CHAPTER 2. A.

(i) THE COLONISER AND THE COLONISED: -

As Ian Ousby, et al., observe, Arthur Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes stories "are...the most famous and enduring contribution to detective fiction by any single author" (*The Wordsworth* 850). On the other hand, Sreejata Guha considers Saradindu Bandyopadhyay's Byomkesh Bakshi narratives "a classic of...[modern Indian literature]" (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* viii). Bandyopadhyay's thirty-three Byomkesh Bakshi mysteries formed identifiably the most popular Bengali detective fiction in late pre-independence and post-independence India.

Although the primary duty assigned to both Sherlock Holmes and Byomkesh Bakshi is identification of criminals, their conception, behavioural features and investigative methodology are markedly different. Holmes was created by Doyle perceptively as a representative of the British imperialists, who would safeguard their interests by maintaining peace and societal status quo at the colonial centre. On the other hand, Bakshi is a middle-class Bengali inquisitor who not only "seeks...the truth" but also acts as the spokesperson for Saradindu Bandyopadhyay's resistance against the hegemony of the Eurocentric sleuths in the sub-genre of detective fiction (*Byomkesh* 40).

Several factors as described below have contributed to Doyle's ideal conception of Sherlock Holmes as an upholder of the British colonial interests. It is important that most of Holmes's clients belong to the aristocracy while the criminals he deals with in narratives like A Study in Scarlet, The Sign of Four, "Five Orange Pips" and "The Adventure of the Dancing Men" are either Orientals or Americans or White Westerners with obsessive attraction for Britain's contemporary or former colonies. In contrast, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay exhibits an ambivalent attitude towards the British colonisers in the stories of the Byomkesh Bakshi canon. It is significant that with the exception of "Aadim Ripu", no other Byomkesh Bakshi story contains reference to the Indian freedom struggle even when the first ten of narratives – "Pather Kanta" (1932), "Shimonto Heera" (1932), "Satyanweshi", (1933), "Makarshar Rash" (1933), "Arthamanartham" (1933), "Chorabalee" (1934), "Agniban" (1935), "Upasanghar" (1935), "Raktomukhi Neela" (1936), and "Byomkesh O Baroda" (1936) – had been written and published prior to the Indian independence in 1947. In the dhoti-punjabee clad Bengali gentleman Bandyopadhyay tries to create an extraordinarily *ordinary* investigator who, in spite of being colonised, would dare to oppose the Eurocentric detectives like Sherlock Holmes, Hercule Poirot and Father Brown intellectually, behaviourally and methodologically, thereby establishing a separate section of subaltern detective fiction. Other Bengali litterateurs like Priyanath Mukhopadhyay, Bhuvan Chandra Mukhopadhyay, Kaliprashanna Chattopadhyay, Dinendra Kumar Roy, and Nihar Ranjan Gupta, whose sleuth narratives were published before 1932, had modelled their investigators on the White Western detectives but, unlike Bandyopadhyay, had subconsciously subsumed themselves in the realm of imperial literature. The pre-

Byomkesh Bakshi detectives, except Robert Blake, exhibit similarity in detecting Indian criminals and handing them over to the perceptively superior White administrators of British India. In contrast, Bakshi displays his insularity by avoiding the British police officials in stories, other than "Pather Kanta", written before the Indian independence in 1947, and dealing personally with the native criminals. Bandyopadhyay does not follow the path of Fanonian *collision* but of cultural and literary *collusion* to protest against the British colonisation and refute the perceived omnipotence and omniscience of the White Western detectives created by Doyle, Agatha Christie and G.K.Chesterton. Bakshi's anti-imperial character is registered through what Homi Bhabha terms "hybridity".

A Study in Scarlet, the first story of the Sherlock Holmes canon that introduces the detective and his associate Dr. John H. Watson, was published in the November 1887-issue of *Beeton's Christmas Annual*. Doyle based his detective on Joseph Bell, M.D., F.R.C.S. (1837-1911), consulting surgeon to the Royal Infirmary and Royal Hospital for Sick Children and teacher of medicine during his student days at Edinburgh University (Baring-Gould, *Annotated I* 7). From their maiden appearance both Holmes and Watson express themselves as supporters of the British colonial expansion and appear to be ideologically prejudiced against the Orient and the inhabitants of the British colonies. It is important that Arthur Conan Doyle was not English by birth, having had been born at Picardy Place, Edinburgh, on 22 May 1859 to the Irish Catholics Charles Altamont Doyle and Mary Foley. Significantly, Holmes's full name – "William Sherrinford Scott Holmes", according to Klinger – might be interpreted as referring to his Scottish ascendancy[1]. On the other hand, Duncan MacDougald, in

Some Onomatological Notes on *Sherlock Holmes* and Other Names in the Sacred Writings, reports that the name "Sherlock" comes from the Irish *scorl`oz* – Shearlock or Sherloch, which is derived from *searl`oz* – Scurloch, Shirlock, or Sherloch, which in turn is the Gaelic version of the Anglo-Saxon *scortlog*, literally 'short lock', that is, one with shorn locks (Baring-Gould, *Annotated I* 10). Moreover, Patrick Woulfe, in Irish Names and Surnames (1923), opines that "the Sherlock family…is of Anglo-Saxon origin, had settled in Ireland before the beginning of the thirteenth century, and soon became very widespread, being found in Dublin, Meath, Louth, Wexford, Waterford, Tipperary, etc." (*Annotated I* 10). In The Colonial Conan Doyle: British Imperialism, Irish Nationalism and the Gothic, Catherine Wynne notes that Charles Altamont Doyle was committed to the Irish cause and his brother resigned as the main cartoonist for *Punch* after the magazine satirised the Pope (3-7). Therefore, incorporation of an element of subalternity in his investigator symbolically becomes an instance of Doyle's own resistance against the hegemony the English colonisers. The detective's refusal of the English knighthood also assumes significance in this contest (Doyle, *The Complete* 1017). In contrast, John H. Watson, initially Ormond Sacker, is identifiably an Englishman from his full name, but is constantly dominated by Holmes[2]. It is to impart universality to his creation and in background of his practice as an ophthalmologist at Southsea in the imperial metropolis of London that Doyle usually uses "Sherlock Holmes" that combines a name and a surname that do not testify to the investigator's nationality or indicate to which Western continent he belongs. The detective has no relative except his elder brother Mycroft who appears in "The Adventure of the Greek Interpreter" and "The Adventure of the Bruce-Partington Plans" and whose first name also does not reveal his nationality or faith.

In spite of the ambiguity in his nationality, Holmes offers his service to the imperial Britain more actively and rigorously than Watson who is an English ex-military surgeon and has the experience of having served in British India. The investigator's early habitat might not be specified in that Watson first meets him as a "student" performing experiments at an unspecified hospital laboratory in A Study in Scarlet (Doyle, *The Complete* 14) but he exhibits a strong patriotic fervour in inscribing "V.R" or Victoria Regina on the drawing room-wall in "The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual" (334), thus alluding to the monarch under whom Britain's colonial expansion had reached its ultimate maturity. Holmes's clients belong to the section of the British and international bourgeois society usually concerned with imperial expansion: for example, the king of Bohemia in "A Scandal in Bohemia", knighted old squires in The Hound of the Baskervilles, the British Prime Minister and the Secretary for European Affairs in "The Adventure of the Second Stain", and (perceptible) members of the British Royalty in "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client". That he deals with them without any exuberance suggests that such noblemen are his *natural* and *ordinary* clients. The cases he investigates are of international importance but are directly or indirectly related to colonisation. In "The Adventure of the Second Satin" he investigates into the theft of a letter potent enough to start an international war between two imperial powers, and in "The Adventure of the Naval Treaty" that of a secret defence memorandum-of-understanding perceptively aimed at strengthening Britain's naval power, the navy being the traditional military wing for imperial expansion. "The Adventure of the Blue Carbuncle" and "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone" revolve round the stealth of

internationally-renowned gemstones that have identifiably been procured from the British colonies. In "The Five Orange Pips" and Valley of Fear, xenophobic occult organisations like the Ku-Klux-Klan and gangsters from Britain's former colony of the United States of America lead to disturbances in the imperial centre. The Victorian man-of-science adhered to strictest codes of etiquette seek to refute the existence of the supernatural in The Hound of the Baskervilles and "The Adventure of the Sussex Vampire" and prevent social scandals in 'The Adventure of the Illustrious Client" and "A Scandal in Bohemia". Apart from testifying to the versatility of Holmes, these cases depict how he follows the Eurocentric societal norms that, in extension, advocate imperial expansion.

In contrast, the Byomkesh Bakshi's adventures generally aim at solving societal problems faced by ordinary Indians of the subaltern metropolis of colonial Calcutta though occasionally landlords like Kumar Tridibendra Narayan Roy of "Shimonto Heera", Himangshu Roy of "Chorabalee", Deep Narayan Singh of "Bonhi Patango" and Mahidhar Chowdhury of "Chitrochor" consult him. Saradindu Bandyopadhyay thus negates the Eurocentric convention of granting primacy to the bourgeoisie.

In the Sherlock Holmes stories, Watson appears as a retired army-surgeon: a figure who has had actively suppressed the native figures in India, and thereby exemplifying Said's observation that "the cult of the military personality was prominent...[in late Victorian British culture]...[,]...usually because such personalities had managed to bash a few dark heads..." (*Culture* 181). Doyle's

characterisation of Watson as a former member of the imperial army is aimed at fusing his Holmes texts with the contemporary imperial British cultural outlook. The retired surgeon has fought in the Afghan war, experienced the violence and malignance of "the murderous Ghazis", and has withstood 'curses' like the enteric fever which the White Western Orientalists customarily link to the Orient (Doyle, *The Complete* 13). In A Study in Scarlet and The Sign of Four, he treats everything originating in India as the rightful property of Britain. Narratives like The Sign of Four and "The Adventure of the Crooked Man" are replete with references to the Indian Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 during which the author identifies the Indian characters like Mahomet Singh, Abdullah Khan, Dost Akbar, Lal Rao and Tonga with danger, treachery and mystery. Under the erroneous impression that the Europeans are inherently qualified to control, discipline and obliterate the colonised natives as and when required, Holmes and Watson shoot dead the Andaman-dwelling Tonga without any further reflection but do not have to face persecution for homicide in The Sign of Four (82). Narratives like "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" and "The Adventure of the Crooked Man" contain description of the daily life of the European settlers in colonised India (196, 365-6). While references to services in the Bangalore Pioneers and the Bengal Artillery in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" (196) gain imperial significance in that they indicate British military wings used to dominate the Oriental natives, Sebastian Moran's wild game hunting in the Himalayas in "The Adventure of the Empty House" (550) testifies to how the British settlers passed their life in the colonies.

Holmes exemplifies his Orientalist attraction in his habit of storing tobacco in a Persian slipper in "The Adventure of the Empty House" and his tour of the Orient covering Tibet, Lhassa, Persia, Mecca and Khartoum in "The Adventure of the Empty House"(550, 544). To Nicholas Stewart, Sherlock Holmes is an imperial-Orientalist "who utilises the European study of the Orient with the result of revealing and outwitting the criminally linked Other, and by doing so...justifies Watson's actions and validates Orientalist research as the key to understanding, controlling and remaining superior to the colonised populaces" [3]. Doyle's underscoring of the Oriental link of criminals like Tonga and Dost Akbar depicts the common imperial perception that evil is intricate to the Oriental psyche. Significantly, a number of criminals in the Holmes narratives have strong links with the former British colony of the United States of America that serves to highlight Doyle's prejudice against the colonised individuals in general. Abe Slaney of "The Adventure of the Dancing Men", Enoch J. Drebber, Joseph Stangerson and Jefferson Hope of A Study in Scarlet, James Calhoun of "The Five Orange Pips", the Mormons prophets Brigham Young and his Elders of A Study in Scarlet and Councillor McGinty of The Valley of Fear are Americans depicted as criminals. Importantly, though Holmes calls Professor Moriarty as "the Napoleon of Crime" in "The Adventure of the Final Problem" (417), the British criminal's activities are restricted to only three stories: "The Final Problem", "The Adventure of the Empty House" and The Valley of Fear.

Byomkesh Bakshi first meets his associate Ajit Bandyopadhyay at a central Calcutta-boarding house in 1925 in "The Inquisitor".

Bandyopadhyay's specification of the year has an important postcolonial connotation because the anti-colonial activities of armed Indian revolutionaries had reached their zenith in Bengal and particularly Calcutta during the 1920s. That Bakshi and Ajit Bandyopadhyay, "fresh out of university", are aged between 23 and 25 during their first meeting is significant because participation of Bengali youths in their early twenties was the largest in contemporary Indian nationalist movement (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 1). Pahari observes that even before the 1930s, "Bengal...[had been]...one of the important regions for the rise of militant nationalism", and that Bengali youths taught in Western system of education and philosophy had thrown themselves in an all-out war against the British occupants (254). Significantly, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay never protests vociferously against the imperial occupation of India. His early profession as a lawyer at British Indian courts and chances of censure and detention for sedition perceptively prevented him from projecting Bakshi and Ajit Bandyopadhyay as active nationalists in stories written before 1947.

Although influenced by Doyle, Christie and Jack London to formulate his fiction, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay has not specified details about a purely imaginary character, and avoids any precise reference to the former imperial capital that was being constantly changed under the anti-imperial activities of the nationalists (*Saradindu II* 637). While Holmes resides at 221B Baker Street in north-west London, Bakshi's house is at an unspecified number on Calcutta's Harrison Street. However, like Holmes who retires from London to Sussex Downs in "The Adventure of

the Second Stain" (Doyle, *The Complete* 717), the Bengali inquisitor retires to Keyatala, Calcutta, in "Beni Sanghar" (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 925).

The Indian author portrays his detective as a family man with middle-class values who, as implied in "Where There's a Will", marries early (*Picture* 127-8) which is a subjective reference in the context that Bandyopadhyay himself married Parul Chakroborty on 28 June 1918 at the age of nineteen. In contrast, Holmes never marries or has affairs. He remains unmoved, unlike Watson, by the physical charms of Mary Morstan in The Sign of Four (Doyle, *The Complete* 58), Irene Adler in "A Scandal in Bohemia" and Violet hunter in "The Adventure of the Cooper Beeches"; does not sympathise with Helen Stoner in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" (197-9); examines the hands of Violet Smith with the objective and detached eye of a scientist (587), and is immune to Hilda Hope's attractiveness in "The Adventure of the Second Stain" (728-9). He considers women to be distractions that would hinder his vigorous championing of Britain's imperial interests (58). Watson marries Mary Morstan in The Sign of Four (92), but the couple remains childless until "The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place", the last Holmes story to be published, which might be interpreted as Doyle's attempt to keep Watson an associate to Holmes's imperially compatible adventures. Holmes also does not pay a single address to his associate's wife after they are married. By eschewing description of scenes of courtship or post-nuptial life, Doyle not only conforms to the norms of the Victorian prudery but also asserts the requirement of the colonisers not to exhibit emotions before the subaltern populaces. To avoid complications such as sexual assaults on women, he never depicts Mary Morstan as

accompanying Watson during his adventures with Holmes. Not a single Doyle's detective narrative deal with the anti-feministic crimes like rape and incest, and does not relish them in states of undress or provocative outfits.

In the Byomkesh Bakshi canon, the Indian inquisitor and his associate appear as strongly heterosexual characters. In opposition to the Victorian conventions for detective stories, Bandyopadhyay exhibits vivid sensuousness and emotional involvements in his sleuth stories, starting with a detailed description of Bakshi and Satyabati's courtship in "Where There's a Will" (*Picture* 125-8). His profession of a Bombay-based Hindi film-script writer between 1938 and 1952 has had perceptively been instrumental in making him deal with extramarital affairs and incorporate courtship and flirtation scenes in the stories like "Picture Imperfect" (210, 220-1), "Bonhi Patango" (*Byomkesh* 554-9), "Magno Mainak" (779-80, 796-7) and "Shanjarur Kanta" (866-9, 881). In contrast to Watson's restrained references to Morstan in The Sign of Four (Doyle, *The Complete* 58), Ajit Bandyopadhyay sensuously describes the physical appearance of Satyabati in "Where There's a Will" (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 100, 111-2), of Shakuntala Singh in "Bonhi Patango" (*Byomkesh* 517) and of Mohini Das in "Kahen Kabi Kalidas" (687). In spite of being married, Bakshi exhibits a subconscious attraction for Rajani in "Picture Imperfect" (*Picture* 207). While Byomkesh Bakshi's investigations in "Arthamanartham", "Chitrochor", "Chiriakhana", "Bonhi Patango" and "Magno Mainak" are overwhelmingly concerned with unmarried or widowed women, Holmes deals with married or honourably engaged primarily aristocratic ladies. Even in the love-centred narratives like A Study in Scarlet, "The Adventure of the Dancing Men"

and "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist", the underprivileged lovers like Jefferson Hope, Abe Slaney and Carruthers have been shown as incorporating within themselves conventions of chivalry.

The differences in Doyle's and Bandyopadhyay's attitude to women in their detective stories might also be explained on the basis of their respective personal experiences. While Bandyopadhyay enjoyed conjugal bliss, Doyle suffered because of Louise Hawkins's consumption between 1893 and 1907 and because of his love for Jean Leckie whom he met on 15 March 1897 but could marry until his first wife's death in 1907[4]. On the other hand, Mary Foley's affair with her boarder, Dr. Brian Waller, six years senior to Arthur, after Charles Altamont Doyle had been institutionalised for alcoholism in 1876, culminated into her moving into his estate in 1882 for the next thirty years, and caused deep anguish to the writer who wrote in Memories and Adventures that his mother's taking boarders to sustain her family "may have eased her in some ways, but was disastrous in others" [5]. It is possible that Holmes's maintenance of distance from women has its basis in such bitter incidents.

