwhile Daphne not only refuses to identify her assailants but also goes ahead with her plans of delivering the baby conceived during the rape. For Daphne, the tragedy of Bibighar consists not in her physical violation alone, but also in her permanent separation from Kumar. The diary foregrounds this double tragedy most forcefully in Daphne's last verbal engagement with the doctor attending to her pregnancy.

So I lay there, letting her get on with it. But suddenly I said, 'What am I to do, Anna? I can't live without him.' She didn't look at me. She was measuring the potion. She spoke to the medicine, not to me. After all, this was the one thing she could really trust, really believe in, really love. She said, 'This you must learn to do. To live without' (562-563).

As the narrator of her segment, Daphne shares a common narrative platform with other characters such as Lili, Ludmila, White and Reid. The written discourses of Reid and Daphne, undertaken in the latter's case to "set the record straight and break the silence" (448), turn them into conscious narrators. The spoken discourses of Lili and Ludmila, on the other hand, are done without the speakers' awareness of their narratorial function. Together, all of them equip the central narrator with perspectives to construct, as he does, the subjectivities of Crane and Kumar. There is, all the same, a subtle difference in
the focalizations of Daphne and other character-narrators. This concerns the relationship between the focalizer and the focalized. While the focalized in the account of the latter group includes their own thoughts on and perceptions of other characters, the focalized in the Daphne's narration is most nearly herself. As the narrating subject of her feelings, she becomes the subject of narration herself.

The discursive complexity such as the one evidenced in The Jewel contributes to the slow unfolding of the story. The overlapping of the narrating voices, the use of the mixed narrative modes, create a sort of contrapuntal music. The narrative technique is, on the whole, a dialectical one. The multiplicity of the first-person accounts is limited, by definition, to each intradiegetic narrator's knowledge, experience and information. The central narrator's voice, it has been noticed, has also to a large extent been regulated by figural focalizations. These several voices reiterate certain events, thereby making them central to the semantics of the novel. At times, the figural voices revealing the minds uttering them supplement each other to complete a picture. But more often than not, the novel posits antithetical views, as it does, in case of Reid and White, for example. A synthesis of these multiple perspectives is made possible in the novel by anchoring them on the value system of the implied author. Although the conditions of meaning are shaped by an intertextual network, they ultimately cohere through the implied author's values into a determinate meaning.
The most repeated event in The Jewel is the rape of Daphne. The event is narrated throughout The Quartet more than a dozen times, each time with a change of either the narrator or the focalizer or the context. The frequency with which the event is referred to in the novel marks it out as the pivotal symbol in the structure of The Jewel in particular and The Quartet in general. A violent sexual union, then, is the primary metaphor for the British-Indian relationships: "... the affair that began on the evening of 9th August 1942, in Mayapore, ended with the spectacle of two nations in violent opposition,..." (9)

That the rape victim Daphne conforms to Scott's values is made clear when the novel endows her with qualities that Crane lacks. Crane is semically encoded as a courageous woman who entertains liberal political ideas. In fact, the Jewel in the Crown - a picture by that name - is given to her in recognition of the courage that she has exhibited in warding off a detachment of rioters intent on ransacking the mission school at Muzzafirabad. The physical courage is fortified by her moral boldness: she has the guts to be impervious to social snobbery and insolently indifferent to the condescension for her inferior social station. This present attitude is a transition from an earlier one of finding "a real enough source of comfort and protection" in the "clan-gathering call to solidarity" (17). The reason why Crane initially turns to the communal circle of security is to be found in her fear of India: "There was, as well, India, which at first had seemed strange, even frightening..." (16) The fear of India as a country of immense and unpredictable proportions
and of a vast alien population propels the British to band together into a group life. Racial exclusiveness, thus, becomes an Anglo-Indian imperative.\textsuperscript{19} It functions as a defense mechanism against the perceived fears of the British.\textsuperscript{20} The ghettoized life that the English come to live - symbolized in the novel by the Mayapore Club - breeds insularity and moral superiority on the one hand and racial prejudice towards the Indians on the other. During the first few weeks of her stay in India, even Daphne is strongly inclined to visit the club in order to escape the obsession" of being surrounded by strangers" (134) and to feel at home among her own kind (136).

