

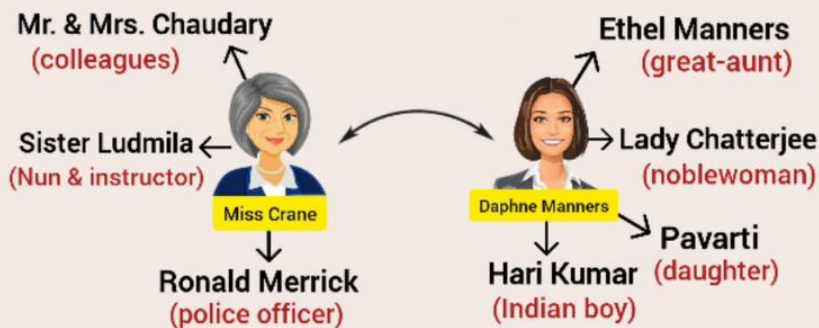
The Jewel in the Crown

Historical Novel

With Notes



The Jewel in the Crown



Background, Themes,
Summary, Symbols & Analysis



Paul Scott (1920-1978)

Introduction

“The Jewel in the Crown” is a historical novel written by Paul Scott. Set in British-controlled India during the final years of the British Raj. First published in 1966 as the opening novel in Scott’s “Raj Quartet” series, “The Jewel in the Crown” was crafted through meticulous research and Scott’s own experiences in India. Through its vivid characters and intricate narrative, the novel invites readers to delve into the complexities of colonial society and the lasting impact of British imperialism on both the colonizers and the colonized.

Brief Biography of Paul Scott

Paul Scott was born on March 25, 1920, in London, England, and he passed away on March 1, 1978, in London as well. In 1943, at the age of 22, Scott was posted as a commissioned officer in India. On return to London he worked as a notable literary agent, before deciding to write full time from 1960. In 1964 he returned to India for a research trip, though he was struggling with ill health and alcoholism. He is best known for his “Raj Quartet” series of novels set in British-controlled India during the final years of the British Raj. In addition to the “Raj Quartet,” which includes “*The Jewel in the Crown (1966)*,” “*The Day of the Scorpion (1968)*,” “*The Towers of Silence (1971)*,” and “*A Division of the Spoils (1975)*,” he wrote other novels and several collections of short stories.

The Jewel in the Crown: Background

The Jewel In the Crown is set in the context of British-controlled India during the 1940s, particularly during the later years of World War II and the period leading up to Indian independence in 1947. The novel is told as if the incident is being investigated years later. The point of view moves from character to character, first to third-person, at different points in time and uses a variety of forms from diaries and letters to interviews and third-person narration. This allows the author to explore various views on the social and political environment of the time.

The Jewel in the Crown: Themes

Colonialism and Imperialism

The Jewel in the Crown is set within the context of British colonial rule in India, portraying the power dynamics and cultural clashes between the colonizers and the colonized. The British presence in India is pervasive, influencing all aspects of life in **Mayapore** and sustain a system of racial and social hierarchy.

Identity and Belonging

The novel explores the questions of identity and belonging. Characters like **Hari Kumar**, who is both Indian by birth and British by education, grapple with questions of identity and belonging. Hari struggles to find his place in a Indian society that views him with suspicion due to his English education, while also feeling disconnected from his Indian heritage.

Racism

The Jewel in the Crown exposes the systemic discrimination and inequality based on race, class, and caste. The rape of **Daphne Manners**, a young British woman, leads to a racially charged investigation in which Hari Kumar, an Indian man, is wrongly accused and mistreated by the authorities. The incident exposes the deep-seated racism and prejudice within colonial society, both among the British rulers and within the Indian community.

Political Unrest and Independence

The backdrop of World War II and the growing nationalist movement in India adds layers of political unrest to the narrative. The novel explores the aspirations for independence among Indians, as well as the challenges faced by those advocating for self-rule in the face of British oppression and resistance from conservative elements within Indian society.

The Jewel in the Crown: Title Significance

In the context of the novel, the title represents British colonial rule in India, which was considered the jewel in the crown of the British Empire. This title signifies the immense significance and value placed on India as a prized possession of the British Empire.

