

Introduction

In this dissertation I have tried to make a micro-study of women characters in Paul Scott's The Raj Quartet. The dissertation consists of 6 Chapters designed as follows: Chapter 1, 'Preliminary - Perspectives' deals briefly with the writer's literary career, the socio-literary tradition (i.e. the Anglo-Indian Fiction) to which The Raj Quartet belongs and its literary genre (i.e., the Historical Novel). In Chapter 2 there is an attempt to work out a map of the fictional world that emerges from Scott's novels — the world made up of the encounter between two cultures — the British and the Indian. Chapter 3 focuses critical attention on the major British women characters — i.e., those who are more or less portrayed in their 'roundness' and play a significant role in the action of the novel : Miss Edwina Crane, Daphne Manners, Ethel Manners, Women in the Layton family — Mabel, Mildred, Susan and Sarah, Sister Ludmila, Barbara Batchelor. Chapter 4 deals with minor British women characters who also play a significant role in exploring the British predicament in India during the last days of the Raj. In Chapter 5, the Indian world in the novel is portrayed in terms of a study of the Indian women characters. Chapter 6, 'conclusions' discusses briefly (a) the inherent limitations

of an Anglo-Indian writer in portraying the socio-political encounter between the British and the Indians in terms of concrete human life and (b) the role that women play in dramatising the encounter between two cultures and in throwing up the moral issues implicit in such an encounter.