The peculiarity of such a self-contained society lies in its internal stratification. That a society predicated on a racial distancing between the British and the Indians should be so stratified is a contradiction in terms. But a hierarchized class structure - a theme taken up in The Towers of Silence- is an accepted fact of the Mayapore life. Like her real-life prototype Marcella Sherwood, Crane is distinguished by neither professional position nor family background.\textsuperscript{21} Consequently, she is accommodated on the lowest rung of what Michael Malim calls" the white caste system of the Raj."\textsuperscript{22} Her imperviousness signifies her refusal to honour the implicit assumptions of a society whose periphery she occupies. The refusal is consequent upon her changed attitude to India. The more she comes to understand and love India the less is the necessity for her to subscribe to the concept of "white solidarity" (16). Her love of India is expressed in her politically liberal instincts so much so that
she is presented as "cranky about the natives" (45). The proairetic encoding of a sequence of actions, however, reveals Crane's character in a new light. Immediately after Gandhi exhorts the British to leave India to either God or anarchy, Crane feels let down by her political hero and takes off his portrait from her wall, even while retaining the Jewel picture. The picture depicts allegorically Queen Victoria in her royal splendours. The pulling down of Gandhi's portrait signifies the failure of the Indians to conform to Crane's yardstick of good political behaviour just as the Jewel picture connotes her quiet pride in the colonial achievement. Thus, when she says that "India must be independent" (37), her political intentions invoke the obligation of the British to grant India freedom and the obligation of the Indians to evidence political maturity.

Like her political good wishes, her love of India operates only on an ideational level. She is incapable of loving any particular Indian because she cannot lose the self-consciousness of being a white person in a black people's world. The tenacious holding on to the Jewel picture reinforces this self-consciousness or what she calls the 'hump'.

... the hump, however high or low it was, which, however hard you tried, still lay in the path of thoughts you sent flowing out to a man or woman whose skin was a different colour from your own (75).
The death of her Indian companion D.R. Chaudhuri in the riot-related violence functions as a catalytic event enabling her to reach out to another both as a human being and as an Indian. She sits beside his dead body holding his hand. Chaudhuri's death is a metaphoric expression revealing at once how her good works and noble thoughts have been going in a vacuum and how her existence has been a dichotomy between profession and practice. Holding the dead man's hand is, therefore, an amendment, a belated attempt at suturing the two halves of her life into a unified whole. It is the first step towards what Lili Chatterjee describes as dirtying her hands for the cause she's held dear, towards identifying herself totally with India. The pulling down of The Jewel picture is a consonant gesture in the direction of losing self-consciousness for achieving a proper identification.

The semic encoding of Daphne through the trait of courage distinguishes her from Crane relationally. Lili Chatterjee divines that "between them they represented something" (110). It is Ludmila who fixes the commonness between them on courage. But Daphne's courage is of a different kind: it is holistic and is not confined to making only gestures as Crane does. She steps out of the charmed circle of safety and security to experience and explore the real India with which she is acquainted as a child. By falling in love with Kumar, she connects the East with the West symbolically represented in the novel by the Bibighar Gardens and the MacGregor House respectively.
MacGregor and the Bibighar are the place of the white and the place of the black? To get from one to the other you could not cross by a bridge but had to take your courage in your hands and enter the flood and let yourself be taken with it, lead where it may. This is a courage Miss Manners had (178).

The two places, as their history suggests, initiate several binary oppositions such as restraint/passion, soul/body, civilization/instinct, West/East. MacGregor rebuilds the house of the prince who has originally built it for a singer whose love he cannot consummate. The English nabob keeps his wife here. The Bibighar, built by the prince's son to house his bevy of courtesans, is used by the nabob to accommodate his Indian lover. By moving from one place to the other, Daphne accomplishes a resolution of the antitheses and achieves a wholeness that Crane lacks. The Kumar-Daphne alliance thus becomes a symbol of an ideal East-West, England-India union, something about which Lili feels "subconsciously pleased but afraid of the consequences" (472).

An interracial violence, as R.K. Sinha points out, informs the story of the houses. MacGregor gets killed at the hands of mutinous sepoys (87), whereas Bibighar historically recalls an event in the course of the Sepoy Mutiny in which a party of women and children held as prisoners for some time were massacred brutally a fortnight later. The conflation of love and violence which forms the legacy of the houses is repeated in the love-
life of Daphne. She is raped soon after she has consummated her love with Kumar in the Bibighar Gardens. The rape of Daphne is the most powerful subversive metaphor of the British-Indian relationship. It signifies that the ambivalent 'imperial embrace' has actually been a brutal rape. The multilevel symbolism of the rape does not even escape the notice of the victim herself. Writing to Lady Manners, she parallels her own condition with that of India:

There is that old, disreputable saying, isn't there? 'When rape is inevitable, lie back and enjoy it.' Well there has been more than one rape. I can't say, Auntie, that I lay back and enjoyed mine. But Lili was trying to lie back and enjoy what we've done to her country (554).

