Review Article

India Enchants: The Burst of Blossoms; Jhabvala's First Phase Novels

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TO WHOM SHE WILL

The impact of modern Western ideology was seen at many levels of Indian life after Independence. An era of science, technology and modern economy was being ushered in. Education in general and that of women in particular was gaining momentum. On the sociological level, certain radical changes of concept concerning the centres of power and influence in family and society were being introduced. A sense of alienation and unsettlement was a sequel to this transformation, for modernization set in motion a disturbance in the traditional pattern of Indian life without providing any viable alternatives. India in the Fifties was in a state of transition.

India's capital, Delhi, was at the centre of this change. From 1947 onwards, it also witnessed a coming together of cultures unprecedented in Indian history. Mass migrations from the northern states, following the Partition of India, were a feature of the late Forties and early Fifties. Being the seat of the new government, Delhi also attracted people from the rest of the country. Bengalis and South Indians, in particular, came in large numbers in search of employment. Independence brought foreign embassies and people from all over the world to the Capital. From the early Sixties, another phenomenon was perceived. A new generation of Westerners, drawn by Indian spiritualism, started coming in. Unlike their predecessors, they came not to conquer but to be conquered 1. How this multiple ingress was affecting the social and intellectual climate of Delhi and by implication the whole of India forms the basis of Ruth Jhabvala's exploration of India in her novels and stories.

Living in Delhi and being a close observer of its social-cultural milieu, Ruth Jhabvala presents in her first novel Amrita or To whom She will 2 a dynamic picture of Delhi in a state of transition. Against this background she conceives and projects a drama of cross-generation conflict and resolution in two extended families of post-Independence India. Of the two, one belongs to the wealthy aristocracy living for generations in Delhi and the other to the new expatriate community from North Punjab now ceded to Pakistan. These families – authentic representatives of their respective communities – are faced with the common danger of invasion from each other's ranks that is bred by the peculiar environment in which they live. A vast cultural gulf separates the two communities, but the lines that each draws to ensure its separateness are equally sacred and inviolable. What seems to have impressed Ruth Jhabvala in her observations of Indian life in those first few years was not the degree of social and cultural assimilation that was subtly but surely changing the face of India but its reverse. India assimilates her generations but not her cultures seem to be her conclusion in her first novel.

This may be rejected as dismissive criticism of Indian society and a number of Ruth Jhabvala's Indian critics have done so. She has been charged with presenting Indians as "ethnic curiosities"3 and criticized for trying to "please foreign readers" by projecting India "as an anthropological show piece."4 It is also a fact that the bulk of her Indian readers find her portrayal of India unacceptable, conditioned as they are by a tradition of conviction in India's ability to assimilate her cultures. Ruth Jhabvala's conclusion is surprising too in the light of her own experience of India. As a European expatriate married to an Indian she should have encountered a cultural gulf of far greater dimensions than the one dividing the Delhi aristocrat from the Punjabi refugee. Yet, in her biographical records, she gives no hint of having experienced any dividing line against her. On the contrary, she has given exuberant accounts of the near perfectness of her assimilation with India in the first few years.

Ruth Jhabvala's first novel reveals a world order in which a stubborn identification with one's inherited culture is both realistic and desirable. This identification has its genesis in the ancient code of laws laid down in the Dharma Shastras. An adherence sustained over the centuries to the social order created thereof, with its ramifications of caste and class and the separations attendant upon them, still shapes and colours the Indian outlook as Ruth Jhabvala sees it. The characters of her novel identify with a well-defined area, predetermined by birth and heritage and share a common conviction that only disruption and unhappiness can result from a violation of the dividing lines. To Whom She Will opens with a member of the aristocratic class, now reduced by circumstances to traveling in a hired open tonga.

Ten pages later, a member of the community uprooted by Partition is reduced to a fit of giggles at the thought of her brother in love with a girl from one of the finest old families of Delhi. For, of all the dividing lines, not one is more rigorously enforced than the one governing marriage. Both communities draw a moral from the ancient myth, where the sage issues a warning against keeping a girl unwed for too long as then there is a danger of her choosing her own husband.

Convinced that early and arranged marriages constitute the sole safeguard against a mixing of class and community, the elders of Ruth Jhabvala's novel fall back on the old adage. The concept of what constitutes "tender age" for a woman, however, has changed from nine in Vedic India to nineteen in the India of To Whom She will.