The British author and the Indian litterateur also differ in the context of their self-identification with their detectives. Doyle positions himself between the extraordinary intelligence of Holmes and the simplicity of Watson in order to provide sufficient publicity for his detective without himself appearing on the scene. On the other hand, Byomkesh Bakshi is admittedly Saradindu Bandyopadhyay's own self-projection, which administers a subaltern identity also to the detective

(*Saradindu II* 646). Contrary to Doyle's focussing on Holmes's different adventures while ignoring societal references, Bandyopadhyay exhibits a tendency to keep the detective stories at an intellectual level and writes them to be simultaneously read as social novels (647). In opposition to Holmes's indulging in physical violence while capturing Jefferson Hope in A Study in Scarlet (Doyle, *The Complete* 33), John Clay in "The Red-headed League"(124), Joseph Harrison in "The Adventure of the Naval Treaty" (411), Sebastian Moran in "The Adventure of the Empty House" (548), and Evans in "The Adventure of the Three Garridebs"(1028), or using firearms in The Sign of Four (82), The Hound of the Baskervilles (527), Bakshi does not carry a gun except in "The Inquisitor" (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 23) and "Amriter Mrityu" (*Byomkesh* 633) and he does not personally own a revolver.

According to Watson's chart of "Sherlock Holmes – his limits", the investigator is a novice at literature, philosophy and astronomy, weak in politics, but is profoundly knowledgeable in botany, geology, and an expert in anatomy, chemistry and sensational literature. He is also an accomplished violin-player, a skilled fencer, boxer and singlestick player and is well-versed in British law (Doyle, *The Complete* 16-7). Apart from his interest in science which he later uses to outwit the criminally-linked Others, Holmes has the basic training of every coloniser for self-protection through the usage of hands, swords and 'singlestick'-s. Ralph A. Ashton notes that "a singlestick is about 34 inches long [,]…[and]…is essentially a slashing, whacking, battering, beating and clubbing sort of weapon" – an instrument an imperialist would

customarily use to discipline a mischievous native (100). Holmes and Watson always carry revolvers during their adventures, and Sidney Paget's illustrations in *The Strand Magazine* show the former in Stetson hats or a deerstalker caps and tweed ulster, thus meticulously following the Eurocentric dress codes. Holmes smokes briar-root pipes, is attracted to Bach and Beethoven, and in stories like "The Red-Headed League" visits opera houses for intellectual refreshment (Doyle, *The Complete* 121). His food includes cold beef, grouse and white wine while he is addicted to seven-percent solution of cocaine (79, 54). Ian Ousby, et al., note that Doyle has manifested his interest in contemporary Victorian science through his detective (*The Wordsworth* 850). Holmes conducts different biochemical experiments in A Study in Scarlet and suggests the infallibility of several others in forensic sciences (Doyle, *The Complete* 14-5), which led the Royal Society for Chemistry to grant him an honorary fellowship for his life-long contribution to the field of medical sciences on 16 October 2002. To depict his imperial investigator as unique and flawlessly conceived and attain credibility for his detective narratives, Doyle has devised several indigenous methods for crime detection including the usage of Plaster-of-Paris, chemical analyses of blood and mud stains, and forensic examinations of cigar ash, shoes, abandoned dresses and other daily-use materials.

Against Doyle's profession as a physician, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay was a lawyer-turned-litterateur and understandably has not given primacy to scientific research and chemical experiments in his Byomkesh Bakshi stories and has stressed on psychoanalysis for crime detection. He symbolically seems to attest the Orientalist conception of the Eastern aversion to science and technology.

A resident of the scientifically-developed Occident, Sherlock Holmes uses machines and technology soon after as they are devised. In "The Red-Headed League", he uses the Tube even as the first underground metropolitan railway service stated operating between Paddington and Farringdon, London, in 1863 (Doyle, *The Complete* 120), speaks on the sparingly-used telephone in "The Adventure of the Three Garridebs" (1020), and rides steamboat and Hansom cab respectively in The Sign of Four and "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax" (79, 815). Ousby, et al., identify his strong feeling, like Doyle, for the atmosphere of the late-Victorian and Edwardian London (*The Wordsworth* 850), and stories like The Sign of Four, "The Red-Headed League" and "The Five Orange Pips" contain vivid description of the different localities of the imperial capital and its climate.

The British detective reflects the contemporary British colonial perception of being the microcosm and locus of the imperial world while speaking about his own omnipotence and uniqueness as investigator. He asserts his centrality, if not his uniqueness while describing his position as a consulting detective in A Study in Scarlet and The Study in Scarlet (Doyle, *The Complete* 18, 54). By making his character refute the qualitative excellence of other literary detectives like Edgar Allan Poe's C. Auguste Dupin and Emile Gaboriau's Lecoq in A Study in Scarlet, Doyle negates any challenge to his detective's position from representatives of other imperial powers like France or former colonies like the United Sates of America (18).

It is important that though Sherlock Holmes is identifiably not an atheist or desecrates the Christian religious institutions, his faith has not been demarcated. He does not cite references from the Bible other than his singular mention of the Biblical David-Uriah-Bathsheba incident in "The Adventure of the Crooked Man" (367). This has been instrumental in making Doyle's detective stories popular. Many former and contemporary colonies identified Christianity with the faith of the colonisers, and with the ambiguity of his belief Holmes is more easily internalised by the non-Christian colonised individuals of Asia and Africa. Depicting Holmes as an orthodox Christian would have impeded his universality and acceptance. Specification of the investigator's faith would have gained significance in context of the intra-Christianity strife between different sections, particularly that between the Anglicans and the Methodists in late-Victorian England, which would have served to expose debilitating differences among the imperialists to the subaltern populace. Therefore, the canon eschews religious fanaticism. Moreover, though Doyle had been born an Irish Catholic, he settled in a predominantly Anglican and Protestant London, and became an agnostic and deeply interested in spiritualism in1881 onwards [6]. The subjectivity of the author's changing faith might have been reflected in the detective's lack of a definite belief. Significantly, the Holmes stories do not deal with Catholic Irish or Scotts, and, other than the excommunicated Williamson of "The Adventure of the Solitary Cyclist", do not depict the Church or clergymen in corruption.

Both Doyle and Bandyopadhyay shared an interest in the occult, planchette and spiritualism, and identifiably possessed similar religious

ideologies. It is important that Byomkesh Bakshi also exhibits an ambiguity in faith and caste. Although he is a Hindu and, according to Bandyopadhyay, a "Kyastha" – the second group of Bengali societal divisions – the Bengali inquisitor does not ever visit temples or prays (*Saradindu II* 646-7). In "Aadim Ripu" he avoids specifying his religious sentiment when approached by Fazlu Rahaman for declaring himself as a supporter either of India or the Hindus, or Pakistan or the Muslims (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 489). On the other hand, his introduction of his mother as a practising Vaishnavite indicates his knowledge about his social and religious positions (434). In India, the acceptability for a general-caste character is greater than that from the "upper" classes like the Brahmins, and the author's ambiguity regarding his inquisitor's social strata and religious faith serves to grant the Bakshi narratives a wide readership.

Saradindu Bandyopadhyay exhibits cultural hybridity in Byomkesh Bakshi's characterisation. The Indian detective uses Western gadgets like electric fans and telephones while simultaneously being ambivalent in his basic attitude towards the imperialists. Though he is perceptively well-conversant with using firearms, but uses them sparingly only in "The Inquisitor" and "Amriter Mrityu" and does not possess a revolver personally. Like Holmes, he is knowledgeable and maintains codes of chivalry while exhibiting qualitative excellence in his psychoanalysis-based investigation. In an instance of cultural hybridity, he smokes European cheroots in "The Inquisitor" (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 24) and the Oriental hookah in "Achin Pakhi", (*Byomkesh* 661). In "The Gramophone Pin Mystery" he exhibits preference for European

silk stockings (50) and, in "Chorabalee", lunches on European menu like cutlet, boiled eggs and tea in flask (*Byomkesh* 131).

If Doyle validates the British colonisation of the East through his Sherlock Holmes stories, Bandyopadhyay symbolically effaces the colonialists from their own colony of India in his pre-1947 stories except Bakshi's brief interaction with the White police commissioner in "The Gramophone Pin Mystery" (*Picture* 65). In the pre-Indian independence stories, the Bengali detective provides insularity to the Indian criminals from the colonial administrators by directly dealing with them himself.

In opposition to the Eurocentric detective fiction norm of focussing exclusively on crime and detection, Bandyopadhyay develops his sleuth stories as poly-thematic narratives. "Durgo Rahoshyo" is also a historical narrative; "Byomkesh O Baroda" and "Shaiylo Rahoshyo" focus on the Gothic mode; "Aadim Ripu" describes the final Indian freedom struggle towards freedom, and "Bonhi Patango" informs about the Indian myth of King Dushyanta-Nerd Shakuntala who married oblivious to their respective social statuses. The author Indianises the Eurocentric conventions of Western detective fiction into Bengali ones. Thus, in "Shanjarur Kanta", identifiably drawn on Agatha Christie's ABC Murders, Prabal Gupta registers his attraction for the Tagore songs by penning the details on Deepa Mukherjee's autograph-book (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 917); Shakuntala Singh of "Bonhi Patango" expresses her occult lust for the police inspector Ratikanta Choudhury by painting a detail from a

Sanskrit myth (558); in "Gramophone Pin Mystery", the assassin impersonating as Prafulla Roy launches his attacks from a bicycle instead of an automobile or motor cycle; and Sukumari of "Magno Mainak" opposes the European cabaret dancers in being a devoted Vaishnavite singer (783).

Doyle, in the Sherlock Holmes narratives, avoids detailed portrayal of Britain's social structures to maintain the British etiquette and project his society's centrality as a model for the primarily Oriental colonies to imitate. In contrast, Bandyopadhyay realistically points out the defects of Bengali societal customs and calls for their amendments. In "Picture Imperfect", Ashwini Ghatak's love for Rajani Choudhury is considered illegitimate because of her being a widow; Santosh Samaddar of "Magno Mainak" is disallowed from visiting Sukumari openly because she is a devotional singer, and Deepa Mukherjee is put under house arrest in "Shanjarur Kanta" because of her intended elopement with her lover Prabal Gupta who is not a Brahmin. On the other hand, Bandyopadhyay adheres to the Indian social norms by condemning extra-marital affairs. Shakuntala Singh and Ratikanta Choudhury are killed in "Bonhi Patango" because of their adultery; a licentious widow is criticised in "Chorabalee", and Deepa Mukherjee, the heroine of "Shanjarur Kanta", is forced to become a sympathetic and cooperative spouse to Debashish Bhatta in spite of her pre-marital and post-nuptial love for Prabal Gupta. Bakshi testifies to Bandyopadhyay's faith in the supernatural by describing irrational incidents in "Shaiylo Rahoshyo" (*Byomkesh* 641), which is in opposition to the scientifically-developed imperial Sherlock Holmes who does not believe even when he has face Stapleton's recreation of the Baskervilles' gigantic hound.

While Holmes frequently verifies his empirical approaches by scientific experiments, the Byomkesh Bakshi canon does not contain any direct reference to science except in "Calamity Strikes" that focuses on the debilitating influences of British colonisation upon the Indian science (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 131-3). The Indian inquisitor's relationship with Ajit Bandyopadhyay is pronouncedly different from that between Holmes and Watson. While Watson repeatedly asserts Holmes's intellectual excellence and uniqueness, Ajit Bandyopadhyay, who is more a friend and share a common history of domination with Bakshi, does not indulge in hero-worship while describing the Bengali inquisitor. Unlike Ajit Bandyopadhyay, Watson identifiably does not share the same social class with Holmes because none of the detective's aristocratic clients ever speaks to him. While Holmes leads a Western lifestyle by visiting operas and concerts frequently, Bakshi does not like music and opera, and seldom watches movies (118). Contrary to Doyle's detective, Bandyopadhyay's inquisitor never consumes alcohol in any of the thirty-three stories. Holmes exhibits his encyclopaedic knowledge before adventures like that of The Sign of Four by customarily lecturing to Watson on topics ranging between the Stradivarius violins, the Buddhism of Ceylon and warships of the future, and the egg-shell pottery of the Chinese Ming dynasty (Doyle, *The Complete* 79, 1043); Bakshi, on the other hand, does not exhibit his scholasticism even after his education. While the British detective is assisted by pro-active associates like Watson himself, The Baker Street Irregulars, and Inspector Lestrade, Bakshi is forced to replace his benign litterateur-assistant with Bikash Dutta in instances like that of "Aadim Ripu", "Chiriakhana", and "Shaiylo Rahoshyo".

Bakshi shares a physical similarity with Holmes though not his complexion. Judging from their respective descriptions in "The Inquisitor" (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 5) and The Sign of Four (Doyle, *The Complete* 16), both the detectives are tall, dark, sharp-eyed, square-chinned with an intellectual appearance. However, whereas the British detective exemplifies his physical strength and resilience by withstanding considerable amount of stress while travelling in "The Adventure of the Final Problem" (422-4) or during pursuit of the Moriarty gang in "The Adventure of the Empty House" (544), having been addicted to seven-percent-solution of cocaine (54), and avoiding food for three days (827), the Bengali inquisitor does not fast or undertake such arduous outdoor adventures.

Holmes, like Doyle, is familiar with the British imperial policies and exhibits deep respect for the British aristocratic families. Importantly, in the Holmes narratives, Doyle glorifies Britain's successful imperial and international exploits and avoids referring to the abortive ones. Thus, even though the Afghan wars have been vividly described in A Study in Scarlet (13), the Crimean and Boer wars have only been mentioned passingly in "The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier" (1063-5). In the Holmes canon, Britain is presented as well-governed even when political uncertainty prevailed between Disraeli and Gladstone. First World War has been kept out of context, and except briefly in "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez" and "His Last Bow", descriptive references to other imperial powers like Russia and Germany have been avoided. The state of Ireland under the successive rules of Queen

Victoria, Edward VII and George V has also not found representation. Britain's apparent calmness is actually Doyle attempt to befool the subaltern who search for unrest in impearl realms to commence their nationalistic resistance.

Doyle's championing of Holmes and Watson as the powerful perpetuators of Britain's imperial interests required that the detective and his associate should not be vulnerable to diseases and annihilation. But Eyles informs that "weary of being identified with Sherlock Holmes and what he regarded as 'a lower stratum of literary achievement'...[Doyle]...carried out his threats to do away with the great detective" (Eyles 30). Holmes's death near the Reichenbach Falls of Switzerland after a confrontation with Moriarty is suggested in "The Adventure of the Final Problem" (Doyle, *The Complete* 426), which made the common British citizens feel insecure and deprived them of presenting a flawlessly-contrived investigator to detect crimes many of which were supposed to be committed by Easterners or those related to the Orient. Following wide protests and demonstrations between 1893 and 1901, that included "we[eping]...wearing mourning bands...implor[ing]...cajol[ing]...worry[ing]...[and] even...threat[ning]" the writer, Doyle was forced to revive Holmes in The Hound of the Baskervilles and finally to make him return under the disguise of a book-seller in "The Adventure of the Empty House" (Baring-Gould, *The Annotated I* 15-6). Moreover, the investigator is rarely sick, and in cases of genuine illnesses, recuperates quickly. Having had been wounded by Adelbert Gruner's agents in "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client", he reportedly recovers faster than any ordinary man (Doyle, *The Complete* 1042). Even after suffering from intense fatigue and exhaustion at Lyons in "The

Adventure of the Reigate Squire", he continues to act thereby arresting the Cunninghams for murdering William Kirwan. In the only other recoded instance of his sickness in "The Adventure of the Dying Detective", he feigns disease to arrest Culverton Smith after tricking him into a confession of his crime.

In his Sherlock Holmes narratives, Doyle does not indicate the advancing ages of Holmes and Watson except in "The Adventure of the Lion's Mane" (1073). "The Adventure of Shoscombe Old Place", the last story of the canon to be published in the 5 March 1927-issue of *Liberty*, seems to present the detective and his associate as retaining the same energy and qualitative excellence as in A Study in Scarlet. The concluding story ends with ample indications of the possible return of Holmes and Watson for undertaking more investigations (1116).

Saradindu Bandyopadhyay's Byomkesh Bakshi narratives identifiably counter those specific conventions of Doyle's stories which have been mentioned above. The Indian writer had also discontinued writing detective stories between October 1936 and December 1951 but was forced to resuscitate the Bengali inquisitor following demonstrations and requests from the young Indian readers particularly from Calcutta who were not ready to forfeit an intelligent subaltern detective who presented an alternative locus of power against the predominantly Eurocentric detectives (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 1003).

Bandyopadhyay himself underscores that Bakshi's and Ajit Bandyopadhyay's ages and their relationship changes with every narrative so that in "Beni Sanghar" the inquisitor appears as an old man of sixty who is long-married, has a school-going son and a strained relationship with his equally elderly associate (*Saradindu II* 646). Bakshi's later adventures from "Beni Sanghar" onwards do not involve movements and chases and are focused more intensely on psychoanalysis. The writer's narrative technique changes from "Room Number Dui" – from ornamental archaic Bengali to the colloquial tongue. Ajit Bandyopadhyay's role as the narrator is minimised in "Beni Sanghar" and from "Shanjarur Kanta" onwards he is removed from the scene all together. In the introduction to Beni Sanghar (Kolkata: Ananda Publishers Private Limited, 1968), Bandyopadhyay writes,

> "Byomkesh can no longer afford the luxury of assigning the task of narration to Ajit. His language has become quaintly archaic, but he has not managed adapting the modern words and phrases. Moreover, he is desperately short of time. Those who have already entered the publishing business know how pennies break the pens... I have already released Ajit from his arduous task. From now on I shall write what I can afford" (*Byomkesh* 645).