In situating the rape of Daphne at the epicentre of the novel, Scott may have been influenced by Forster whose *A Passage to India* is organized around the imaginary rape of Adela Quested by Dr. Aziz. It may also be that the thematic parity is the outcome of an attempt by the writers at mapping out the colonial mind. The colonial fear of a possible native attack on the white womenfolk has been the subject-matter of a vast array of cultural and psychological texts. As Gomathi Narayanan points out, the threat of a rape is a common enough feature of British fiction on India to the extent that it has become an archetypal motif. In writing about the Indo-British colonial encounter, it is easier for the novelist to draw upon this motif. But it
would be misleading to suggest that the motif originates in or is confined to the Indo-Anglian fiction. The first reference to the motif occurs, incidentally, in Shakespeare’s *The Tempest* which portrays Prospero as a racialist whose daughter has suffered an attempted rape at the hands of an inferior being. Mannoni, in his study of the Madagascar colonial situation, observes that the apprehensions of danger to the chastity of women are "pure projections of the unconscious" and that this sexual guilt is the justification of hatred and colonial racialism.

Similarly, Frantz Fanon who has made a special study of the French colonialism in Algeria concludes that the colonizer detects in the native’s looks a desire for, among other things, sleeping in the settler’s bed and with his wife, if possible. The white rationalizes the native’s desire to outrage the modesty of his woman as the wish-fulfilment of an emasculated subject nation in its attempt to equalize the colonizer’s aggression by tainting him with shame and humbling the colonizer’s woman. The colonial woman is, as it were, the feminine counterpart of Prospero and frequently far more racialist than the man. The incorporation into *The Jewel* of the substantive features of these psychological texts is made evident by the emphasis on the danger that the rape of Daphne poses.

... the Bibighar Gardens affair... seemed to the European population to be the key to the whole situation they presently found themselves in, the sharpest warning of the most obvious danger... especially to the women (81).
The use of a phallocentric image such as the 'key' identifies the nature of the danger that the British women apprehend to themselves. The fear of the native attack is reiterated again by Reid in his analysis of the political scenario of the time.

These two incidents were portents of the greatest danger to our people, and coming hard on each other's heels as they did, I could only come to one conclusion, that the safety of English people, particularly of our women, was in grave peril (364).

Given the presence at the back of the British mind of a fear of sexual intimidation, the rape of Daphne serves to reinforce and further compound the racist mistrust of the Indians. The centring of the text on the rape, therefore, helps to underline the British racism as the primary reason for the failure of a successful interpersonal relationship between the two communities. Daphne's love of Kumar is, in itself, a transgression of the taboo relationship and hence a solitary woman's revolt against the basic colonial assumptions. Failure is perhaps inscribed into the revolt right from the beginning because, as Daphne herself admits, such a relationship is "put to the test too often to survive" (510).

The forces of racist prejudices inimical to a possible England-India union are typified by Reid and Merrick. Although a reciprocal insistence on "a critical distancing between the
ruler and the ruled" paradigmatically groups these two characters together, they are quite different from each other in their mental make-ups. Whereas Merrick is a really complex, three-dimensional character, Reid is a Kiplingesque stereotype believing in "the staggering feat of a handful of Englishmen ruling over the destinies of millions" and "the selflessness of these exiles who made enormous sacrifices for the good of the natives". A good take-off of General Dyer, Reid is intent on saving the Raj at any cost. The Jewel establishes a comparability between his condition and that of Dyer:"I am thinking here, of course, of the cause celebre of General Dyer in Amritsar in 1919, who found himself in a position not unlike that which I myself had to anticipate in 1942"(355).

Scott has always maintained that history is often made by diseased people and that Dyer created the most macabre history because he was ill from a disease of the brain. A similar unhinging pressure can be seen to be exerting on Reid's actions: at the time he is asked to take command of the Mayapore brigade, his wife is terminally ill and his only son a prisoner of war. The recreation on a minor scale of the 1919 events— the unrestrained firing on an unarmed assembly of people resulting in a large number of casualties— is motivated as much by Reid's sense of personal loss as by his belief in the need to keep the facade of the invincibility of the Raj intact.