When nineteen year old Amrita, the grand-daughter of the wealthy barrister Rai Bahadur Tara Chand, and twenty two year old Hari Sahni, a Punjabi refugee, fall in love and wish to marry each other, they encounter opposition from both families. They are the first generation of liberated Indians who have been exposed to the one nation concept. As a result, they consider the restrictions imposed upon them unjust and meaningless. They are united in a common effort to prevent the marriage which they look upon as nothing short of a disaster. The story of how they pursue their mission and achieve their goal forms the comic plot of the novel. In her conclusion, Ruth Jhabvala establishes the point of view of the elders that like must mate with like, and her own conviction, during this phase of her life in India that the merging of the generations and the continuation of tradition is natural and desirable in India.

Raj Bahadur, Tara Chand, described by an absentee character in the novel as a "time-server", is the present head of the family comprising three daughters, one son-in-law and two grand-children. Tara Chand prides himself on his advanced ideas regarding female emancipation , but is exposed as a fake in the course of the novel. He affects a distaste for arranged marriages and holds forth on his respect for individual preference in matrimony. Yet his much vaunted liberal outlook falls short indeed when he is up against Amrita's preference for Hari Sahni:

'I have enquired into the young man's family … the result … was not satisfactory … you know that I myself am not hidebound in this way; that indeed I have allowed two of my own daughters to marry outside their immediate community, and in one case quite distinctly beneath her own level of, shall we say, breeding and fortune… it is apparent that I am one who is willing to leave a generous margin in these matters; that I do not insist on the exact parallel. But in your case … the margin, the discrepancy between the two families, the young man's and yours, is too wide.' (pp. 6-7)

Here, we are up against not caste or community consciousness but deliberate snobbery of class. That individual worth does not figure at all in the old man's considerations is expressed by him with unashamed candour:

'I have also… spoken to the young man himself, and I may mention that I was not impressed either by his personality or by his capabilities. However… that is a point on which I do not wish to insist. If the family background had been satisfactory, I would not have unduly concerned myself over the young man's deficiencies. They are, after all, your affair.' (p. 7)

In the values expressed here lies the key to the Rai Bahadur's personality. That a strong conservation and social snobbery underlies the veneer of modern liberalism is indicated from the way in which he – a self-avowed champion of social progress – declares that family background is his concern while the young man's character and abilities are Amrita's. Obvious too is the extent of his self-delusion. Overweening vanity impels him to act and hold forth with conviction. However, the gap between what he thinks he is doing and what he really does is ruthlessly though comically exposed. He believes that he has given his daughters an emancipated upbringing and allowed them to choose their own husbands. In reality, husbands were found for two and the third could marry the man of her choice only after a prolonged battle of wills with her father. Even Mira, the dim-wit of the family, is aware of this discrepancy;

It was all very well for Papaji to say that he had not arranged his daughters' marriages; but Mataji had been there and all the aunts, and they had seen to it that suitable husbands were found. How else could she have

married Harish's father? She could not have gone out to look for him. And Tarla too—Vazir Dayal had not just walked into the house; various aunts had seen to it that he got there. That was the way things were done, the way they had to be done. (p. 180)

The eldest Tarla, though apparently dedicated to the cause of female emancipation, backs her father up in all his moves against Amrita. Tarla affects modernity and adopts liberal views on education, marriage and careers for women. But in the face of Amrita's choice in matrimony she proves to be just as hidebound as her father. Amrita's mother Radha who had, in her tempestuous youth, flouted her father and insisted on marrying a man from another community is the strongest advocate for the dissolution of the Hari-Amrita relationship. In her heart she looks upon her own inter-community marriage as a mistake and is determined to prevent Amrita from repeating it.

Mira the youngest of the family and the only one who possibly cherishes some real affection for Amrita, has no better contribution to make to the subject under discussion than to commiserate: " 'It is a pity . . . she cannot marry my Harish. That would be so ideal for all of us' "(p.104) – a conclusion she has reached after her experience of one inter-community union, her sister Radha's. The three sisters, for all their character contrasts and their bickering and sparring, unite in a conspiracy to arrange Amrita's marriage with the America returned son of a Delhi socialite Lady Ram Prashad Khanna. They arrange an interview and show Amrita to her prospective mother-in-law in a ceremony so formal and ostentatious that the thinness of their Western veneer is revealed with startling clarity.