Other than "The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier", Doyle has never made Holmes narrate his own exploits. "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone" follows the third-person mode of narration.

Unlike Holmes, the Oriental Byomkesh Bakshi has been depicted as genuinely suffering for a considerable period in "Picture Imperfect" (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 195-8). Also, in "Bishupal Badh" (1970), the final, incomplete story of the canon, the detective and his associate living a secluded life as a publisher, have been realistically depicted as being on the verge of separation which would obstruct their return and further collaboration. Judged in this context, Byomkesh Bakshi appears as more realistically represented than Holmes.

The White imperial detective and the brown-complexioned subaltern inquisitor differ markedly from each other in their respective methodology of investigation and approaches to criminals. Holmes follows the theory of elimination that he summarises as "When you have eliminated all the impossible, whatever remains, however improbable, must be the truth" in The Sign of Four (Doyle, *The Complete* 66). In Doyle, the criminal is, with the exception of Grimesby Roylott of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" and Joseph Harrison of "The Adventure of the Naval Treaty", usually not a member of the family concerned or a close friend or relative but is a stranger. The detective have to deal with several unfamiliar faces in course of his investigation, most of which he discard in the usual trial-and-error method. But his methodology also involves the basic Orientalist prejudice that the Easterners are characteristically malignant and barbaric, thus imparting an anti-subaltern aspect to his approach. The writer also symbolically approaches the *Hard Boiled detective fiction* writers like Herman McNeile, Raymond Chandler, Dashiel Hammett and Brett Hallilay

whose sleuths often take recourse to unlawful methods during investigation and torture their captives to make them confess when Holmes kills Tonga in The Sign of Four (82), intends to horsewhip James Windibank in "A Case of Identity" (137), and unlawfully enters the house of Charles Milverton in "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton" (637).

Byomkesh Bakshi regards the Holmesian empirical proofs as fallible and depends on psychoanalysis (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 33). Bandyopadhyay thus opposes S.S.Van Dine's clause that "there is no place for description not for psychological analysis [in detective fiction]" that was meticulously followed by the post-1928 Eurocentric detective stories (Todorov 50-1). The Bengali inquisitor is first introduced to the suspect who is generally either a family member or a close acquaintance, and after a series of verbal interviews and rational psychoanalysis, he identifies and captures him. Following what might be identified as the "Classic Realist Detective Story pattern" focusing more on intuition and intelligence than on physical quests, Bakshi guesses Shakuntala Singh's lust for Ratikanta by taking a look at the Dushyanta's blue eyes in her myth-painting in "Bonhi Patango" (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 558); he also similarly deciphers Aurobindo Halder's lust for Mohini Das in "Kahen Kabi Kalidas" or the motive of Santosh Samaddar's murder of Heena Mullick in "Magno Mainak". However, his does not follow any definite rule or order during investigation in opposition to the British detective's meticulous maintenance of newspaper cuttings of reports on famous personalities and infamous anti-social individuals in his reference books.

While Holmes exposes himself and Watson during their rigorous outdoor adventures to lethal dangers like Tonga's poison darts in The Sign of Four (Doyle, *The Complete* 82), Sebastian Moran's air gun in "The Adventure of the Empty House" (548), Negretto Sylvius's cudgel in "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone" (960), Evans's bullet in "The Adventure of the Three Garridebs" (1027-8) and poisoned roots in "The Adventure of the Devil's Foot" (783), Bakshi more follows the 'armchair conventions' of Dupin, Poirot and Marple, thus eschewing chase sequences and instances of danger in exception to "The Gramophone Pin Mystery" (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 63), "Adwitiya" (*Byomkesh* 751), and "Shanjarur Kanta" (921). Contrary to the British detective's fondness for disguises in stories like "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone" and "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton", Bakshi does not conceal his original appearance except in "The Inquisitor" and "Gramophone Pin Mystery". Bandyopadhyay's attempts to unravel the puzzles of human psychology symbolically make his Byomkesh Bakshi narratives 'proper crime stories' in context of Ronald Knox's convention that detective fiction to be concerned more with puzzles than with the issue of crime (*The Wordsworth* 254).

Both Sherlock Holmes and Byomkesh Bakshi are occasionally maltreated by the official police forces. However, whereas Inspector Lestrade of Scotland Yard is pitted against the consulting detective while safeguarding the imperial power's integrity, British India's police officers like Bidhubabu in the pre-1947 Byomkesh Bakshi narratives see the inquisitor as a threat to the functioning of the

imperial government. Just as Holmes reprimands Lestrade in "The Adventure of the Norwood Builder" (Doyle, *The Collected* 566), Bakshi exhibits a rare courage in warning and chastising a colonial police official like Bidhubabu in "Where There's a Will" (Bandyopadhyay, *Picture* 101). That both the detectives come under the purview of law for violating civilian privacy and on mere suspicion in "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client" and "The Inquisitor" respectively fortifies their image as the just upholders of law.

Criminals in Doyle's detective narratives commit crimes of international ramifications and are concerned principally with power and money rather than love interests. Moriarty of "The Adventure of the Final Problem" and The Valley of Fear, Sebastian Moran of "The Adventure of the Empty House", Grimesby Roylott of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" and Negretto Sylvius of "The Adventure of the Mazarin Stone" are either scholastic or respectable, enjoy immunity, and evade immediate suspicion because of their privileged position in the British society. Significantly, Moriarty, Moran and Culverton Smith possess different improvised weapons like the sawed-off Von Herder air gun in "The Adventure of the Empty House" and the poisoned spring Smith mails to the detective in "The Adventure of the Dying Detective". Such sophisticated weapons cannot be found in the Bakshi canon with the exception of Prafulla Roy's bicycle bell in "The Gramophone Pin Mystery" and Debkumar's poisoned match sticks in "Calamity Strikes". This may symbolically attest the Orientalist conception about the Easterners' characteristic aversion to science and technology.

The Holmesian criminals like Moriarty, Sebastian Moran, Grimesby Roylott, Jonathan Small of The Sign of Four , Stapleton of The Hound of the Baskervilles, Adelbert Gruner of "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client", Charles Augustus Milverton, Culverton Smith, and Joseph Harrison exhibit five distinct similarities. First, other than Roylott, they meticulously follow the standard Eurocentric codes for public conduct; second, many of them like Moran, Roylott, Small and Smith have previously been associated with or possess deep knowledge of the English colonies in the East; third, they are never punished by any non-British authority or extradited out of the imperial centre of England to be tried on foreign soil; fourth, other than Gruner and Roylott, they are chivalrous and do not harm women sexually; finally, like John Clay in "The Red-Headed League" and Sebastian Moran in "The Adventure of the Empty House" they maintain etiquette even when courting arrest but never repent for their crime (Doyle, *The Collected* 124, 549).

In contrast, Bandyopadhyay's criminals like Phonibhusan Kar and Probhat Halder show remorse on being arrested, and like Kar and Amaresh Raha of "Picture Imperfect" commit suicide by slashing wrists or shooting themselves (*Picture* 124, 243). With the exception of Raha, they do not follow any formal dress code they maintain any formal dress code. While Small, Milverton and Clay exhibit affinity for money and power, criminals in the Byomkesh Bakshi stories like Probhat Halder of "Aadim Ripu", Ratikanta Choudhury of "Bonhi Patango", Prabal Gupta of "Shanjarur Kanta" and Bhuvaneshwar Das of "Kahen Kabi Kalidas" are

concerned primarily with love and sexual lust. In Bandyopadhyay, crime emanates with a challenge to the traditional Bengali societal customs. In spite of his advanced age, Anadi Halder tries to marry Shiuly Mazumdar whose lover Probhat Halder murders him in "Aadim Ripu"; Pranhari Poddar is murdered by Bhuvaneshwar Das, Mohini's husband, when he tires to project the married woman as a bait to entrap young men and earn money in "Kahen Kabi Kalidas"; Santosh Samaddar of "Magno Mainak" is forced to commit suicide when his murder of Henna Mullick is detected and his betrayal of his own country exposed; in "Bonhi Patango" Shakuntala Singh is killed as she sacrifices her husband Deep Narayan Singh for Ratikanta Choudhury; Manek Mehta of "Shaiylo Rahoshyo" is annihilated when he tries to establish an extramarital liaison with Hymabati Biswas; and Sureshwar Ghosh is murdered in "Achin Pakhi" by Nilmoni Majumdar after he kills Hashi Ghosh, Majumdar's illegitimate daughter.

Appearing as more socially relevant and realistically depicted, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay's Byomkesh Bakshi stories suitably challenge the perceived hegemony of Doyle's imperially-compatible Sherlock Holmes narratives and posit an alternative form of the subgenre that might be identified as the subaltern detective fiction.

NOTES:

1. Klinger, Leslie S. "Life and Times of Mr. Sherlock Holmes, John H. Watson, M.D, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Other Notable Personages". 1 February 2003. <http://webpages.charter.net/lklinger/Chrotabl.htm >
2. Ibid.
3. Stewart, Nicholas. "A Postcolonial Canonical and Cultural Revision of Conan Doyle's Holmes Narratives". 3 February 2003. <http://www.qub.ac.uk/english/imprerial/india/conan_doyle.htm >
4. "Arthur Conan Doyle: The Wives of Conan Doyle". 1 February 2003. <http://www.siracd.com/life_wives.shtml>
5. "Arthur Conan Doyle: Mary Foley Doyle". 1 February 2003. <http://www.siracd.com/life_mother.shtml>
6. "Arthur Conan Doyle: Spiritualism". 1 February 2003. <http://www.siracd.com/life_spirit.shtml >

CHAPTER 2. B.

DETECTIVE STORIES: A POSTCOLONIAL CRITIQUE. IMPERIAL DOMINANCE AND THE COLONISED PEOPLE'S RESISTANCE: -

In Culture and Imperialism, Edward W. Said compares Rudyard Kipling's Kim with the Sherlock Holmes narratives, and identifies Arthur Conan Doyle (1859-1930) as an imperial writer whose primary interest is to uphold and sustain the British law. He writes,

> "[The] union of power and knowledge is contemporary with [Arthur Conan] Doyle's invention of Sherlock Holmes (whose faithful scribe, Dr. Watson, is a veteran of the North West Frontier)...a man whose approach to life includes a healthy respect for, and protection of, the law allied with a superior, specialised intellect inclining to science...Kipling and Doyle represent for their readers men whose unorthodox style of operation is rationalised by new fields of experience turned into quasi-academic specialties. Colonial rule and crime detection almost gain the respectability and order of the classics or chemistry" (Said, *Culture* 184).

It is natural for an author of such imperially compatible texts like The White Company (1890) and The Great Boer War (1900) to advocate Britain's colonial expansion in the Sherlock Holmes canon that exemplifies his literary best. Doyle "spent several months on the ground... [of Boer War]... in South Africa during 1900", and put in his detective narratives like The Sign of Four and "The Adventure of the Crooked Man", "a long account of ancient treachery on another continent... [that is, Asia] that has prompted the... [catastrophic]...events in London...[,]...[the imperial centre]" (Eyles 40, 17).

According to Said, "The Orient is not only adjacent to Europe; it is also the place of Europe's greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages" (Said *Orientalism* 1). Trevelyan uses the term "richest jewels of the English Crown" to describe the Indian colonies (391). But the Europeans, particularly the English who were the mightiest of the colonial powers, were not ready to link their own affluence to the resources of the colonies. In novels like A Passage to India and Kim and the Sherlock Holmes narratives, E.M.Forster, Rudyard Kipling and Doyle refutes any symbiotic relationship between Europe and the Asian and African continents, projecting the latter two as forming the contrasting image, idea, personality and experience of the Occident. Especially the English and French litterateurs have always tried to deal with the Orient by "making statements about it, authorising views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it", and the Holmes canon proves to be no exception (Said, *Orientalism* 3).

When Doyle published his first Sherlock Holmes story in *Beeton's Christmas Annual* in November 1887, he was influenced by the past and contemporary social and political conditions of England and the world. These included the Anglo-Sikh War (1845), the Irish Potato famine (1845), the Crimean War (1854-1856), the Indian Sepoy Mutiny (1857), the American and Afghan civil wars (1861 and 1863, respectively), the foundation of the xenophobic Ku Klux Klan in the United States of America (1865), beginning of Prussian Expansion (1864) and of the primary ideas of Communism (1867), Franco-Prussian War (1870), Victoria's becoming the Empress of India (1877), and the Zulu War (1879). The British government witnessed frequent changes at the administrative level: the recurring tenures of the Derby-Disraeli government (1852, 1858 and 1866), the premiership of Lord Palmerston (1855 and 1859), Gladstone's Liberal tenure (1868 and 1880) and the Conservative rules of Disraeli (1874) and Lord Salisbury (1885).

It is important that England's position as a colonial superpower began to face stiff challenges from other imperialists like France, Germany and Spain from the second half of nineteenth century onwards. Simultaneously, the British colonies like India, Afghanistan and South Africa began to violently resist the English colonial controls. Engel's Condition of the Working Class in England (1845) and the first volume of Karl Marx's Das Kapital (1867) seriously questioned England's capitalistic manoeuvres and, in extension, indicated their imminent end. Writing in background of the contemporary social and political conditions, it was natural that Doyle would attempt to present a calm and stolid face of the imperial centre to the colonies.

That is preciously why Sherlock Holmes protects the British imperial interests and disciplines the erratic Oriental subaltern and the White individuals associated with them without ever betraying his awareness of the unstable social and political conditions of late-nineteenth century Britain. On the other hand, he gives an impression that Britain's political stability and colonising potentialities are at their zenith more during the late Victorian Age than ever.

Composing the Holmes narratives Doyle also shows an influence of the contemporary scientific and technological discoveries and inventions. This included the discovery of the planet Neptune in 1846, the Foucaultian demonstration of earth's rotation with a huge pendulum in 1851, the establishment of the telegraph system in India in 1853, commencement of trans-Atlantic cable in 1857, the publication of Charles Darwin's Origin of Species and Descent of Man in 1859 and 1871 respectively, construction of the first practical internal combustion engine by Lenoir in 1860, inauguration of the Metropolitan underground-railway in London in 1863 (though the first deep tube railroad began operating in 1884), invention of telephone and phonograph respectively in 1876 and 1877, and Edison's patenting the incandescent lamp in 1879.[1]

Sherlock Holmes's deep interest in science and technology does not only reflect the litterateur's confidence in the late Victorian and Edwardian sciences but also vindicates Said's observation that according to the European colonisers "the Orient was being outstripped and outdated by Western science" and was

"exploited by the developing sciences" (Said, *Orientalism* 65, 40). He has thus underscored the role of the European scientists in the domination of the Orient:

> "To be able to sustain a vision that incorporates and holds together life and quasi-living creatures [European and Indo-European cultures] as well as quasi-monstrous, parallel inorganic phenomena [Semitic, Oriental culture] is precisely the achievement of the European scientist in his laboratory. He constructs, and the very act of construction is a sign of imperial power over recalcitrant phenomena, as well as a confirmation of the dominating culture and its naturalisation" (*Orientalism* 145-6).

Doyle's obsession with the colonies and his constant advocacy of the "pacification of the subject race" is an example of his "imperial might" and his adherence to the imperial *clause* that "there are Westerners, and there are Orientals...The former dominate; the latter must be dominated..." (*Orientalism* 36).

Holmes giving primacy to rationality and preciseness of investigative techniques once again identifies him as an imperial figure because against the Easterners' abhorrence of accuracy,

> "the European is a close reasoner; his statements of fact are devoid of any ambiguity; he is a natural logician, albeit he may not have studied logic; he is by nature sceptical and requires proof before he can accept the truth

> of any proposition; his trained intelligence works like a piece of mechanism" (*Orientalism* 38).

On the other hand, the pictures painted in stories like The Sign of Four (82-92) and "The Adventure of the Crooked Man" (365-6) serve to portray the general European conception about the demeanour of the Orientals. To the White imperialists, the Eastern subaltern populace are:

> "gullible, devoid of energy and initiative, much given to fulsome flattery, intrigue, cunning, and unkindness to animals...[they] cannot walk on either a road or a pavement...[they are] inveterate liars...lethargic and suspicious... and in everything oppose the clarity, directness and nobility of the Anglo-Saxon race" (*Orientalism* 38-9).

According to Said this is significant because "*knowledge* of the Orient, because generated out of strength, in a sense *creates* the Orient, the Oriental and his world" (*Orientalism* 40).

By creating the character of Watson who has spent at least two years in India (Doyle, *The Complete* 13), and by asserting the superiority of Holmes to the surgeon (though the detective never visits the Orient such extensively) as far as the issues of power and efficiency of Orientalist knowledge are concerned, Doyle "contrasts the *local agent* [Watson] who has both a specialist's knowledge of the native

and an Anglo-Saxon individuality, with the central authority at home in London [Holmes]" (Said, *Orientalism* 44). In his capacity as the "local agent", Watson might unwillingly jeopardise imperial interests where as Holmes, "the central authority [,] is in a position to obviate any [such] danger" (*Orientalism* 44). In the Holmes canon, Doyle repeatedly attempts to "polarise the distinction [between the West and the East]... and limit the human encounter between different cultures, traditions and societies" (*Orientalism* 46). A transgressor of this polarisation, like Dr. Grimesby Roylott of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band", is annihilated.