Merrick's racist biases are, on the other hand, grounded in far more complicated motivations than Reid's. He is the one
character who figures on the centre-stage of all the four volumes of *The Quartet*; as a result, the semic encoding of his character is not complete in any particular volume. Each novel progressively reveals traits about him which supplement or modify the ones established earlier. The character of Merrick is constructed as "a tree-like hierarchical structure in which elements are assembled in categories of increasing integrative power". Not until *A Division of the Spoils* does his character seem full and final. In *The Jewel*, Merrick does not put in a personal appearance: all his actions and speech-acts are reported by other characters.

To Merrick colour "is basic. It matters like hell "(500). His analysis of what he feels to be the core of the colonial mind overlays in fact a complex of personal frustrations both social and sexual in nature. Merrick's first confrontation with Kumar takes place because the latter speaks an accented English which is better than the former's. The accent is a metonymic expression of a public school education which has been beyond the reach of Merrick and is hence a signifier of his humble origin. It subverts the commonplace colonizer-colonized equation because it transposes privilege and power with deprivation. Merrick who has the privilege under the colonial system is deprived of what Kumar who ought to be at a disadvantage in the given system possesses. This explains why Merrick harps on Kumar's vanity.

Anyone could see the kind of boy Kumar was. The worst type of educated black. Vain, arrogant, puffed-up. Only by consorting with a white woman could his
vanity be satisfied... A vain boy like that, for all his so-called English ways, was almost certainly playing a treacherous part in the uprising (197).

Moreover, Merrick is sexually jealous because Daphne turns down his proposal and falls in love with Kumar. In psycho-analytic terms, Kumar symbolizes Merrick's lack and a sense of plenitude can be achieved only through an obliteration of the symbol. Hence his keenness on implicating Kumar in Daphne's rape case. Because he wants him to be guilty of the crime he plants evidence against him. He deposits Daphne's bicycle in front of Kumar's living quarters on the night of Daphne's rape in order that it may later be collected as an incriminating material. Ludmila finds in him "a determination to miss nothing, a madness, an intention to find evidence" (163). Given his maniac obsession, Kumar's defilement and torture, as reported by Vidyasagar, are possibly true despite White's questioning of the veracity of the report. The Jewel suspends the resolution of the uncertainty, keeping it aside for The Scorpion.

The Jewel presents the differences based on race and colour as the major impediments to a human union between England and India. The failure of the union leads the two central characters of the novel-Crane and Daphne- to express grief in their individual ways. It is because of this, perhaps, that the novel conveys, as Narayanan points out, an impression of atonement despite the presence of Indian assaults at its centre. Crane commits suttee not much later than her recovery from the shock of the assault and the removal of the Jewel picture.
There was a shed in the compound behind Miss Crane's bungalow.... She locked herself in and soaked the walls with paraffin and set them alight and died...in the few seconds it took for the violently heated air to scorch the breath out of her lungs... for this act of becoming suttee...she dressed for the first time in her life in a white saree, the saree for her adopted country, the whiteness for widowhood and mourning (145).

Suttee is an obscurantist medieval Hindu practice by which the widow burns herself on her husband's funeral pyre. The basis of the ritual is reparation. The widow expiates her responsibility for her husband's death: "the folk theory of sati imputes that the wife brings about the death of the man under her protection by her weak ritual potency and by deliberately not using or failing to maintain her latent womanly ability to manipulate natural events and fate". On one level, Crane's committing suttee is an expiation for the death of Chaudhuri for which she is partly responsible. She has insisted on coming back to her headquarters on the fateful day despite requests by her colleagues to call off the journey. As a result, Chaudhuri has offered to accompany her and has been killed on the road. His death reduces her love of India to a gesture, unsupported as it is by a real human contact. By implication, therefore, it signifies the death of the personal ideals to which she is wedded. Similarly, the political ideals which she has always believed to
be basic to the original colonial promises, i.e. Britain's peaceful withdrawal from India, are seriously compromised in the brutal suppression of the 1942 riots. The act of suttee is Crane's self-imposed penance for the failure of values both personal and collective. On the symbolic level the act of suttee completes Crane's movement towards a wholeness, begun with the removal of the Jewel picture by fixing her gender identity. The novel encodes her as a castrated figure, i.e. as a man with a lack. She is ridiculed for her "long nose, and plain looks" (15), sympathized for the denial of the temporal blessing of marriage (33), despised as a "dried-up virgin" (78). Since suttee presupposes marriage and widowhood, Crane becomes, by committing suttee, feminized and whole.