A threat to the clan's conspiracy comes from Tarla's husband Vazir Dayal Mathur, whose mission in life seems to be the debunking of everybody around him and his father-in-law in particular. Amrita's grandfather, in the approved English fashion5 of half a century earlier, plans to send her away – not on a pleasure trip to Europe but for education to England – in an attempt to make her forget her calf love for Hari. Whimsical and egocentric and possessing immense wealth, Vazir Dayal conceives the idea of foiling his father-in-law's schemes by offering to pay Hari's passage himself. He makes promises of financial assistance in the process of a game of patience, his magnanimity increasing with every right move:

He felt very pleased with himself, though probably even he was not sure what pleased him most, to be helping Amrita, to be annoying his wife's family or to have completed his patience so successfully. (p.108)

Vazir Dayal's game of patience seems to bear about the same relation to Amrita's problem as Tarla's efforts at female emancipation. For all their apparent dissension, they are seen by the novelist as kindred souls – both playing a game and using Amrita as pawn. The card game and social work are used by the novelist to establish the two types of character as well as to define the extent of the sincerity and seriousness that Tarla and her husband are capable of vis-à-vis Amrita. Amrita is, quite understandably, repelled by the attitudinizing, selfishness and malevolence she sees around her and mistakenly believes them to be the products of Western sophistication. Motivation for revolt comes with romantic love for a member of a community she believes to be composed of simple unostentatious people who, to her innocent trusting mind, represent the soul of India. Yasmine Gooneratne interestingly relates Amrita's rebellion to Ruth Jhabvala's own recoil from her Europeanness at this stage of her life.

Ruth Jhabvala was "enraptured" by a post-independence Delhi in which, with the withdrawal of the British Raj, traditional Indian courtesies were being revived and deliberately cultivated; and so Amrita, the young heroine of her first novel To Whom She Will (1955) recoils from the Westernized values of her wealthy and well-bred family to seek identity with an "Indianness" that she imagines is to be found only in simple, true and unostentatious folk unspoiled by Western ways.6

However, here too Amrita finds herself at a loss. Her affection for Hari is based on an idealized concept of the Indianness she supposes him to represent. That her idealism is misconceived is perceptible from the way her quest for the simple and the natural leads her to people whose dividing lines are just as uncompromising as her grandfather's, and whose rejection of her is as total as the Rai Bahadur's rejection of Hari.

The cultural contrasts are established in a series of brilliantly etched scenes. Rai Bahadur Tara Chand's imposing mansion, furnished with massive Victorian furniture and expensive ornaments brought back from his travels abroad, forms an effective contrast to the "downstairs part of a one-storey house in one of the new colonies" (p. 11), where Hari lives with his mother, brother, sister, sister's husband, their three children and a cow. That the polarities in life style are not only wealth based becomes clear from other points of contrasts. One is that between the elegant interior décor of Tarla Mathur's drawing-room and the crude ostentatious one of Hari's sister Prema Suri's – the rich and cultured member of the Sahni family. Compare -

A fan turned softly from the ceiling, not really necessary in that cool room but providing a sweet titillating breeze. An

enormous Persian carpet covered the marble floor; it was patterned all over with tiny flowers in pink and green and blue, dainty and fresh and poignantly artificial. The divans were almost at floor level and matched the brocaded silk of the curtains; green and crimson horsemen glittering against a somber background. There was a long low cabinet, with bronze grillwork twisting behind the glass front, and on it a tea-set, red and gold, fine as breath, curved shallow cups with long handles pointing upwards (p. 25)

With Prema had everything ready, and she sat waiting on one of the flowered divans in the drawing-room. There were three of these divans ranged round the wall at regular intervals; between them were armchairs, also flowered, and small tables. The pattern was divan, small table, armchair, divan . . . and so on in admirable symmetry. On each small table stood one silver ashtray.