Orientalism, to Said, is "a textual Universe by and large" and the "impact of the Orient was made through books" (*Orientalism* 52). It is, therefore, necessary that the scope of the Orientalists' text should "apparently cover everything from the editing and translation of texts to numismatic, anthropological, archaeological, sociological, economic, historical, literary and cultural studies in every Asiatic and North African civilization, ancient and modern"(*Orientalism* 52). Holmes's encyclopaedic knowledge includes information concerning the Buddhism of Ceylon in The Sign of Four (Doyle, *The Complete* 79), the Andaman natives in The Sign of Four (75), tattoo marks of China in "The Red-headed League" (113), association with the Tibetan Llama and Khartoum's khalifa in "The Adventure of the Empty House" (544), coolie-disease from Sumatra in "The Adventure of the Dying Detective" (819) and the real egg-shell pottery of the Ming dynasty in "The Adventure of the Illustrious Client" (1043).

By practising prejudice against the colonised populace, particularly against the Easterners, Doyle was only following the "universal practice of designating in [his] mind a familiar space which [according to him] is *ours* and unfamiliar space beyond *ours* which is *theirs*" though such geographical distinctions, to Said, are "entirely arbitrary" (Said, *Orientalism* 54). In this "space" was placed the erroneous ideas that Asia exudes the "feelings of emptiness, loss, and disaster", that it is "defeated and distant", and that the motif of the Orient "insinuates danger" and its excesses "undermine rationality" (*Orientalism* 56-57). The *experience* of the authors with such *ideas* leads to the building up of an "internally structured archive from the literature that belongs to these experiences" (*Orientalism* 58). "The journey, the history, the fable, the stereotype and the polemical confrontation" that Doyle has incorporated in his Sherlock Holmes texts come from such "internally structured archive" (*Orientalism* 58).

Though Doyle, like Rudyard Kipling, has tried to *construct* a new picture of the Orient and the United States of America, a former colony of England (though it is not traditionally considered to be a part of the Orient), Said has refused to acknowledge such arbitrary literary constructions as being genuine or artistically productive. Such acts, he opines, lead to the Western ignorance becoming more refined and complex, and not to the increase in volume and accuracy of "a body of positive Western knowledge" (*Orientalism* 58). Texts as Doyle's can never be accurate depictions of the East because "the language…[does not] even…[try]…to be accurate" (*Orientalism* 71).

Though the Orient for Europe was, until the nineteenth century, "a domain with a continuous history of unchallenged Western dominance", the English always treated the colonies as threatening and malignant (*Orientalism* 73). However, Doyle's constant references to the Indians and Indian objects are baffling because

> "India never provided an indigenous threat to Europe... [the] native authority crumbled there and opened the land of inter-European rivalry and to outright European political control that the Indian Orient could be treated by Europe with such proprietary hauteur – never with the sense of danger reserved for Islam" (*Orientalism* 75).

Most probably this attitude defines Doyle's ambition to know India better than any other European ever knew it – an inclination Simon Ockley exhibits in History of the Saracens in 1708 (*Orientalism* 75).

Said's Orientalism also explains why Watson *should be* a former British settler and physician with elaborate Oriental experiences. He writes,

> "...To be a European in the Orient, and to be one knowledgably, one must see and know the Orient as a domain ruled over by Europe" (197).

Most of the early English Orientalists in India, Said notes, were legal scholars or medical men with strong missionary learnings because

> "most of them were imbued with the dual purpose of investigating the sciences and arts of Asia, with the hope of facilitating ameliorations there and of advancing knowledge and improving the arts at home" (*Orientalism* 79).

In all his capacities Watson belongs to the *Institut*, the learned division of England's army comprising of "chemists, historians, biologists, archaeologists, surgeons and antiquarians" (*Orientalism* 84).

The imperially-compatible White Western characters like Sherlock Holmes and John H. Watson were created and employed by the Eurocentric litterateurs to improve:

> "the Orient as a whole, to do what scheming Egyptians, perfidious Chinese, and half-naked Indians could never have done for themselves" (*Orientalism* 90).

In spite of the fallibility and impracticality of the textual approaches to the Orient, they are undertaken by the Western authors primarily for two reasons: because these writers are not ready to confront at close quarters some "relatively unknown, threatening, and

previously distant" objects, and because they favour "the appearance of success" that serves to temporarily allay their psychosis of the East (*Orientalism* 93). To the imperialists,

> "the Orient, like the fierce lion, was something to be encountered and dealt with to a certain extent because the texts made that Orient possible. Such an Orient was silent, available to Europe for the realisation of projects that involved but were never directly responsible to the native inhabitants, and unable to resist the projects, images, or were description devised for it" (*Orientalism* 94).

In spite of all its subversive ingredients like Tonga in The Sign of Four or the *treacherous* Indian sepoys in "The Adventure of the Crooked Man", the Orient and particularly India is ultimately projected in the Sherlock Holmes stories as *benign* and, more importantly, *silent*. In "The Adventure of the Three Students", the Indian student Daulat Ras turns out to be innocent of copying from a question's proof although he moves about in agitation and exhibits suspicion of the British investigator. On the other hand, Tonga does not utter a single word, not even when he is shot to death, in The Sign of Four.

Doyle pits Christianity, identifiably the predominant religion for the colonisers, against the non-Christian faith of the colonised like Hinduism and Islam in The Sign of Four , Mormonism in A Study in Scarlet, and the Negroid religion in "The Tiger of San Pedro" (*The Complete* 754). Colonisation, according to

Said, involves identification and creation of religious, commercial, military and cultural interests, and the imperial Christian powers like England and France felt it to be their legitimate interest to safeguard themselves against the faith of the colonised, particularly Islam (*Orientalism* 100). Stephen Howe describes this as the coloniser's "aspiration to universality" (13). He writes,

> "With the advent of a universalist, Christian monotheism, the notion was added that all outsiders were by definition not only uncivilized but ungodly...Thus for such inferior peoples to be brought under the sway of universal empire by conquest would also be to bring them access to civilization and true religion...Conquest was therefore morally justified, even divinely ordained" (14).

Changing the faith of the colonised individuals served the colonisers because the former, when taught in Christian doctrines, shed their hostility against people not practicing *their* religion and felt an erroneous religious unity with the colonisers. Nicholas Stewart notes that though Jonathan Small, in The Sign of Four, reposes faith in Tonga, he views his native associate through a Christian ethnocentric perspective as a "hell-hound"[2]. Even if the colonised people change their faith, the element of mistrust remains with the colonisers to whom, even with all exceptions, a person from the East is "first an Oriental, second a human being, and last again an Oriental" (Said, *Orientalism* 102).

Doyle's, and in turn, Holmes's suspicion of any individual or object related to the Orient might also be explained by Said's observation that to the Europeans, the Orient is to be *watched* for its offensive behaviour where as they, the Europeans, remain the *watchers* of the "living tableau of queerness" (*Orientalism* 103). To Holmes, "the Oriental...[is] in need of investigation, in need even of knowledge about himself", and that is what he proposes to undertake (*Orientalism* 308).

It is significant that in Sherlock Holmes stories the Orientals or individuals connected to the East never use modern scientific gadgets or instruments, and in rare cases like that of the Ghazis who attack Watson at Maiwand with Jezail bullets in A Study in Scarlet, use weapons invented or devised by the Europeans (Doyle, *The Complete* 13). In The Sign of Four Tonga uses blow darts to kill people, Jonathan Small uses his wooden leg to kill a Pathan, and Mahomet Singh and Abdullah Khan threaten Small with a "great knife" (91, 86). In "The Adventure of the Speckled Band", Grimesby Roylott, who nurses an affinity for the East, uses a swamp adder to kill his step-daughter Julia Stoner, and in "The Adventure of the Crooked Man" Henry Wood, having had served in India, is always accompanied by the tropical ichneumon. In Orientalism in Crisis, Abdel Malek refers to the comparative lack of sophistication in the Oriental gadgets as instances of the time lag between Orientalist Science and that of the material under study (107-8). The Europeans' development of science and technology and the Easterners' underdevelopment in that field had resulted in the latter's being outstripped (Said, *Orientalism* 65).

All throughout his Holmes narratives Doyle identifiably exhibits a willingness to rule the natives, particularly the Orientals. To Howe, "the idea of empire has...usually been associated with European, White rule over non-Europeans, with 'racial' hierarchies and racist beliefs" (16). Doyle's insistence might be explained by his erroneous perception that the colonised Easterners "have never understood the meaning of self-government" which the European colonisers characteristically do (Said, *Orientalism* 107). He also thus undertakes the task of transporting the underdeveloped empire into modernity. Said has, however, detected in such attitudes as Doyle's a sense of power to resurrect and create the Orient (*Orientalism* 121). Holmes's rationality and Orientalist knowledge acquired through scientific experiments, reading newspaper reports and journals on the Orient, and through "lexicography, grammar, translation and cultural decoding" have not only made him a "central authority *for* the Orient" (Said, *Orientalism* 121-2) but also the Orient's principles have perceptively become *his* (*Orientalism* 129). Ernest Renan, in L' Avenir de la science (1890), has demonstrated that the Orientalist's attempt to become *the centre* is a necessity for his arrival at the very system of things, and that is what Holmes constantly attempts althroughout the narratives (*Orientalism* 132).

Orientalism outlines the importance of pilgrimages to the Orient to the Eurocentric imperialists. Said observes,

> "...A pilgrimage to the Orient has involved not only the penetration of the Orient by an imperious consciousness but also the virtual elimination of

> that consciousness as a result of its accession to a kind of impersonal and continental control over the Orient" (179).

Holmes's Afro-Asian tour covering Tibet, Persia, Mecca and Khartoum in "The Adventure of the Empty House" therefore exemplifies Doyle's another attempt at gaining control of the eastern colonies (Doyle, *The Complete* 544).

It is important that Doyle never makes his detective deal with an Oriental woman. To Western litterateurs like Doyle and Kipling, the Oriental women express "express unlimited sensuality... [because]...they are more or less stupid, and above all they are willing" (Said, *Orientalism* 207). The Orient being a region for "untiring sensuality, unlimited desire and deep generative energies" (*Orientalism* 188), and "the association between the Orient and sex...[being]...remarkably persistent" (309), Doyle eschews indulging in fantasies about Oriental women, unlike what Gustave Flaubert in Flaubert in Egypt (*Orientalism* 187). Moreover, he conformed to the codes of Victorian prudery, exhibited, like a common European, the subconscious fear of being seduced by natives, and was always cautious about projecting Britain as a country precise about maintaining its etiquette. To Said, "Orientalism is a male province", and that disallows Holmes from being accompanied by or dealing with any female during his adventures against the Easterners or those associated with them (*Orientalism* 207). The Orientalist investigator actually remains a bachelor until "The Adventure of the Shoscombe Old Place", the last story of the canon.

The Oriental women are further banished in the context that even the Easterners like Tonga, Mahomet Singh and Abdullah Khan do not possess any female counterpart. On the other hand, Frantz Fanon explains that the White European *collective cultural unconscious* has made the colonised Orientals the symbol of both sexual potency and evil, and that the sexual favours of White women bestow the Eastern subaltern a form of recognition (Wyrick 48-9). In Black Skin, White Masks, he writes: "When my restless hands caress those white breasts, they grasp White civilization and dignity and make them mine" (63). It was, therefore, necessary for Doyle to keep White women a 'safe distance' away from the Easterners. That is why Julia and Helen Stoner are, in spite of their step-father Dr. Grimesby Roylott's Oriental obsession, *brought back* to England when they reach marriageable age in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band". It is to ensure protection of the European women from the Easterners that Doyle does not give any pro-active role to them in his Sherlock Holmes narratives.

Said notes that in the early-twentieth century Orientalism delivered the Orient to the West by "translating, sympathetically portraying, inwardly grasping" the obscure, barely-intelligible Oriental civilization, and he describes the relationship between an Orientalist and the Orient as "hermeneutical" (*Orientalism* 222). The European approach to the East is identifiably "schizophrenic" and "eccentric" (*Orientalism* 102) – an attempt to deform the East (273). In the thirty four Sherlock Holmes stories published between 1901 and 1927, beginning with The Hound of the Baskervilles and continuing up to "The Adventure of the Shoscombe Old Place", Doyle tries to come at terms with the "chameleon-like quality" and "sublimity" of the

Easterners (Said, *Orientalism* 119) by explaining the Oriental "civilizations, religious dynasties, cultures...[and]...mentalities" as academic objects (222). His unmannerly Orientals like Tonga and Achmet are "simply the old Orientalist stereotypes dressed up in policy jargon" (*Orientalism* 321).

Said, in Culture and Imperialism, has further gone on to describe culture as a kind of "kind of theatre where various political and ideological causes engage one another" (xiv). The link between the British literary canon and its attendant culture requires special investigation. Bill Ashcroft, Gareth Griffiths and Helen Tiffin describe "literary canon" as "...not a body of texts *per se*, but rather a set of reading practices" and "reading practices" as "the enactment of innumerable individual and community assumptions, for example about genre, about literature and even about writing..." (*The Empire* 189). Said observes, "Partly because of empire, all cultures are involved in one another; none is single and pure, all are hybrid, heterogeneous, extraordinarily differentiated, and unmonolithic" (*Culture* xxix). It is precisely because of its heterogeneous nature that the definition of *culture* becomes even more complicated and its territory more extended. The link between different detective canons, for example, that of Holmes, Hercule Poirot or Father Brown, and its attendant imperialist culture therefore exists but in complicated intertwining.

Doyle's conception of the Orientalist investigator at the end of the nineteenth century conforms to Said's observation that "by the end of the nineteenth century the empire is no longer merely a shadowy presence but in the works of

writers like Conrad, Kipling, Gide ...Loti [and Doyle], a central area of concern" (*Culture*, xviii).

The definitions of imperialism and colonialism are identifiably intermingled in the Sherlock Holmes stories (*Culture* 8). The White European investigator Holmes advocates the British occupation and rule of the South Asian and African countries while being ensconced in the imperial centre of London. The amalgamation of imperialism and colonialism in the social as well as literary context between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries resulted in the creation of a "socially desirable, empowered space in metropolitan England...[which was] connected by design, motive and development to distant or peripheral worlds...conceived of as desirable but subordinate..." (*Culture* 61). Western powers like Britain allowed their metropolises to acquire and accumulate territory and subjects on a very fast scale, and Said notes that by 1914 "Europe had a grand total of roughly 85 per cent of the earth as colonies, protectorates, dependencies, dominions and commonwealths" (*Culture* 6). Doyle's Holmes-narratives reflect the writer's satisfaction with the power of English imperialism in late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

Said notes that in the 1960s Jean-Francois Lyotard and Michel Foucault have described a "striking new lack of faith in...the great legitimising narratives of emancipation [of the colonised] and enlightenment [of the comparatively unsophisticated colonised through Western science, philosophy and literature]" practiced by such authors as Doyle, Kipling and Conrad (*Culture* 29). Holmes

is attracted to the Orient not only for the apparently criminal characteristic features of the Orientals, but also because he wants to make them knowledgeable through his own Orientalist knowledge, thus putting up a façade of Oriental liberation. The picture of the Orient in general and of India in particular that emerges out of the Sherlock Holmes stories such as The Sign of Four and "The Adventure of the Crooked Man" "exists in a deeply antithetical relationship with the development of the movement for Indian independence" such as the Sepoy Mutiny of 1857 (*Culture* 36).

The self-definition of the cultures of the natives is suppressed in Doyle's detective stories. Tonga and Mahomet Singh in The Sign of Four and Daulat Ras in "The Adventure of the Three Students" possess no clearly demarcated self-defining culture. The assertion of their identity is prevented because such an assertion "can mobilise atavistically, throwing people back to an earlier imperial time when the West and its opponents championed and even embodied virtues designed not as virtues so to speak but for war" (*Culture* 42). The conception and construction of Doyle's Orientalist texts was a contemporary Western *necessity* because of the development of dominant discourses and disciplinary traditions in the canon of modern intellectual history – the intellectual identifiable with the knowledgeable Whites (*Culture* 47). In Masks of Conquest: Literary Study and British Rule in India (1989), Gauri Viswanathan locates the political origin of such English studies and discourses as Doyle's in the system of colonial education imposed on the natives in nineteenth century India. Ideas of the necessity of discipline for and its maintenance by the White youths explored in the very British Sherlock Holmes stories was first created by the colonial

administrators "for the ideological pacification and reformation of a potentially rebellious Indian population" (*Culture* 48). The Holmes narratives can, therefore, be identified to have had been conceived for dominating and disciplining primarily the Oriental colonised people. Such *classics* as Doyle's stories were extremely Eurocentric, and, according to Said, exuded "narrow, often strident nationalism" on the part of the author (*Culture* 51).

Gayatri Chakravorty-Spivak's assertion that the subaltern in Western discourses *cannot speak* has also been reaffirmed by Said:

> "Without significant exception the universalising discourses of modern Europe ... assume the silence, willing or otherwise, of the non-European world. There is incorporation; there is inclusion; there is direct rule; there is coercion. But there is only infrequently an acknowledgement that the colonised people should be heard from, their ideas known" (*Culture* 58).