Daphne's atonement has the same self-destructive quality as Crane's. She refuses to identify her assailants and thereby denies her compatriots a public revenge. What is more, she insists on having the baby conceived during the love-making and the subsequent rape. She believes the baby to be Kumar's. Her love of Kumar is as much an expression of her love of the country as an effort to offset the British refusal to own responsibility for the creation of the type to which Kumar belongs—the Brown sahib. Brought up in England and educated at Chillingborough, he finds himself in India, like a Eurasian in "a racial no man's land". Rejecting India and rejected by both the British and the Indians, his is "a tragic search for some sense of his own identity." Daphne's refusal to opt for a caesarian operation to have the baby out and later her death by peritonitis are forms
of atonement for a personal as well as a communal failure. On the individual level, the expiation is for the promise of silence enjoined upon Kumar— a promise meant to protect him turns out to be the cause of his damnation because he takes the promise too literally. On the communal level, Daphne expiates for the robot-like colonial system that sunders any interracial love. Parvati, the child she gives birth to, becomes a human symbol of Daphne’s rejection of the race-based dehumanising system and her hope of the desirability of an East-West union on equal human terms.

.... the child I bear... Its skin may be as dark as Hari’s or almost as pale as mine, or somewhere in between. But whatever colour he, or she, is part of my flesh and blood; my own typically hamfisted offering to the future (451).

Through a relentless effort to satisfy the demands of the soul and the body unhindered by impediment posed by the colonial system, Daphne comes to share Scott’s values. Indeed, Daphne is the most important character in The Jewel. The only other character who has the tacit approval of Scott is White. He is not only fair to the Indians but even has cultivated personal friendship with many of them. On one occasion he even tries to break the racist division of the Mayapore town by trying to take a few Indians to the club, an exclusive preserve of the British. He tries to put to action his political ideas which are far more liberal than those of Crane. Working within the system, however,
he is constrained and does not, therefore, have the courage that Daphne exhibits in her actions.

The political liberalism of both White and Crane as well as the love of Daphne is subverted by the illiberal and racist forces represented in the novel by Merrick and Reid. Consequently, the kind of relationship that the Jewel-in-the-Crown picture presents is at complete variance with the patterns of relationship that obtain in the India of 1942. The picture depicts Queen Victoria as the Empress of India who is seated on "a golden throne, under a crimson canopy, attended by her temporal and spiritual aides: soldiers, statesmen and clergy" and surrounded by "representative figures of her Indian Empire-princes, landowners, merchants, money-lenders, sepoys, farmers, servants, children, mothers and remarkably clean and tidy beggars". An Indian prince, attended by native servants, approaches the throne bearing a velvet cushion on which he offers a large and sparkling gem(30). The picture signifies a stable social order of happiness under the matriarchal care and benevolence of the Queen.

However, the turbulent political conditions of 1942 and the racist biases of colonialism singularly undermine all that the picture conveys. Moreover, the foregrounding of the mother figure privileges only one mode of relationship - the paternal; the picture therefore suppresses the possibility of an equitable human relationship. As against this, the central character of the novel, Daphne, attempts at a human contact with a man from
another race and culture on the basis of equality. The gesture of Crane's holding Chaudhuri's hand falls into this category. The picture, thus, provides an ironic counterpoint to the themes organized by the novel.

The frustrated union of Daphne and Kumar forms the thematic core of The Quartet which seeks to explore the total range of the Indo-British colonial encounter telescoped in the last five years of the Raj. It is as much about race relations as about the interpersonal relationship among the members of the British community in India. The all-embracing experience of India largely determines the nature of the intra-community relationship of the British in the same way as the imperial embrace by the British regulates the Indian response to the colonial situation. As the opening statement of The Quartet, The Jewel, by turning on the central situation of the rape of Daphne, underlines violation as basic to such imperial embrace. The reasons cited in the novel for this include, among other things, a racist obsession with the English superiority. The other volumes of The Quartet which apportion a vast textual space to the delineation of the patterns of relationship within the British community seek through the motivations and mindstyles of characters an explanation for this nature of the Indo-British relationship.
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