Precisely in the middle of the room, on a wildly patterned square of carpet, was another small table; on this stood a polished and unused silver tea-set. A large coloured full-length photograph of Prema dressed up in her best clothes hung on one wall; on the opposite wall a coloured full length photograph, equally large, of Suri. A vase bulged waist-high in the imitation fireplace; in this were stuck eight artificial flowers which looked as if they had been starched. (p. 25)

All the essentials of luxurious living are present in the two images, but the contrast between them hits the eye. The novelist is able to achieve this by means of judiciously chosen epithets for each. Adjectives like “cool,” “fresh,” “dainty,” “sweet,” “titillating” and “fine as breath,” used to describe Tarla’s drawing-room, are deliberately contrasted with the “also flowered,” “widely patterned,” “equally large,” “bulged,” “stuck,” and “waist-high” of that of Prema’s.

The rituals of eating, serving and preparing of meals are also effectively used by the novelist to denote cultural contrasts The description of a lavish meal served by liveried retainers in the Rai Bahadur’s immense dining room with its “broad heavy dining-table … spread with a gleaming white cloth and laid with initialed cutlery” (p. 9), is followed two pages later with a picture of Hari sitting on a charpoy in the middle of the courtyard, eating his dinner out of little brass bowls on a tray, in full view of the cow undergoing her milking operations (p. 11). Prema’s tea party for Amrita, with the tea things laid out on a huge dining table looking “rather isolated, like rabbits lost in the snow” (p. 53) and the teapot nursed by the fire for two hours by a ragged little servant boy, is projected as hilariously incompatible with the sophisticated arrangements of Tarla Mathur’s soiree in honour of Lady Ram Prashad Khanna.

Yet Hari and Amrita are drawn to each other by virtue of these very polarities. Amrita believes she recognizes a delightful Indianness in Hari’s habitual unpunctuality – an unworldliness and impracticality so truly Indian that it could not be governed by “hard-set European things like time and clocks” (p. 21). His undisguised love of food and unselfconscious enjoyment of it makes her think of him as simple and unspoilt’ and his ways “as the traditional, truly Indian ways which had been lost in her family” (p. 23). Hari, on the other hand, is attracted to Amrita for her westernized sophistication and her wealthy background. That the two have not the slightest notion of each other’s aspirations is established in their first scene together, Amrita voices an apprehension that Hari’s sister will not approve of her.

She may think I am very spoilt and westernized and affected; because my family have made me like that . . . I am afraid that your sister will despise that, and so she will not be able to like me. O Hari, often I worry about it, and then I am so grateful to you for not despising me for using knife and fork and speaking a lot in English and having been educated in a convent and at Lady Wilmot College’. (p. 24)

Prema’s party for Amrita turns out to be a fiasco. Amrita had expected supreme simplicity but what she encounters is vulgar display and sentimental vapourings. She senses the culture gap between them – though indistinctly at first. Among other things, Prema boasts of her fine literary taste:

‘Some of the stories in these magazines are very good. They are so true to life. I have learnt much from them and also they give me comfort.’ She sighed. ‘One can forget one’s sorrows when one is reading,’ she said, and sighed again.

Amrita remembered that her father used to say the same thing but she thought that he had meant it in a different way. (p. 52)

Her embarrassment and distress increase with Prema’s burgeoning exhibitionism and emotional outpourings till they take her further and further away from the subject that had brought them together in the first place – her love to Hari: “She had to admit that Prema was not after all so truly Indian as she had thought she would be” (p. 54). Prema, on the other hand, is astonished at the sight of Amrita in a plain chiffon sari and no jewellery at all – “not even bangles” (p. 52). Amrita’s confessions of having come by bus and of her mother keeping only one servant bring her down heavily in Prema’s estimation. She decides that Amrita is not good enough for her brother and solemnly promises her mother that while she lives Hari will

not marry Amrita.

In contrast to the disappointing outcome of Amrita's visit to Prema, Sushila's afternoon with the latter is a great success despite the fact that Prema had made none of the elaborate arrangements that she had for Amrita. Sprawled on the bed together Sushila and Prema whisper confidences, eat sweets, hold hands and understand each other perfectly:

Prema told her everything: about the complexities of a woman's life and the deep silent suffering that was her lot; and men's selfishness and their brutality; about the aching heart in the midst of splendour; about the cost of the dining-room furniture; about Suri, a lot about Suri; and then, above all, about Prema. (p. 90)

Sushila, who is "one of us" (p. 90) and therefore emotionally attuned to Prema's brand of sentimentality, makes a very sympathetic listener. Herself a Prema in the making, she understands and appreciates her perfectly. A heavy cloud of sentiment and pleasurable melancholy hangs in the air.