He characterises the Western culture and literature as ongoing contests "between north and south, metropolis and periphery, white and native" (*Culture* 59). They have been identified to carry an unequal relationship of force between the sophisticated, privileged Westerners and the "primitive...weaker and less developed non-European, non-Western person" (*Culture* 65). In Doyle's detective fiction the colonised, particularly those from south-eastern Asia like Tonga of The Sign of Four or the Sumatran coolies of "The Adventure of the Dying Detective" are silent in the sense that they do not utter a single word all throughout the various references given to them in the said stories, and are

technically unsophisticated. Their silence is assumed by Doyle who does not want any voice of dissent against his apparently omnipotent and omniscient private investigator, least from an Oriental.

The first Holmes narrative, A Study in Scarlet, was published in 1887 and might be included as a British text written during the *age of empire* which Said identifies as beginning around 1878 (*Culture* 68). Under the rules of Queen Victoria (1837-1901) and Edward VII (1901-1910), Britain regarded itself as the most powerful academic, military and economic imperial centre. Under such "authority of the [Western] observer and of European geographical centrality", the colonised native was reduced to occupy "a secondary racial, cultural, ontological status" (*Culture* 70). The Western fantasy of centrality and superiority of British culture was sustained by their obliterations of native cultures. Said's observation on the assumed centrality of British power, juxtaposed with Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's canon moulded by "reading practices" which include "community assumptions", suggests that to privilege its own imperial and colonial status, the British culture would readily accept texts affirming its imperial centrality and primacy (*The Empire* 189). Naturally Doyle's Sherlock Holmes narratives gained unprecedented popularity soon after their first publication. Said points out the gist of Holmes narratives when he argues that the British imperial culture encouraged "canonical inclusion and exclusion" (*Culture* 70).

The identification of the *unspoken subjects*, that is, the marginalised, distorted representations of the colonised and their culture in texts accepted

by the contemporary British colonial culture would be the initial step in identifying, and thereafter questioning the canon and canonical texts such as Doyle's as constructs of imperial ideology. Said argues that the critical appraisal and reappraisal of such texts:

> "entail...reading the canon as a polyphonic accompaniment to the expansion of Europe, giving a revised direction and valence to such writers as Conrad...Kipling [and Doyle] who have always been read as sports, not as writers whose manifestly imperialist subject matter has a long subterranean or implicit and proleptic life...[in the works of previous generation of writers]" (*Culture* 71).

He has detected the presence of imperial ideology in the works of writers including Spencer, Defoe, Austen (*Culture* 71) and Doyle (181).

Said has also underscored the power of novels and short stories by imperial litterateurs such as Kipling and Doyle in upholding the imperial ideology. In the "incorporative, quasi-encyclopaedic cultural form" of such writings are packed "a highly regulated plot mechanism and an entire system of social reference that depends on the existing institution of bourgeois society, their authority and power" (*Culture* 84). A Study in Scarlet and The Sign of Four, for example, are pictures of reality at the very early or very late stages in readers' experience, and the inherited reality from other such novels are rearticulated and repopulated according to their creator's situation, gifts and predilections (*Culture* 88). The Sherlock Holmes texts naturally inherit the

ideology of colonialism from the pre-Doyle litterateurs such as Austen, Dickens, Flaubert or Chateaubriand. In them Doyle rearticulates his own Orientalist observations and asserts his conception of Britain as the colonial locus and superior in fields of culture, education, etiquette, social security and investigative sciences to other imperial powers like France and Germany. According to Said, the novels written by the British authors incorporate within themselves an overwhelming concern with power and "participate in...and...contribute to an extremely slow, infinitesimal politics that clarifies, reinforces, perhaps even occasionally advances perceptions and attitudes about England and the world" (*Culture* 89). He terms it as the novel's "consolidation of authority" (92).

The time Doyle published his second Sherlock Holmes story, The Sign of Four, a number of options, all premised upon the subordination and victimisation of the Eastern natives, had been made available to the Europeans. That included delight in the usage of power to rule the natives and secure profit from distant territories through voyages, trade, annexation and learned expedition and exhibitions, "an ideological rationale for reducing [and] reconstituting the native as someone to be ruled and managed", the security of the situation that allows the conquerors to overlook the violence perpetrated by themselves and the process "by which, after the natives have been displaced from their historic location on their land, their history is rewritten as a function of the imperial one" (*Culture* 158-9). While narrating the biographical history of Jonathan Small in The Sign of Four and Henry Wood in "The Adventure of the Crooked Man", Doyle identifiably chooses to execute the last option for subordinating the Oriental natives.

It is also significant that in such stories as The Sign of Four and "The Adventure of the Crooked Man", Doyle repeatedly and obsessively alludes to the Indian Sepoy Mutiny that started on 10 May 1857 at Meerut. Said identifies the Mutiny as the "single most important, well known and violent episode of the nineteenth-century Anglo-Indian relationship" (*Culture*177). The English litterateurs like Doyle and Christopher Hibbert cited the instance of the rebellion to demand the subjugation of Indians by the "higher civilization of European Britain" (*Culture* 177). Edward Thompson, in The Other Side of the Medal (1925) singled out the Mutiny as the "great symbolic event by which the two sides, Indian and British, achieved their full and conscious opposition to each other...The Mutiny, in short, reinforced the difference between the coloniser and colonised" (*Culture* 177-8). Said reasons that, "to be British [during and after the Mutiny] meant to feel repugnance and injury – to say nothing of righteous vindication – given the terrible displays of cruelty by 'natives', who fulfilled the roles of savages cast for them" (*Culture* 178). Doyle, while portraying the violence and annihilations perpetrated by the "savage" Indian Sepoys in The Sign of Four, has identifies himself as a conforming British imperialist. That is also the reason why Patrick Brantlinger could detect that "the mid to late Victorian fiction...[written in English in England]...contained an immense amount of writing about the Indian Mutiny" (205).

The two aspects that Doyle had written the Sherlock Holmes stories *first* in the English language, and *second*, in Britain, are also important to account for his imperial approach. In his The Nigger Question Thomas

Carlyle advocates a language of total generality that is "anchored in unshakable certainties about the essence of races, peoples, cultures, all of which need little elucidation because they are familiar to his audience" (Said, *Culture* 123). Said observes that Carlyle thus speaks a "lingua franca for metropolitan Britain: global, comprehensive, and with so vast a social authority as to be accessible to any one speaking to and about the nation" (*Culture* 123). This lingua franca, which Doyle also invokes in his Sherlock Holmes texts, locates England at the focal point of "a world also presided over by its power, illuminated by its ideas and culture, kept productive by the attitudes of its moral teachers, artists, legislators" (*Culture* 123).

Written by Saradindu Bandyopadhyay (1899-1970), the Byomkesh Bakshi stories, on the other hand, are postcolonial in the sense that the Indian author hails from an Eastern country "colonised by Britain" and in his narratives and exudes "a concern only with the national...[that is, Indian]... culture...[during and]...after the departure of the...[British]... imperial power" (Ashcroft, et al., *The Empire* 1). In his sleuth stories, admittedly influenced by Doyle, Chesterton and Christie who begun their respective sleuth stories on Holmes, Father Brown and Poirot in 1887, 1911 and 1920, Bandyopadhyay *rewrites* the canonical stories of detective fiction (*Saradindu II* 646). He protests against the *othering* of primarily the Eastern populace in the imperially-compatible detective narratives of the White Westerners by assuming for himself and his detective an authority, voice and control of the voice. In context of Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's definition, Bandyopadhyay's Byomkesh Bakshi stories might be identified as instances of the subaltern litterateur's writing "back to the centre of

the...[British]...Empire" (*The Empire* 97). A section of the national literature - an essentiality, according to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, for the "whole enterprise of postcolonial studies" (*The Empire* 17), was built up by Bandyopadhyay based especially on two facts. First, the British settlers in India had built their capital at Calcutta that became a *reflection* of the imperial metropolitan centre of London, and second, since the Bengal Renaissance of the 1820s to 1840s, the predominant literature in British India was that of Bengali and the British definition of "intelligentsia" catered almost exclusively to the people of Bengal while every important colonial activity was executed at and from Bengal.

Byomkesh Bakshi not only belongs to the Bengali middle class, but also incorporates within himself almost every tradition of the Indian family life, thus catering to the postcolonial *clause* that "the study of national tradition is the first and most vital stage of the process of rejecting the claims of the Centre to exclusivity" (Ashcroft, et al., *The Empire* 17). Bakshi does not possess any superhuman strength, unnatural intelligence or potency. He also does not claim uniqueness for his profession, unlike Sherlock Holmes in The Sign of Four (Doyle, *The Complete* 54). With the exception of "Shaiylo Rahoshyo", no Byomkesh Bakshi narrative deals with supernatural incidents, and the canon eschews melodrama, violent bloodshed, mystic sages and cannibalistic natives. Bandyopadhyay thus annuls the Western (mis)representation of the Oriental Empire, particularly India, as the "site of the exotic, of adventure and exploitation" (Ashcroft, et al., *The Empire* 19). Moreover, the Moroccan explorer Muhammad Ibn Battutah (1304-c.1369), who visited Bengal in 1346, referred to

the region as "moisture laden...[and]...amply-treasured hell" and accentuated its perceived exoticness by detailing on his purchases of "one concubine for one *ashura* [or gold coin], and the young boy Lulu for two *ashura*-s" in his Rihlah (Mukhopadhyay, *Bangla* 490-1). By writing his detective fiction as an Indian in Bengali, Bandyopadhyay nullifies any such distorted representation as mentioned above and creates a postcolonial venue for a "study of the effects of colonialism in and between *English*...[that is, the postcolonial writings in English]...and writing in indigenous language" including Bengali (Ashcroft, et al., *The Empire* 24). Because he was an Indian colonised on his own territory, the author was "not forced to adapt to different landscape and climate", but according to D.E.S Maxwell in "Landscape and Theme" (1965), had his "own ancient and sophisticated responses" to himself "marginalised by the world view which was implicated in the acquisition of English" (*The Empire* 25).

Significantly, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay does not directly oppose the British domination of India in the ten stories published before the Indian independence in 1947, which would have otherwise been confiscated on charges of sedition. As a lawyer who had practised in British-Indian courts, the author was understandably forced to resist the imperialists through cultural and literary *collusion* rather than *colliding* with them. However, in the stories written after the Indian independence and especially in "Aadim Ripu", he celebrates the united and individual Indian struggle for independence and in context of Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's observations on "thematic parallels", becomes a postcolonial litterateur and critic (*The Empire* 27).

The Australian postcolonialists further note that the theme of "construction...of houses as buildings in postcolonial location is a recurring and evocative figure for the problematic of postcolonial identity in works from very different society" (*The Empire* 28). Thus Bakshi and Ajit Bandyopadhyay's construction of a new house at Calcutta's Keyatala in "Room Number Dui" exhibits their problem of identifying themselves in the postcolonial society of urban, middleclass Indian Bengalis (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 834).

Bandyopadhyay's Byomkesh Bakshi narratives can be identified to display the political, imaginative and social control involved between the colonisers and the colonised in context of the political theories of Frantz Fanon and Albert Memmi (Ashcroft, et al., *The Empire* 29). It is significant that Bandyopadhyay chooses to express his resistance against the hegemony of the Eurocentric detective characters through Bengali. The utilisation of such pre-colonial languages, Bengali having had become a major Indian language in the eleventh century, was instrumental to a large extent for decolonisation. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin note,

> "...In India, that is in postcolonial countries where viable alternatives to *english* continue to exist, an appeal for a return to writing exclusively, or mainly in the pre-colonial languages has been a recurring feature of calls for decolonisation" (*The Empire* 30).

The syncreticist critics regard novels and short stories of the kind written by Bandyopadhyay as cross-cultural hybrids. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin assert that,

> "In India where the bulk of literature is written in indigenous Indian languages, the relationship between writing in those languages and the much less extensive writing in *english* has made such project...[as a novel or a work of fiction exclusively in an Indian language]...a powerful element in postcolonial self-assertion" (*The Empire* 30).

In the Byomkesh Bakshi stories Bandyopadhyay has not only repeatedly asserted the investigator's nationality and identity, but by *creating* the character altogether has also challenged the very *notion* of centrality of English fictional detective characters created, for example, by Doyle, Chesterton and Christie. Byomkesh Bakshi is as intelligent as, if not more than, Holmes, Poirot or Father Brown, and his investigative techniques, though based especially on psychoanalysis, are no less efficient and valid than that of the English detectives who give primacy to the empirical evidences. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin describe such texts as Saradindu's short stories and novels as being "subversive" that attain sufficient potency as resistance literature (*The Empire* 33).

Unlike Sherlock Holmes, Byomkesh Bakshi is not a European and yet he does not continue to vociferously assert his precise national and regional identities through his speeches and observations. Though unlike Holmes, he is a

teetotaller, he smokes cheroots and habitually uses English words and phrases. Thus the Bengali inquisitor exhibits in his character what Homi Bhabha, Edward Braithwaite and Wilson Harris describe as "hybridisation" (*The Empire* 34). In The Womb of Space (1983), Harris observes that though the postcolonial texts appear to deal with divisions of culture and race, they also contain "seeds of *community* which as they germinate and grow in the mind of the reader, crack asunder the apparently inescapable dialectic of history". According to him,

> "the hybridity of present always struggle to get free from that of the past which stressed ancestry and which valued the pure over its threatening opposite, the 'composite'. It replaces a temporal lineality with a spatial plurity" (*The Empire* 36).

The hybridity exhibited in Byomkesh Bakshi's characterisation tries to mitigate the obtrusive influence of Eurocentric detective stories in Dinendra Kumar Ray's conception of Robert Blake and Priyanath Chattopadhyay's inspector in charge.

Writing in Bengali and by making Bakshi a middle-class Bengali gentleman, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay negates the influence of the English detective fiction over the means of communication of the subaltern by abrogating or denying the privilege of English literature itself. He captures and remoulds the colonial detective fiction and its style to appropriate and reconstitute it in an Indian context. He thus uses his own language as a tool to utilise it "in various ways to express widely

differing cultural experiences" of the Bengalis as separate from the English (*The Empire* 39).

In his researching the cultural purity of the Indian in general and the Bengalis in particular, in what Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin identify as the Indian "diglossic societies" in his detective fiction, Bandyopadhyay adheres to a constant procedure of decolonisation (*The Empire* 39). By doing so he privileges the *margin* represented by the educated Indian litterateurs in his postcolonial stories. He intersects the sub-genre of English detective fiction with his own indigenous one and exhibits "the creative potential" of his own language and literature (*The Empire* 44).

The Bengali language in which Bandyopadhyay writes his detective stories can be identified with the very demeanour of the general Indians as far as the *Creole continuum* is concerned. Shaped up by the "ceaseless pattern of conquest and domination", his stories abrogate the centrality of English detective fiction by using an indigenous language to signify difference with the basic English sub-genre while employing a certain degree of sameness in the methodology of the detectives and motives of the criminals which allows it to be understood (*The Empire* 49).

It is significant in different Byomkesh Bakshi stories, for example, in "Satyanweshi" (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 29, 33), "Pather Kanta" (45, 52, 60, 65) "Simonto Heera" (75, 80), "Makarshar Rash" (92), "Arthamanartham" (114,

115), and "Agniban" (167), Bandyopadhyay uses several English words and phrases mostly written in English itself. Such use of *untranslated* words, or in the other way, the original words from the imperial literature the Indian writer was inspired by, signifies, according to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, "a difference" and "a certain cultural experience" that cannot be reproduced by the colonised litterateurs (*The Empire* 53). Such *untranslated* words and those retranslated back to the original source "not only act...to signify the difference between cultures, but also...illustrate...the importance of discourse in interpreting cultural concepts" (*The Empire* 64). Bandyopadhyay thus reactivates the sense of polarity between the colonised Indian populace and the British colonisers and harps on the subaltern readers' resentment against imperial domination. He forces them into "an active engagement with the horizons of the culture in which these terms [that is, the untranslated or, more precisely, re-translated words and phrases] have meaning" (*The Empire* 65).

In The Palm-Wine Drinkard (1952), Amos Tutola expresses an opinion that "alien world-views might come closer if their linguistic structures were somehow meshed" (*The Empire* 68). Bandyopadhyay identifiably *constructs* his detective fiction on the pattern of Doyle and Christie and follows the linguistic structure exhibited by the English detective stories consisting in the short, information-laden dialogues between the investigator and the narrator-associate and absence of prolonged conversation between the sleuth and the apprehended criminal. Thus he tries to bring closer the alien world views expressed in the English texts and his own ones.

Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin give primacy to the development of neologisms in the postcolonial texts to emphasise that:

> "words do not embody cultural essence, for where the creation of new lexical forms in...[postcolonial texts written in]...*english*...[and postcolonial texts written in other languages of the colony]...may be generated by the linguistic structures of the mother tongue, their success lies in their function within the text rather than their linguistic provenance" (*The Empire* 71).

Bandyopadhyay employs several Bengali neologisms like "messe-bashai" ("at the boarding house") and "stabdho-gambhir" ("silent and gloomy") in "Satyanweshi" (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 27, 34), "bi-sickl" ("bicycle") in "Pather Kanta" (67), "air" for "yaar" or friend in " Makarshar Rash" (95), "gnenje" or a fold in the loin-cloth used to store coins and currency notes in "Aadim Ripu" (486), and unconventional phrases like "deep stombher aalo dhonyay dom bandhyo hoiya moriya gelo" ("the light emanating from the lamp-stand suffocated itself to death in smoke") in "Chitrochor" (265), and "dare dare drum" – an allusion to a nonsensical phrase originally coined by Sukumar Ray – or "gur, gur, gur, guriye hama, khap petechhen Gyostho mama" – a nonsensical phrase Byomkesh uses to distract attention – in "Aadim Ripu" (477, 498). Some of these words like "gnenje" and "air" are not normally used even in colloquial Bengali, and Sukumar Ray's nonsensical phrases do not have any proper meaning, but

they form a coherent and natural ingredient to the narrative and are never employed out of context. Such words, though they are not employed out of context, do not embody the cultural essence of the Indian subaltern or the linguistic essence of the Bengali language.