The Jewel in the Crown: Summary

The novel revolves around two incidents that happen on **August 9, 1942**. During riots following the Indian Congress's vote to support Gandhi and independence, two Englishwomen, **Miss Crane** and **Daphne Manners**, are attacked.

In the opening chapter Paul Scott introduces us to cranky, eccentric **Miss Crane**. She is a British woman who first comes to India as a governess and decides to become a headmistress in the Protestant Mission School in the fictional town of Mayapore, India. Miss Crane is depicted as a woman who is dedicated to her students and takes her role as an educator seriously. She likes Mahatma Gandhi and hanging his picture on a wall. But Miss

Crane began to dislike Gandhi when he started Quit India movement. On 9 August 1942 Miss Crane is caught in the countryside with her colleagues Mr. & Mrs. Chaudhuri. Despite her efforts to protect Mr. Chaudhuri, he is killed by a violent mob. Miss Crane is deeply affected by his death and loses hope in the India she once loved. **Ronald Merrick**, a police officer, questions her during the investigation, but she only responds with “*There is nothing I can do.*” Later, Miss Crane tragically commits suicide by setting herself on fire.

Daphne Manners moves from London to British-ruled India during World War II after losing her family. She stays in Rawalpindi with her great-aunt **Lady Ethel Manners**. Lady Manners sends her to Mayapore to stay with her Indian friend, **Lady Chatterjee**, whom Daphne calls “Auntie Lili,”.

While staying with Lady Chatterjee in McGregor House Daphne meets **Hari Kumar**, a journalist at the *Mayapore Gazette*. Hari is an Indian boy who was brought up in England and educated at *Chillingborough school* that Daphne’s own brother attended. Hari speaks only English, but his father’s financial collapse and suicide obliged Hari to return to India. In India Hari faces racial discrimination and identity crises.

Despite these racial tensions, Daphne and Hari fall in love. However, one night in a park known as the *Bibighar Gardens*, they are attacked by Indian men. Daphne is raped, but she doesn’t report it to protect Hari from prejudice. The police superintendent, **Ronald Merrick**, arrests Hari anyway. Daphne

tries to free him by making false claims, but eventually, she threatens to accuse Englishmen of the rape, leading to her being rejected by the British community in India. Merrick drops the rape charges against Hari and instead accuses him of breaking a law against anti-imperial activities. Hari is sent to prison, and Daphne becomes pregnant. She hopes the baby is Hari's, but it could be from any of the men who raped her. Daphne returns to Ethel's home and gives birth, but sadly, she dies during childbirth due to her heart condition. Lady Ethel notices that Daphne's baby, **Parvati**, looks a lot like Hari. She considers that Hari is her biological father.

The Jewel in the Crown: Symbols

“The Jewel in the Crown” contains several important symbols that carry thematic significance throughout the narrative. Here are some key symbols from the novel:

The Crown: The crown symbolizes British colonial power and authority in India.

Mayapore: The fictional town of Mayapore serves as a microcosm of colonial India, representing the complex social, cultural, and political dynamics of the British Raj.

The Bibighar Gardens: The Bibighar Gardens, where the rape of Daphne Manners occurs, symbolize the violence and brutality of colonial rule.

Hari Kumar's English Education: Hari Kumar's English education symbolizes the cultural hybridity and identity crisis experienced by individuals caught between two worlds.

These symbols serve as metaphors for the broader social and political dynamics at play within the narrative, inviting readers to contemplate the complexities of colonial relationships and their lasting impact on individuals and communities.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, "The Jewel in the Crown" by Paul Scott offers a exploration of the complexities of colonial India during the final years of the British Raj. Through its richly drawn characters and intricate narrative, the novel delves into themes of colonialism, racism, identity, and power dynamics, against the backdrop of historical events such as World War II and the Indian independence movement. Scott's masterful storytelling immerses readers in a world where personal relationships intersect with larger social and political forces, ultimately revealing the profound impact of colonialism on both the colonizers and the colonized.