She understood and she appreciated, she sighed, she said, It is Life, she said, O poor, poor Prema, and sometimes she wept, and then Prema wept too, and it was as if their two souls mingled in one sorrow. (p. 90)

The methods employed by the older generation of each community to bring their recalcitrant young ones on the road to conformity are also contrasted to highlight cultural differences. A noticeable characteristic in the tightly knit refugees clan is the subtlety with which it assimilates its generations – a quality bred into them by their history of emotional and financial insecurity. Renee Winegarten's observation that in Jhabvala's early novels "whatever the inner strains and stresses, the Indian family dominates, wrapping its members in a loving protective cocoon"11 is more applicable in Hari's case than in Amrita's. Amrita's family generates tensions and exercises authority but radiates little warmth and offers less protection. Radha's fiery exhortations, the Rai Bahadur's measured orations and the endless round of family conferences to decide Amrita's fate contrast effectively with the smooth adroitness with which Hari is brought around. The Sahnis, it is true, have to deal with a much feebler brand of revolt. Hari's half-hearted remonstrances and his mild protestations of love for Amrita are easily subdued by alternate coaxings and gentle reprimands. Amrita, notwithstanding her soft voice and courteous manners, has a will of iron. There is a history of discord too in the Rai Bahadur's family. Radha had displayed a similar determination in her youth and though her marriage had been considered a calamity by the members of her family, it could not be prevented. Vazir Dayal has consistently struck a jarring note. In their dealings with Amrita, her grandfather, mother and aunts draw a blank and it is Hari's family in whose hands the power of separating the two really rests. The Rai Bahadur comes perilously close to losing his authority (p. 100), and Radha has to stoop to visiting the despised refugees. Dressed in her finest clothes and jewels,12 she sallies forth in a chauffeur-driven car borrowed from her sister Mira, with the intention of impressing and intimidating Hari's mother and sisters but ends up by being reassured by them. Prema tells her –

'You need not worry. Your daughter is safe… If an elder sister cannot command her brother, who can? We will marry him, straight away we will marry him, no more delay. At once I will call for the girl's parents and all will be arranged….'

Radha's eyes brightened, and she asked, 'You can do this?' 'But of course we can do it. We are his family. It is our right to command him.' (p. 142)

In the final analysis, however, the Hari – Amrita union is dissolved not so much through family intervention as by a diminishing commitment to one another by Hari and Amrita themselves. In the end, both can envisage a happy marriage within their own ranks. As is to be expected, the change of vision comes first to Hari – his commitment to his love being weaker than his family's influence on him:

He had always known that sooner or later this would come, sooner or later his family would decide that it was time for him to be married. He had always accepted the prospect with equanimity: what must be must be…

Then too, Sushila was a girl from his own community she had been reared against the same background and to the same habits and traditions as he himself had been. He would not have to feel any constraint in her or her family's presence: his ways were also their ways . . . Her family would accept him as he was, and his family would accept her. Life could flow on as it always had done, practically without any readjustments. It was a smooth sweet, honeyed path they were laying for him. (p. 94)

While Hari can grasp this concept even as an abstraction and accept it, Amrita is brought to a dim recognition of it only through her gradually awakening love for Krishna Sen Gupta. In identifying with Krishna she falls back not on her grandfather's family but on memories of her dead father. That Amrita and Krishna are of a kind is established quite early in the novel. Radha, looking around for a suitable paying quest, finds Krishna – Who had come to Delhi to take up a teaching post at the University. He was a

Bengali, which made it all right, for Nirad Chakravarty had been a Bengali; his father was a well-known lawyer in Calcutta, which made it even more all right, and later it was discovered that his father had, from 1933-35, shared a prison sentence with Nirad Chakravarty in Meerut Jail; this, of course, made Krishna quite one of the family. (p. 19)

Like Amrita, Krishna too has to undergo a process of maturing before he can be assimilated into his inherited way of life. An important part of this assimilation is his recognition of Amrita's worth. On his return from England after completing his studies, he had encountered a new India – one from which he had felt bitterly alienated:

He hated the uncomplaining poverty, the apathy . . . He hated the servants who took it for granted that he was the master. . . He hated the beggars and the insolence with which they made it clear that they belonged to this society . . . He hated – perhaps most of all, because it hemmed him in all the time and threatened to engulf him – the complacency of his own class, the civil-servant mind, the stolid satisfaction with routine work, with salary and position for ever fixed, with yawning pleasures in once-English clubs. He hated the policy of intimidation on which the whole system seemed to rest . . . He hated the women because they were ignorant and innocent and submissive. He hated the heat which undermined and insulted his vigour. He hated – hated everything; even his parents, because it was they who had made him come back to this.7

Krishna's parents had noticed his displacement but had refrained from interfering. They had recognized, in their son's revolt, the signs of a frustrated attempt at identification with a land that cannot measure up to the standards of the West. They themselves had experienced similar emotions in their first encounter with India on their return from Europe, but in their time "there had been something definite, something concrete, for them to revolt and fight against." The National Movement had given "their newly acquired European liberal principles an outlet and a Cause". But their son's case, they realize, is different. He would need to reconcile and compromise and finally perhaps his bitterness would be "rubbed away by time and habit".(p. 47)

Four years in India and most of Krishna's eloquent hatred had indeed rubbed off. He had begun to lose his Western conditioning – had begun to confirm. He gradually got used to being waited upon by servants, ignoring beggars and looking upon young women as members of a different species. Even the sentimental Bengali verses he had sneered at earlier, now had the power to move him to tears. His initial alienation from Amrita had been part of the general disenchantment. Though living under the same roof, he had ignored and rejected her as a type unfamiliar to him and therefore undesirable. The English women he remembered with appreciation had been bold in their speech and behaviour, more conscious of their sex and more confident in their dealings with men. In contrast, Amrita's innocence and modesty had struck him as prudish and silly. But now –

Amrita's shy smile, her soft voice, her hands fluttering from out of her sari, these belonged; and what formerly he had characterized as prudery, he now thought of as a natural, a very fitting, reticence. (pp. 109-10)

Krishna and Amrita, but for their separate obsessions, would have instinctively recognized their natural counterparts in each other. Apart from the similarities of their inheritance and upbringing, they share certain innate characteristics that link them to their older generations. A sensitivity and delicacy, an inbred restraint in language and a scrupulous sense of honour can be traced back in Krishna's case to his parents and in Amrita's to her dead father. Thus when Amrita is thoroughly frustrated in her efforts to get her ideas through to Hari, she answers his characteristic: "'Have I offended you? If I have, I will never forgive myself. I will kill myself. I will pluck my own heart out,'" with the gentle "'yes Hari . . . but you have to speak first with a man in the Pushtu section' " (p. 77).

Krishna and Amrita discover their love for each other almost simultaneously – Krishna when Amrita innocently asks him to be her go-between and Amrita when Krishna announces his intention of leaving them. Ironically, it is around the same time that Radha, frustrated in her attempts to marry Amrita off to Lady Ram Prashad Khanna's son, starts planning a marriage between the two. "In this way the tradition of arranged marriage is reconciled with romantic love, "14 and Ruth Jhabvala's moral that one's cultural inheritance is not a liability but an asset is established. Her vision of India as a land in which an assimilation of generations and a preservation of community and cultural segregations is the final reality, is crystallized in actual and anticipated wedding festivities in her delightful first novel of India.

REFERENCES

1. This sentence, in the present tense, appears in the form of an epigraph to Ruth Jhabvala's second collection of short stories, See A Stronger Climate (London: John Murray Ltd., 1968).

2. Ruth Prawer Jhabvala, To Whom She Will (1955; rpt. London: Penguin Books, 1985). All references cited are from this edition.

3. Eunice De Souza, “The Expatriate Experience”, in Awakened Conscience: Studies in Commonwealth Literature (New Delhi: Sterling Publishing, 1978), p. 341.

4. Chetan Karnani, “Ruth Jhabvala’s Backward Place”, a paper presented in the 5th Triennial ACLALS Conference, Suva, January 1980, p. 11.

5. It was the fashion in England around the turn of the century to send young girls away on cruises to the Mediterranean to make them get over their infatuations.

6. Yasmine Gooneratne, “Contemporary India in the Writing of Ruth Prawer Jhabvala”, Westerly, Dec. 1983, p. 74.

7. This catalogue tallies in toto with the experience of Westerners in the second phase of their cycle of response to India, as depicted in Ruth Jhabvala’s later novels. However, Westerners move from acceptance to rejection and her Indian’s from the West in reverse order.