Being an Oriental litterateur Saradindu Bandyopadhyay writes out of the condition of "otherness" in his texts and asserts the "peripheries" represented by the colonised, their conditions, culture and literature as the "actual substance of experience" (Ashcroft, et al., *The Empire* 78). Byomkesh Bakshi *acts,* and Ajit Bandyopadhyay plays the role of an interpreter who not only interprets in his actions the representation of an Oriental detective working in the East, but also depicts him as a colonised individual who, in spite of being admittedly inspired by Chesterton about which he discusses in "Kahen Kabi Kalidas", is as intelligent as the Eurocentric sleuths and poses a resistance against the hegemony of the White detective fiction (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 715). Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin detect in this role of the interpreter "one of the major foci of the processes of abrogation and appropriation" of the imperial texts like those by Doyle, Chesterton and Christie (*The Empire* 80). On the other hand, Jan Mohammed finds in the introduction of writing in societies of the dominated "a development of a different kind of consciousness which might be characterised as *historical*" (*The Empire* 81). The development of the 'historic consciousness' through allowing the colonised individuals like Bakshi and Ajit Bandyopadhyay and their readers to scrutinise their fixed past, also allows them, in turn, to make distinctions between truth about why they have been colonised and error of what went wrong to intimidate their

independence. This permits the development of "a more conscious, critical, and comparative attitude to the accepted world picture" (*The Empire* 81).

Another important aspect of postcolonialism is an exhibition of the way the state gags the voice of the individual and regulates the means of communication (*The Empire* 84). All throughout the ten stories written before Indian independence Bandyopadhyay never exudes any reaction against the English domination or makes any reference to the Indian independence. The British administrators in Bengal "gagged" the voice of resistance in the litterateur by threatening execution, trial for sedition, castigation, ban or boycott.

Bakshi does not boast of his intellect or potencies anywhere in the thirty-three stories of the canon. With his brown complexion, casual view of life and avoidance of European dresses, Bakshi continues segregating himself from the White man and does not spoil his indigenousness.

It is to be mentioned that by avoiding any mention to the British colonisers even in the ten stories written before the Indian independence, Byomkesh Bakshi negates the presence of colonisers in India altogether. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin define this as the "gulf of silence – the absence which is indicated in the [writer's as well as the created character's] ...surrender of speech and their entry into the linguistic vacuum of the [colonial] situation" (*The Empire* 86). It indicates the difference of the postcolonial texts from the colonial English detective ones.

The texts of the metropolitan canon including Doyle's detective stories allow only select experiences of the coloniser to be rendered as literature which denies the subaltern litterateur an access to the world. Saradindu Bandyopadhyay tackles the situation in two ways – first, by avoiding any direct mention of the very fact that he has been dominated, and second, by projecting Calcutta as the *metropolis of otherness* against the Holmes's metropolis of London. In The Mimic Men (1967), V.S.Naipaul opines that the mimicry implicit in postcolonial texts is permanently disabling because the imperial centre imposes disorder and inauthenticity on the margins of the empire. Bandyopadhyay has also made his detective an individual of the imperial centre in British India and a parallel force to Doyle's investigator. In his being a *very ordinary* Bengali without an unconventional lifestyle, addiction and eccentricity, Byomkesh Bakshi rejects any ostensible mimicry of the Eurocentric life and negates the concepts of disorderliness and *exotica* adhered to the Orient by the European litterateurs. It is important that Sherlock Holmes is a cocaine-addict (Doyle, *The Complete* 54), violently nationalistic (334) and goes without food for a number of days (827).

To Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, "Language is power because words construct reality" (*The Empire* 89). In a dominated society both the language and the economic structure are controlled from the imperial centre. By writing his detective stories in such a society in an indigenous language, Bandyopadhyay seeks to imperial control of the subaltern literature and depict India realistically. The Oriental nature of his language minimises its constant manipulation by the imperial tongue even

though he is physically dominated himself. The peripheral position of Bengali detective fiction is changed to a new centrality through the difference of language from that of the colonisers and through a totally different approach to the process of investigation: while Sherlock Holmes depends on empirical evidences, Bakshi takes a psychological approach. The Indian author abrogates the perceived power of authentication of the imperial centre by constructing a new approach to the process of detection and the nationality, class, caste and demeanour of the investigator. These multiplicity, and therefore, difference of perspectives as far as the language, treatment and *approach* to detective fiction are concerned, would prove instrumental in "decentring" the colonial domination and its omnipotence (*The Empire* 101).

However, to Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, a return to an idealised pre-colonial cultural condition is an impossibility (*The Empire* 109). Similar to R.K.Narayan in The Man-eater of Malgudi (1960), Bandyopadhyay might have incorporated several aspects of the Bengali tradition in his Byomkesh Bakshi narratives, but he had begun writing in colonial India the various indigenous cultures of which had already been interpenetrated by the culture of the colonisers. With the absence of any *pure* culture in India of the 1920s, Byomkesh Bakshi stories, like any contemporary postcolonial text, are "complex and hybrid formations" (*The Empire* 110).

During his interview with Griffiths at Mysore's Dhvanyaloka Institute in 1986, U.R.Anantha Murthy suggested that the relationship of the ancient Indian languages like Tamil and Sanskrit to the modern Indian vernaculars is

analogous to that of Latin and modern English (Ashcroft, et al., *The Empire* 118). It, therefore, follows that all texts written in Indian languages in late colonial and early post independence India would mix a modern Indian language like Bengali with an ancient one like Sanskrit which vigorously asserts the direct continuity of some essential Indianness. This particular quality is also reflected in Bandyopadhyay's Bengali detective fiction and heightens the postcolonial response implicit in them. Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin write,

> "Addressing the problem of writing in India within a postcolonial framework does not imply an acceptance of ...[the]...hegemony...[of English literature and its different genres written by the English coloniser-litterateurs], but rather the opposite – in practice it suggests the only effective way of escaping the control implicit in its very structure...The work produced by contemporary writers in language as diverse as Maratha, Bengali, Kannada, Telugu, Malayalam, etc., far outweighs in quantity and quality the work produced in *english*" (*The Empire* 121-2).

Bandyopadhyay's thirty-three Byomkesh Bakshi stories are, therefore, not only an exhibition of his resistance against the perceived potency and uniqueness of English detective fiction, but also are of sufficient excellence as to command wide critical attention as postcolonial texts.

Michel Foucault's observations on discourse have helped the postcolonial critics to identify the governing rule of postcolonialism such as what is exhibited in Bandyopadhyay's detective narratives. Said's and Foucault's postcolonial discourses invoke certain ways of thinking about language, truth and power, and their interrelationship. Foucault identifies the great system and theories of the colonisers, including the literary ones and vital truths, for example, about the demeanour and faith of the colonised populace, as harbingers of a new orthodoxy and a new tyranny. He seeks to denounce the Western conception of different Eastern cultures, customs and traditions as false because it is based on discourse and truth is relative to the "system of possibility for knowledge" (*The Empire* 167). He denies the existence of objective knowledge – something the Eurocentric detectives of Doyle, Christie and Chesterton are supposed to be in possession of – and considers all valid theory of knowledge as attempts to exercise power. According to Foucault, "Truth isn't outside power, or lacking in power. Truth is a thing of this world: it is produced only by virtue of multiple form of constraint. And it induces the regular effects of power" (131). Sherlock Holmes's quest for truth, therefore, becomes a quest for an imperial power as well where as Byomkesh Bakshi's inquisition is rendered into a powerful anti-colonial reaction against the hegemony of the Eurocentric detective fiction. According to Foucault, "We are subjected to the production of truth through power and we cannot exercise power except through the production of truths" (93). Postcolonial discourses such as Bandyopadhyay's are grounded on a struggle for power: the power of the Indian investigator against that of the Western detectives, of Bengali against English, and of the subaltern-metropolis of Calcutta against the imperial centre of London, and all these struggles seek to produce

Oriental truths that had had previously been distorted in the Orientalist literatures of the West. Bandyopadhyay's Indian stories gain significance in context of Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin's observation that,

> "Power is invested in...[an Eastern]...language...[like Bengali]...because it provides the terms in which truth itself is constituted. The struggle for power over truth in some senses, mimics the metropolitan impulse of dominance, and postcolonial critics such as Homi Bhabha have sought to address this problem...only by stressing the way in which it functions...can such a mimicry be avoided and replaced by a theory and practice which embraces difference and absence as material signs of power rather than negation, of freedom not subjugation, of creativity not limitation" (*The Empire* 168).

Homi Bhabha investigates the construction of the colonised individuals within a disabling master discourse of colonialism that "specifies a degenerate native population to justify its own conquest and subsequent rule" (Ashcroft, et al., *The Empire* 178). He suggests that a thorough reading of the colonial texts like Doyle's detective narratives can recover the voice of the dominated subaltern like Daulat Ras through mimicry and parody as both a strategy of colonial subjection through "reform, regulation and discipline, which appropriates the Other" and the native's inappropriate imitation of this discourse, which has the effect of menacing colonial authority (Bhabha, *Of Mimicry* 126-7). Bandyopadhyay, the native Indian author,

threatens the authority and hegemony of the Eurocentric stories through his mimicry of the constructional framework of detective fiction as written in Europe.

The Byomkesh Bakshi stories eschew any reference to other Indian detectives and, in extension, assume their centrality in the Indian scenario. Bandyopadhyay projects Calcutta as the colonised individuals' *sole metropolis*, and depicts Bengal as the microcosm of colonial India. He thus symbolically identifies Bengal, Bengali, and the Bengali culture as representatives of the nation, national language and national culture, respectively. According to Said, both the national language and national culture are central to the organisation of anti-colonial resistance (Said, *Culture* 260). Bakshi's Bengali identity, therefore, becomes crucial for projecting Bandyopadhyay's stories as subaltern resistance texts.

Partha Chatterjee's observation that "much nationalist thought in India depends upon the realities of colonial power either in totally opposing it or in affirming a patriotic consciousness" applies for Bandyopadhyay's opposition to the presence of the British forces asserted through his ignoring them in he Bakshi stories written before 1947 and his non-reference to any colonial hallmark in the post-independence sleuth narratives (79). This leads "inevitably to an elitism of the intelligentsia [,]...[a class to which Saradindu Bandyopadhyay himself belonged] [,]...rooted in the vision of a radical regeneration of national culture" (79). However, even if the Indian litterateurs like Bandyopadhyay try to restore India to a position of

regenerating national culture, Chatterjee points out that such efforts are employed only behind utopian dream and are, therefore, wasted.

Chatterjee's thesis shows that *evasion* and *avoidance* are the two vital ingredients of anti-imperialist nationalism, and that "nationalism...become a panacea for *not* dealing with economic disparities, social injustice, and the capture of the newly independent state by a nationalist elite" (Said, *Culture* 262). Bandyopadhyay's Byomkesh Bakshi stories exhibit the above-mentioned *evasion* and *avoidance* in the three following ways.

First of all, When Byomkesh Bakshi is consulted by Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel (1875-1950), an important Indian freedom fighter and the first deputy prime minister of independent India, in "Aadim Ripu", he becomes a part of the nationalist elite, where as stories like "The Gramophone Pin Mystery" and "Where There's a Will" testify to his rapport with the colonial administrators. However, in spite of his political connections, the inquisitor never exhibits any inclination to rule the newly-independent India.

Second, Saradindu Bandyopadhyay evades descriptions of influence of the former colonial administration in shaping up the legislature, executive and judiciary of post-independence India or how Bakshi grew out of an *adaptation* of English detective fiction. To reiterate, no Bakshi story written in pre-independence India directly depict or deal with British characters.

Finally, Bandyopadhyay identifiably does not deal in his detective stories with economic disparities among the different Indian social classes and maintains a complete silence on the different social injustices like suppression of Indian women on domestic front, trafficking, prostitution, arbitrary arrests, corruption among the administrative officials, and patronisation of criminals by higher authorities. Bakshi does not reflect on the economically underprivileged condition of rural and semi-urban Bengal, and, significantly, most of his clients belong to the middle-class.

The picture of post-independence India presented in stories like "Bonhi Patango" and "Rakter Daag" includes murders but no instance of anarchy, mass-movement, mass-extermination or violent class struggle. This particular characteristic feature of the Bakshi narratives conforms to Chatterjee's observation that the new national state, after its establishment, is not ruled by the romantic rebels or prophets, but by pragmatic self-conscious leaders (147). The peasants and urban poor, two important constituting classes of such a state, are irrational and passionate and can be easily manoeuvred. In his detective stories Bandyopadhyay identifiably seeks to include a large number of *urban poor* into Chatterjee's *clause* of absorbing the *urban poor* and the peasants into the state to be made functional in its development (147). Bikash Dutta, the members of Bhuteshwar's Wrestling Club in "Rakter Daag", the young peasants – Patal, Gopal and Bishnu – of Shantalgola in "Amriter Mrityu", and the labourers of Manish Chakroborty's coal mines in "Kahen Kabi Kalidas" are some of the *urban poor* people and peasants who are absorbed as participants in the post-independence Indian society:

Bikash becomes an associate of Bakshi, Bhuteshwar's club members seek to purge society of the sexual attentions of such psychological criminals as Satyakam Das, the Shantalgola peasants participate in the investigation into Amrita's death, and it might be assumed that in the absence of Gobindo Halder's manoeuvrings, Manish Chakroborty's labourers would work efficiently and contribute to the development of his business.

In spite of his nationalistic sentiments, Bandyopadhyay makes his inquisitor more a Bengali than an Indian and transforms his nationalism into a sort of topicality and regional pride. This is significant in context of Chatterjee's observation that "by transforming nationalism into a regional or state ideology, the postcolonial countries...[and their elites]...subjected themselves to a global process of rationalisation based on external norms, a process governed in the post war years of modernisation and development by the logic of a world system whose type is global capitalism, commanded at the top by the handful of leading industrial countries" (Said, *Culture* 320).

Ashis Nandy, in The Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under Colonialism and "Oppression and Human Liberation: Toward a Post-Gandhian Utopia", analyses the debilitations of colonial encounters by citing references from Foucault's analysis of power. He regards modern colonialism as a sort of crucial historical juncture in which power changes its style and first begins to elaborate the strategies of profusion. Doyle's implicit colonialism in his Sherlock Holmes stories also changes its style accordingly. Starting with an English surgeon's elaboration of his

suffering at the hands of the Afghan natives in A Study in Scarlet, the representation colonial power is transferred to Sherlock Holmes, the Orientalist man-of-science, with his arrival in the eighty-second line, and he thereafter elaborates the various strategies for controlling the natives in The Sign of Four.

Of the two genres of colonialism Nandy describes in The Intimate Enemy – the "bandit mode" and the "mind-and-culture occupying mode" – Doyle identifiably exhibits the second mode in his detective narratives (Gandhi 15). Through the Holmes canon Doyle puts forward the argument that "imperialism was really the messianic harbinger of civilization to the uncivilized world" (15). Only after the arrival of the disciplining coloniser Jonathan Small does the cannibalistic Tonga change into a "staunch and true...faithful mate" (Doyle, *The Complete* 91); in A Study in Scarlet the Christian John Ferrier practises the predominantly colonisers' faith among the formerly-colonised society of the Mormons and Doyle implies that they should be converted to Ferrier's religion in order to become civilized; Daulat Ras, who escapes the excesses of colonial disciplining in India by being in the imperial centre himself, behaves suspiciously in "The Adventure of the Three Students", thus symbolically attesting the erroneous Orientalist conception of the Oriental ambiguity.

In spite of the compartmentalisation of militaristic and cultural imperialisms, Nandy points out how colonialism enacts a separate kind of violence by postulating the colonised as negative or inverse image of the coloniser. He writes,

> "[The]...colonialism... [that seeks to project Europe as the locus of civilization by empting the colonised world of its meaning]...colonises minds [that is, it leads to bondage through psychological manipulation of the native] in addition to bodies and it releases forces within colonised societies [like that of India and the African countries] to alter their cultural priorities once and for all. In the process, it helps to generalise the concept of the modern West from a geographical and temporal entity to a psychological category. The West [as represented by Holmes through the characters of Holmes and Watson] is now everywhere, within the West and outside, in structures and in minds" (*The Intimate* xi).

That is why in spite of his and, in turn, Holmes's nearly-obsessive interest in the Orient, and particularly India, Doyle has presented only three Indians as having separate existence – the "Hindu servant, clad in a yellow turban, white, loose-fitting clothes, and a yellow sash" and Tonga in The Sign of Four, and Daulat Ras in "The Adventure of the Three Students". Readers find only these three Indians in direct action and existence. It is important that none of them are important representatives of the Indian culture – the Hindu being a servant, Tonga a cannibalistic Andaman native and Ras an unimportant Indian student subsumed in the disciplining influence of Britain's educational institutes. The other Orientals like Dost Akbar and Abdullah Khan appear in narratives by colonisers within the Sherlock Holmes stories. Their cultures have not been defined and their individualities have been effaced.

Doyle's narratives also cater to Hegel's theorem that human beings acquire identity or self-consciousness only through the recognition of others (Hegel 175-88). Holmes's imperial identity is not recognised only by Watson alone but also by members of England's contemporary or former colonies like Jefferson Hope, Birdy Edwards, Tonga and Daulat Ras or by those who have prolonged association with the Orient like Dr. Grimesby Roylott. Holmes's relationship with the representatives of England's former and contemporary colonies can be defined by the Hegelian "master-slave relationship" where the master, that is, Holmes, is recognisable through his knowledge, physical power and efficiency, while the slave or the Oriental becomes a dependent 'thing'. To exemplify, Steve Dixie is overpowered by Holmes's cold, threatening attitude in "The Adventure of the Three Gables" (Doyle, *The Complete* 1051).

Nandy also indicates that colonial discourses, that include Doyle's narratives, rationalise themselves through rigid oppositions such as maturity/immaturity, civilization/barbarism, developed/underdeveloped, and that the colonial literature puts particular stress on identifying the state of being colonised with childhood (Gandhi 32). In The Sign of Four , Jonathan Small attributes to Tonga the qualities of a child by describing him as "little", "hanging about my hut", "young" and describing that he "took him in hand" (Doyle, *The Complete* 91). Similarly, Holmes pits his thoughtful approach against the immaturity of Dixie's passionate attack in "The Adventure of the Three Gables", his civilized behaviour against the uncivilized manners of Grimesby Roylott in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band", his matured judgment of

the human nature against Daulat Ras's suspicion of Europeans in "The Adventure of the Three Students", and his mechanise revolver against Tonga's primitive dart-thrower in The Sign of Four.

On the other hand, Byomkesh Bakshi might be identified as a representative of what Nandy describes as "non-players" (*The Intimate* xiv). Bakshi is the non-Westerner who is able to live with the *alternative* West constructed by the subaltern-metropolis of Calcutta and the methodology of the Eurocentric detectives adapted to an Indian climate, atmosphere and context, "while resisting the loving embrace of the West's dominant self" (xiv).

In "Oppression and Human Liberation: Toward a post-Gandhian Utopia" Ashis Nandy suggests that the "post-national ethic" must begin by "recognising the oppressed or marginalized selves of the first and second world as civilisational allies in the battle against institutionalised suffering" (*Oppression* 348). The boundaries between the colonial victors like Holmes and the colonised individuals like Byomkesh Bakshi might be replaced by a recognition of continuity between the coloniser and the dominated, but such a recognition would not only deconstruct the identity of Holmes as a coloniser but also would result in de-recognition of Bakshi as intelligent and efficient subaltern-investigator. Nandy's "post-national ethic" cannot be therefore conformed to for preserving the separate identities of Holmes and Bakshi.

In The Intimate Enemy Nandy has gone on to theorise the emergence of a protest against the colonial cult of masculinity. He writes:

> "Colonialism...was congruent with the existing Western sexual stereotypes and the philosophy of life which they represented. It produced a cultural consensus in which political and socio-economical dominance symbolized the dominance of men and masculinity over women and feminity" (*The Intimate* 4).

In the Byomkesh Bakshi stories different women like the inquisitor's wife Satyabati, Mohini – whose brings about the death of Pranhari Poddar in "Kahen Kabi Kalidas", Shiuly Mazumdar – whose impending marriage to Anadi Haldar forces Probhat to murder him in "Aadim Ripu", and Shakuntala Singh – whose kills Deep Narayan Singh in "Bonhi Patango" play vital roles and, therefore, might be cited as instances of the litterateur's protest against the male colonial discourse.

In his criticism Ranajit Guha repeatedly stresses the lack of harmony between the West and its overseas colonies. Even in the absence of direct political control, economic control and cultural hegemony of the colonisers help to prolong and sustain the colonised individuals' sense of being ruled. In context of Guha's problematics of continuity and discontinuity expressed in *A Rule of Property*, it is impossible that Saradindu Bandyopadhyay would be able to study the Indian past as radically affected by British power not in the abstract but concretely

because as an Indian his origin, upbringing and familial background depended historically on the power of the colonisers such as abstraction requires and appropriates not only people but also geography (Said, *Culture* 306). As imperialists the British settlers felt that their task in India was to solve "the problem of sovereignty in Bengal" in favour of the British Crown (Guha, *A Rule* 145), and Holmes's notion of the British rule in India is chiefly concerned with the site and the incident of the Indian Sepoy Mutiny in The Sign of Four. Against this Guha suggests the dismantling of imperial historiography in Europe itself – the "aboriginal site of the colonisers' greatest security, longevity and authority" (Said, *Culture* 306). Byomkesh Bakshi dismantles imperial historiography in two ways – by negating the total history of the British rule in India through non-mentioning, and by using the very methodology of investigation adapted from imperial-detectives like Holmes and Father Brown in a totally Indianised atmosphere, thus challenging the uniqueness of European detective fiction that thrives in the security of European climate, atmosphere and context. To Guha, the control of the colonised individuals by the colonisers is continuous and devastating, and therefore, in extension, the description of how continuity is established between the Eurocentric detective fiction and its peripheral Bengali detective fiction of the colony is an impossibility.

In "Can the Subaltern Speak?", Gayatri Chakravorty-Spivak questions the issue of representation of the oppressed subject, thus drawing attention to the complicated relationship between the knowing investigator and the (un)knowning subject of subaltern histories. In her essay she points out the major differences between "representation" and "representability", and in extension, to the

ambivalence of postcolonial investigation (Gandhi 2). It follows from her essay that Byomkesh Bakshi cannot depict himself as a representative of the Indian subaltern without assuming authority in the process. It also becomes problematic to precisely identify which subaltern class does he represent, and whether he is a true representative of the Indian subaltern at all.

In context of McLeod's definition that "subaltern...are those who did not comprise the colonial elite – such as the lesser rural gentry, impoverished landlords, rich peasants and upper-middle class peasants", Bakshi *is* a subaltern (191). But Chakravorty-Spivak points out that according to poststructuralists like Foucault and Gilles Deleuze, human consciousness is constituted *discursively* and that "...the oppressed, if given the chance ...and on the way to solidarity through alliance politics... can speak and know their condition" (*Can the Subaltern* 25). Because the subaltern subjectivity is constituted by the shifting discourses of power that endlessly speak through them, situating them in particular positions and relations, they do not construct their own identities but have them written for them. Bakshi, being a subaltern and a fictional character, has his identity constructed by Bandyopadhyay who is himself a member of the subaltern and has, in turn, his consciousness constructed by the imperialists from positions outside of himself . Because Bandyopadhyay's "consciousness is *not* a transparent representation of the self but an effect of discourse", it becomes problematic that Bakshi would be able to project himself as a *real* and *natural* representative of the subaltern investigators (McLeod 192). Chakravorty-Spivak shows concern about Foucault and Deleuze's assumption that "the...

[White]...intellectuals...[like themselves]...can serve as a transparent medium through which the voices of the oppressed can be represented" (McLeod 192). But because the subaltern is *not* a sovereign subject in control of his consciousness, an Eastern intellectual like Bandyopadhyay cannot be a transparent medium for the presentation of subaltern consciousness. To Chakravorty-Spivak, "subaltern consciousness is fiction, an effect of Western discourse", and, therefore, retrieval of the voice of a "subaltern subject" from the colonial archives posits a risky "complicity in an essentialist, specifically Western model of centred subjectivity in which *concrete experience* is (mistakenly) preserved" (McLeod 192-3). Chakravorty-Spivak's observations deny that the voice like that of Bandyopadhyay should be read as credible representation of the subaltern voices that also include other writers of Bengali detective fiction like Priyanath Mukhopadhyay, Kaliprashanna Chattopadhyay, Panchkari De and Dinendra Kumar Ray, because such a reading would inadvertently depend on the Western discourse. On the other hand, if the Byomkesh Bakshi stories are interpreted as having a separate existence as a part of conspicuously Indian literature running parallel to the Eurocentric detective stories, only then can they be assumed as not only faithfully representing detective fiction in colonial and postcolonial India but also offering a more complete and powerful resistance against the hegemony of Western sleuth narratives.

Chakravorty Spivak notes that the representations of "subaltern insurgency" tend to patronise men. She writes,

> "Within the effaced itinerary of the subaltern subject, the track of sexual difference is doubly effected ... both, as object of colonialist historiography and as subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of sender keeps the male dominated. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow..." (*Can the Subaltern* 28).

To her, the subaltern female exists as the *unrepresentable* in discourse – a shadowy marginalised figure whose speech would be disfigured if any attempt to retrieve her voice is made by the postcolonial critics (McLeod 193). The women characters in the Byomkesh Bakshi narratives identifiably accord with Chakravorty-Spivak's observations. Although there are different vividly-described female characters like Satyabati, Rajani, Shakuntala Singh and Mohini, it is significant that they are controlled by their respective male counterparts – Byomkesh, Dr. Ghatak, Ratikanta Choudhury and Bhuvan Das, and cannot undertake any important action. They are not granted outdoor mobility and identifiably cannot take any decision independent of the males. They are even denied the power to utter epiphanic words, and their reactions to different instances of crime are unrecorded. The women in Byomkesh Bakshi stories suffer from what Robert Young identifies as the "problem of enunciation" (164). They get written continuously as objects of patriarchy in the patriarchal society of urban Indians, and exist, in accordance with Chakravorty-Spivak's observations, as shadowy figures on the margins of the patriarchal realms of postcolonial literature.

In The Postcolonial Critic: Interviews, Strategies, Dialogues, Chakravorty-Spivak equates European knowledge and mirage of Western rationality with the economic domination and political hegemony of colonialism, and agrees with Foucault's and Derrida's observations that the very structure of Western rationality is racist and imperialist (7). This can be extended to demonstrate the imperial compatibility of Doyle's Holmes narratives. Contrarily, by successfully making his detective conform to a culture and modes of investigation separate from that of Holmes's, Bandyopadhyay challenges the universal validity of Western culture and epistemology as being the harbingers of the supreme and the most efficient.

Chakravorty-Spivak warns that recent concessions to marginality studies within the first world metropolitan academy serve to identify, confirm, and exclude certain cultural formations as chronically marginal. Because the *third worldism* of postcolonial studies may well perpetuate real social and political oppressions which rely upon rigid distinctions between the *centre* and the *margin*, explicit and continual identification of Byomkesh Bakshi narratives as 'third world literature' may lead to the social oppressions of the other texts belonging to the sub-genre of Bengali detective fiction (*Outside in* 55). Doyle's sleuth narratives collectively being a part of the 'first world literature', the Byomkesh Bakshi stories, according to her credo, may put up a resistance as 'third world literature' only for a certain and limited amount of time. The identification of Bandyopadhyay's detective stories as solely Indian counterparts to and resistance texts against English detective fiction reduces the risk of their turning themselves in social and political oppressions.

Frantz Fanon's postcolonial theories are also relevant in reading the Sherlock Holmes stories as colonial and the Byomkesh Bakshi stories as anti-colonial narratives The characteristic violence shown by Holmes towards Jefferson Hope in A Study in Scarlet, and Tonga in The Sign of Four, or that exhibited by Dr. Grimesby Roylott towards his native butler in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band", conform to Fanon's assertion that "colonisation cannot be understood without the possibility of torturing, of violation, or of massacring" (*Toward the* 66).

Holmes's penchant for disguising himself has been exemplified in different Sherlock Holmes narratives. He impersonates a "drunken looking groom, ill-kempt and side-whiskered, with an inflamed face and disreputable clothes" and an "amiable and simple-minded Nonconformist clergyman" in "A Scandal in Bohemia" (Doyle, *The Complete* 103,106), as a "thin, wrinkled old man" in "The Man with the Twisted Lips"(168), a "venerable Italian priest" in "The Adventure of the Final Problem" (420), an "unshaven French ouvrier" in "The Disappearance of Lady Frances Carfax", (808), and as "a rakish young workman with a goatee beard and a swagger" in "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton" (635). Significantly, with exception in "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton" (637), he never wears a mask. To be masked, according to Fanon, means "to be possessed by the Other, by a force where power and authority transcend the individually human", and by avoiding the mask, Holmes avoids being possessed by the Other (Wyrick 26).

Holmes's constant assertion of his superiority to the Orientals stems from the general consideration of White men as superior to the Black and other colonised individuals (Fanon, *Black Skin* 10). Because "to speak means to assume a culture", Saradindu Bandyopadhyay identifies himself as a subaltern Indian litterateur by speaking through his investigator, and stresses on the insularity and distinctiveness of his own culture from that of the colonisers (*Black Skin* 17). It is also important that though Bandyopadhyay created the character of Bakshi after the inspiration of Doyle, Christie and Chesterton, he writes in his own subaltern language his own language because the subaltern's mastery of the colonisers' language might increase his acceptability by the White Westerners, but it alienates him from his root culture, erasing the cultural memories, and causing his dislocation from the colonised individual's community (Wyrick 32-3).

Fanon has described in details how the Eurocentric literatures like that of Doyle stereotype and belittle the colonised individuals through the processes of *infantilisation*, *primitivisation*, *decivilisation* and *essentialisation*. In colonial literature the subaltern is ever "the eternal victim of an essence, of an appearance for which he is not responsible" (*Black Skin* 35). The presentation of Tonga as cannibalistic native, of Daulat Ras as the suspicious Indian, of Steve Dixie as the adamant and unintelligent rogue and of the swamp adder as a symbol of the polarity and incompatibility of the East and the West are instances of Doyle's stereotyping of the Orient.

Sherlock Holmes's insistence on rationality stems from his psychosis of the pre-determined, unreal categories of the subjugated countries and races. According to Fanon, "For a man whose only weapon is reason there is nothing more neurotic than contact with the unreason..." (*Black Skin* 118). To a coloniser like Holmes, the subaltern is not only irrational but also possesses within him all the negative qualities – he is "an animal", "bad", "mean" and "ugly" (113-4). The White man's "racial epidermalschema" shatters the coloured subaltern into a triple person: a body, a race and a history (112). To Holmes, Tonga is a man of black body from a cannibalistic race that requires discipline and has no well-defined cultural history, and is therefore, fit to be colonised. Roylott's brutal treatment of his native butler in "The Adventure of the Speckled Band" is, therefore, not criticised when he returns to Britain.

Fanon distinguishes the differences of treatment that the colonised individuals receive from the colonisers on basis of their complexion. The Jews, being White, are compelled to internalise the stereotypes others have of them, even if only to combat them. They become, in process, "overdetermined from within". On the other hand, the Black and brown-complexioned Afro-Asians are the victims of the ideas others have of them as well as of their own appearance. That is why Holmes's reaction at the appearance of Steve Dixie in "The Adventure of the Three Gables" is somewhat more dismissive than his towards Jefferson Hope in A Study in Scarlet or Abe Slaney in "The Adventure of the Dancing Men".

A reversal of the racist stereotypes by assigning positive instead of the negative values to the colonised populace is an impossibility to Fanon. In Eurocentric literature the colonised individuals are always consigned to a static cultural childhood and the idea that the "Negroes...[and the other Eastern subaltern are]... backward and simple" is constantly reinforced (*Black Skin* 126).

Holmes's constant assertion of his being a British is significant because to Fanon, race is never a "minor term". Drawing on Fanon, Wyrick observes, "A society without class is possible, but not one without race. And the raciality is achieved only with each race 'disalienating' itself, thereby giving rise to racist formations" (Wyrick 41). In his making the investigator a practicing member an imperial race, Doyle subconsciously adheres to him a racial prejudice even against the general the non-British Whites.

None of the representatives of the Oriental subaltern populace presented in Sherlock Holmes narratives – be it Mahomet Singh or Tonga in The Sign of Four or Daulat Ras of "The Adventure of the Three Students" – possesses his female counterpart. Importantly, they never show any sexual attraction for the White females. To Fanon, an independent sexual pathology of the subaltern is non-existent, and sexual relationships between the Easterners and the Westerners are instances of abnormal behaviour (Wyrick 46). In spite of all their racial prejudices Doyle's texts do not attribute any abnormal sexuality to the subaltern, although he always keeps the European women the Eastern males apart from one another. To White litterateurs like Doyle, the dark-

complexioned subaltern males symbolise repressed sexuality, and the White women characteristically invest black men with the aggressive sexuality they have been taught to abhor. Fanon writes,

> "The civilized White man retains an irrational longing for unusual eras of sexual licence...projecting his own desires onto the Negro...[and other dark-complexioned subaltern males]...[,]...the White man behaves 'as if' the Negro... [and the other Easterners]...really had them" (*Black Skin* 165).

There is an obtrusive difference between the ways Sherlock Holmes and Byomkesh Bakshi dress themselves. Being a European, Holmes dresses himself in formal or elaborate suits, ulsters and caps, and smokes pipes. On the other hand, the Indian inquisitor uses dhoti and punjabee. Because "throughout the world, clothes signify gender, wealth and status; they express individual personality, group expectations, and social conventions", the distinction between Sherlock Holmes the coloniser and Byomkesh Bakshi the colonised is made conspicuous through their dresses (Wyrick 68). In A Dying Colonialism, the traditional Algerian woman's dress with the *haik* or the body veil becomes "a battleground for colonial and anti colonial ideology" to Fanon (Wyrick 68). Thus Byomkesh's dress becomes a mark of his anti-colonial sentiment. Similarly the elaborate Indian saree of Satyabati grants her insularity from the "colonial fantasy of the harem" (*Dying* 46). With her elaborate drapery, she offers a

resistance to the "dream of colonisation: the colonised willingly offering up their treasures, asking to be taken" (Wyrick 69).

Fanon has also noted in The Dying Colonialism that the colonisers' conceives the colony as a fertile female. Wyrick observes,

> "In colonial discourse and individual fantasy, the land-to-be-taken is conceived as female, passive, potentially fertile, the 'natural' object of forceful masculine desire" (70).

In the Sherlock Holmes stories, the Orient perceptively appears not only as a female but also as a land of sensuality and fertility fit to be dominated and enjoyed. Doyle's general avoidance of mentioning the Oriental woman out of his concern with etiquette and Victorian prudery is substituted with his very wholesome notion of the total Orient as the female. His nearly-obsessive attraction for the Orient might also be interpreted in context of this particular Fanonian observation.

In the world of Holmes and Bakshi, the initiative of the coloniser to deconstruct the difference created by the colonised individuals' dress becomes the counter-initiative of the colonised to maintain the traditional dress code even more stringently. Fanon explains, "To the colonialist offence against the veil, the colonised opposes the cult of the veil" (*Dying* 47). Against the traditional European

formal suit, Byomkesh Bakshi's dhoti and punjabee become important anti-colonial symbols.

Fanon has also an explanation for the reason why science and technology never find detailed focus in the anti-colonial texts. It is significant that against Holmes's magnifying glass, revolver and different chemicals for conducting experiments at the laboratory, Bakshi seldom uses a gun and always depends upon psychoanalytical approach during investigation. Objects, gadgets, and technology are never values free in a colonial situation. To the resisting subaltern, the colonial gadgets and technology offer a "daily invitation [to the colonised who are tempted to use them] not to go native" (*Dying* 71). Exemplifying the instance of the pre-independence native Algerians' aversion to radio, a gadget imported by the French imperialists, Fanon describes, "Switching on the radio meant [to the Algerians] giving asylum to the occupier's words; it meant allowing the coloniser's language to filter into the very heart of the home, the last of the supreme bastions of the national spirit" (*Dying* 92). In the ambivalent postcolonial world, Byomkesh Bakshi may use the electric fan and the telephone to ease his daily life, but he exhibits a general aversion towards gadget-oriented approach to crime detection.

Watson, the English physician, can be demonstrated as a practicing coloniser in context of the Fanonian observation, "The doctor who is killed in Algeria...is always a war criminal" (*A Dying* 135). Fanon analyses the role of the colonial doctors in torturing prisoners, betraying the subaltern patients to colonial

authorities and in withholding medical supplies. He points out that "the colonizing doctor adopts the attitude of his group toward the struggle of the...[colonised]...people" (*Dying* 133). The medical practice of Eurocentric physicians like Watson is saturated with racism and profiteering where the non-European patients are treated with contempt and brutality. Watson's being a physician does not certify to him any sort of apolitical humanitarian essence. In his practice and constant assertion of prejudice, Watson becomes more a "colonial interloper". Wyrick observes,

> "For Fanon, Western medicine is an integral part of the oppressive colonial situation. Along with other forms of science and technology, it lends a surgically gloved hand to the iron fist of military and economic domination. Despite its capacity to make...[the colonised people's life] ...better, European medicine is understandably perceived by subject people as yet another form of conquest" (91).

Against the White physicians of Holmes narratives – like Watson himself, Grimesby Roylott of "The Adventure of the Speckled Band", Percy Trevelyan of "The Adventure of the Resident Patient", James Mortimer of The Hound of the Baskervilles, Culverton Smith of "The Adventure of the Dying Detective" and James Saunders of "The Adventure of the Blanched Soldier", Bandyopadhyay pits the Indian ones – Mohan of "Makarshar Rash", Rudra of "Agniban", Ashwini Ghatak of "Chitrochor", Bhujangadhar Das of "Chiriakhana" and Asim Sen of "Khunji Khunji Nari" . The subaltern doctors assumed importance during the anti-colonial wars. At their

hands the Western medicines "take on a new value. These medications [that is, the components of Western medicine – penicillin, sterile dressings, anaesthetics], which were taken for granted before the struggle for liberation [of the colonised] were transformed into weapons" (Fanon, *Dying* 140-1). The "native" doctor, who was seen as a colonial agent before the colonies' war of liberation of the colonies started, is "reintegrated into the group…[of the struggling colonised]…during the anti colonial resistance" (142).

That Byomkesh belongs to the middle class is also significant because Fanon considers that true liberation of the colonised individuals from the colonisers is possible only when the impoverished and the middle class individuals are involved. In The Wretched of the Earth, he underscores the need for thinking, planning and acting to build up an anti-colonial nation "from the bottom up" because "the revolutionary struggle is based on the heroic aspirations of the common people" (*The Wretched* 35). Thus Byomkesh Bakshi's importance as an anti-colonial subaltern increases manifold because he belongs to the middle class.

To Fanon, "the nation-state is the crucial political unit" (Wyrick 104). Young describes the nation as:

> "a kind of cooperation…the border that allows other nations to recognise it as a nation, to send its representatives there, so that it can participate in the global community of nations…[;]…[it is a]…community without communal values" (60).

To become a nation the people should not only resemble each other as closely as possible but should also speak a common language (Young 60). In order to stress the importance of post-independence India as a distinct nation, Bandyopadhyay has made his principal protagonists practicing Hindus while simultaneously imbibed the non-Bengalis like Bhuvaneshwar Das of "Kahen Kabi Kalidas", and Deep Narayan Singh and Purandar Pandey of "Bonhi Patango" with general Bengali traits and language.

Byomkesh Bakshi's Calcutta as well as Jonathan Small's Agra have been divided into 'Western' zones consisting of well-built, brightly-lit areas resided in by the British imperialist, and the dirty, ramshackle, native zones. The Agra Fort with its distinctive "modern part" and "old quarter" in The Sign of Four might be cited as one of the examples (Doyle, *The Complete* 86). Similarly, the delta-shaped seedy, deserted *pally*-region of pre-independence Calcutta in "Satyanweshi" has been projected against the aristocratic southern-Calcutta locality where Sir Dwigendranarayan, an imperial collaborator, resides in "Shimonto Heera" (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 77). Fanon notes that "the colonial world is divided into compartments" (*The Wretched* 27). The two faces of colonial Calcutta, therefore, acquire a colonial connotation.

Byomkesh Bakshi's identity as a middle-class individual as distinct from the bourgeoisie and the mercantile classes assumes significance in Fanon's indictment of the bourgeoisie for its being morally and intellectually despicable.

Underscoring the importance of the middle-class individuals in national struggle and indicting the bourgeoisie and the merchants, Fanon writes,

> "Neither financers nor industrial magnets are to be found within this national middle class. The national bourgeoisie of underdeveloped countries is not engaged in production, not in invention as building, nor labour; it is completely canalised into activities of the intermediary type. Its innermost vocation seems to be part of the racket" (*The Wretched* 150).

That Bakshi has no relation to the mercantile society, his father being a schoolteacher and mother a housewife, helps in his retaining importance as an anti-colonial resistor (Bandyopadhyay, *Byomkesh* 434).

Fanon stresses that the native intellectuals like physicians, engineers, litterateurs, artists and teachers – a group to which Bandyopadhyay belongs – should "throw...[themselves]...body and soul into the national struggle" and not act like adopted children of the colonisers, by "greedily...[trying]...to make Western culture their own" (*The Wretched* 233, 218). After re-educating themselves and intimidating fetishization by Western cultures, the subaltern intellectuals must educate the common people because "everything depends on them" (197). Bandyopadhyay assumes a special significance in the postcolonial India as the litterateur who can resist and teach commoners to participate in anti-impeirla resistances. As an artist he works in three stages, thus according in turn with the qualities that Fanon finds indispensable in an

anti-colonial subaltern artist (Wyrick 142). He first successfully imitates and thereby distorts the Western conventions of detective fiction to prove that as a native intellectual he is as smart and talented as the Europeans litterateurs. Second, he glorifies the traditional Indian styles of composing fiction and in stories like "Durgo Rahoshyo", deals with themes of India's heritage to put the Indian culture at par with the Western ones. And third, by making the hero of his stories a Bengali middle-class individual, he inspires the subaltern into discerning a national hero in Bakshi and induces in them an urge to be intellectually efficient as the Indian detective.

It is important that like Doyle, Sherlock Holmes is not an Englishman. Doyle was born at Edinburgh in Scotland to Irish Catholic parents – Charles Altamont Doyle and Mary Foley. According to Leslie S. Klinger, the full name of the British investigator is William Sherlock Scott Holmes which includes an identifiable Scottish element [3].On the other hand, Duncan MacDougald Jr., identifies "Sherlock" to be Irish in origin (Baring-Gould, *The Annotated I* 10). Doyle subsumes the detective in his imperial ideology when he depicts Holmes as asserting himself as a patriotic Briton by inscribing "V.R" or *Victoria Regina* on the drawing room wall in "The Adventure of the Musgrave Ritual" (Doyle, *The Complete* 334). Both "Sherlock" and "Holmes" are not common British name or surname and do not indicate the proper nationality of the investigator. With the ambivalence of his nationality the imperial investigator himself becomes a hybrid character. On the other hand, in spite of being an Indian, Bakshi frequently uses English words in his dialogues, and smokes cheroots in "The Gramophone Pin Mystery" (Bandyopadhyay, Picture 45), cigarettes in "Picture

Imperfect" (233) and hookah in "Achin Pakhi" (*Byomkesh* 661). He also exhibits preference for European food that includes cutlets, eggs and tea stored in thermo flasks in "Chorabalee" (131). He has been educated according to the European standards, maintains a European punctuality and adheres to Eurocentric codes of chivalry even when he wears dhoti-punjabee all the time. With the juxtaposition of European and Indian behavioural features Byomkesh Bakshi is also a hybridised character.

Bakshi's adherence to the European customs like smoking cheroot, maintenance of punctuality, food habit and usage of Western gadgets might be cited as instances of what Bhabha indicates by "colonial mimicry". They indicate those colonial meanings and identities which are "almost the same, but not quite" and designate the ethical gap between the normative vision of post-Enlightenment civility and their distorted colonial (mis)imitations (Bhabha, *The Location* 86). Bhabha observes,

> "Between the Western sign and its colonial signification there emerges a map of misreading that embarrasses the righteousness of recordation and its certainty of good government" (*The Location* 95).

In his mimicry of the European standards of living Bakshi systematically misrepresents the foundational assumptions of colonial discourses like the Sherlock Holmes stories by articulating them "syntagmatically with a range of differential knowledge and personalities that both estrange...[their]...'identity' and produce new forms of knowledge, new modes of differentiation, new sites of power" (*The Location* 120).

Bakshi's power of psychoanalysis is different from the empirical power of Holmes's investigation. His knowledge of the Indian mind, demeanour, social system, and mythology differs from Holmes's encyclopaedic knowledge ranging from Stradivarius violins, including the Buddhism of Ceylon, to the warships of the future that significantly excludes a psychoanalytical approach (Doyle, *The Complete* 79). Even if Byomkesh follows different European customs and uses English words and phrases in his dialogues, he uses them sparingly only to sustain his vernacular that has been mixed with the colonial vocabulary as a result of prolonged imperial rule and uses Western technology for easing his domestic life in Calcutta. This exemplifies how Bakshi's mimicry inaugurates the process of anti colonial self-differentiation through the logic of inappropriate appropriation.

To Bhabha, the simple presence of the colonised Other within the textual structure of different Eurocentric texts is enough evidence of the ambivalence of the colonial text. Such an ambivalence destabilises the claim of the colonial narratives like the Sherlock Holmes stories for absolute authority or unquestionable authenticity. That is why stories like The Sign of Four, "The Adventure of the Three Students" and "The Adventure of the Three Gables" lose their power to represent racial purity of the colonisers. Because the "colonial presence is always ambivalent" and, therefore, hybridised, Bhabha observes that "hybridity is a problematic of colonial representation and individuation that reverses the effects of the colonialist disawal, so that other 'denied' knowledges enter upon the dominant discourse and estrange the basis of its authority...its rule of recognition" (*The Location* 107,114). He

describes this "partialising process of hybridity" as a "metonymy of presence" (*The Location* 115). Therefore the presence of Afro-Asian natives in The Sign of Four, "The Adventure of the Three Students" and "The Adventure of the Three Gables" exemplifies the hybridity of the Sherlock Holmes stories.

Doyle has not only creates stereotypes out of the subaltern characters like the savage Tonga, the suspicious Daulat Ras, and the undependable Abdullah Khan and Mahomet Singh and the swamp adder but also jokes about their desire to be ruled. Tonga's relationship with Small who treats him as a "young snake" and takes him around for exhibition, and Mahomet Singh's reposing faith in him become ironically comical. Holmes's mistrust of Daulat Ras because he is an Indian and Small's trust in Tonga in spite of his being a native are as contradictory as Small's sense of ownership of the Agra treasure and his wavering between the conception of the Orient as the land of treasures and lethal enteric diseases. Bhabha terms this 'displacement' of the Empire and colonised individuals' value by imperial litterateurs like Doyle as "colonial doubling". He writes,

> "Colonial doubling...is...a strategic displacement of value through a process of metonymy of presence. It is through this partial process, represented in its enigmatic, inappropriate signifiers – stereotypes, jokes, multiple and contradictory belief, the 'native' Bible – that we begin to get a sense of a specific space of cultural colonial discourse. It is a separate space, a space of separation – less than one and double – which has been

> systematically denied by both colonialists and nationalists who have sought authority in authenticity of *origins*" (*The Location* 120).

In the Byomkesh Bakshi narratives can be discerned "the emergence of a radically protean political entity at the moment of anti colonial insurgency" through Indian literature (Gandhi 130). The indeterminate zone or 'place of hybridity' that bridges the polarity of the coloniser and the colonised is characterised by communication, negotiation and translation. Though Byomkesh Bakshi has been constructed as a subaltern investigator to resist the supremacy of the English detectives like Sherlock Holmes and Father Brown, Bandyopadhyay registers his anti-colonial resistance not by direct *collision* but by literary and cultural *collusion* – first by adapting himself to the Eurocentric culture and thereafter creating a world necessarily without the imperialists. His communication of the creation of an efficient subaltern investigator to readers habituated with reading Eurocentric detective novels by the English litterateurs like Doyle, Christie and Chesterton gains significance in this context. Anti-colonial politics begins to articulate its agenda in the "place of hybridity", and "the construction of a political object that is new...properly alienates...[the colonised individuals'] ...political expectations and changes...the very forms of...[the subaltern's]...recognition of the moment of politics" (Bhabha, *The Location* 25). Though Bakshi is a fictional character, he becomes a 'political object' by incorporating within himself the voice, reaction and resistance of the Indians against the British colonial occupation.

According to Robert J.C. Young, hybridity:

> "involves processes of interaction that create new social spaces to which new meanings are given. These relations enable the articulation of experiences of change in societies splintered by modernity, and they facilitate consequent demands for social transformations" (79).

The hybridised character of Byomkesh Bakshi offers a creative space of articulation and demand, revolt and resistance, and innovation and negotiation for many of the contradictory social channels operating and developing within the Bengali society in late pre-independence and early post-independence India.

It follows from Bhabha that Bakshi's maintenance of a pure Bengali culture separate from that of the Eurocentric one of Sherlock Holmes would be an impossibility because cultures are not "holistic, separated and static with pre-given cultural contents and customs" (*The Location* 34). McLeod regards cultures as porous and always leaking into each other and crisscrossing supposed barriers (McLeod 228). Bakshi's smoking of cheroot, frequent usage of English words and preference for European food are examples of his cross-cultural identity.

While constructing his detective Saradindu Bandyopadhyay has cautiously avoided dealing with the history of the Indian detective fiction and of the Indian themselves, with the exception of the pre-independence Hindu-Muslim riots in "Aadim Ripu". According to Bhabha, "The present of people's history ...is a practice

that destroys the constant principles of the nation culture that attempt to hark back to a 'true' national past, which is often represented in the reified forms of realism and stereotype" (*Nation* 303). By avoiding depiction of the Indian history and by not allowing history to become the background for his stories other than "Durgo Rahoshyo", Bandyopadhyay symbolically preserves the national culture of the Indian readership.

Bhabha emphasises that the idea of the nation, the language of those who write of it and the lives of those who live in it are ambivalent (*Nation* 1). It is therefore natural that Sherlock Holmes who lives in the imperial Britain and speaks the colonial language of English would be as ambivalent as the subaltern, Bengali-speaking character of Byomkesh Bakshi. The cultural dissemination is, however, more pronounced in Bandyopadhyay's sleuth stories than in Doyle's detective narratives because of the British author's maintenance of the insularity and uniqueness of his investigator as Britain's representative.

In the conclusion, it requires mention that Doyle's description of the British weather in stories such as "The Adventure of the Cardboard Box"(*The Complete* 287), "The Adventure of Charles Augustus Milverton"(632), "The Adventure of the Six Napoleons" (645), "The Adventure of the Golden Pince-Nez" (671) and "The Adventure of the Missing Three-Quarter" (687) finds relevance in Bhabha's equating England's weather with the "most changeable and immanent signs of national difference" (*Nation* 319). It encourages within Doyle:

> "[the] memories of the 'deep' nation crafted in chalk and limestone; the quilted down; the moors menaced by the wind; the quiet cathedral towns; that corner of a foreign field that is forever England. The English weather also revives memories of its daemonic double: the heat and dust of India; the dark emptiness of Africa; the tropical chaos that was deemed despotic and ungovernable and therefore worthy of civilizing mission" (*Nation* 319).

Doyle's projection of Sherlock Holmes as a representative of the British imperial power is thus reinforced by his presentation of the English weather.

NOTES:

1. Klinger, Leslie S. "Life and Times of Mr. Sherlock Holmes, John H. Watson, M.D, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Other Notable Personages". 1 February 2003. <http://webpages.charter.net/lklinger/Chrotabl.htm >
2. Stewart, Nicholas. "A Postcolonial Canonical and Cultural Revision of Conan Doyle's Holmes Narratives". 3 February 2003. <http://www.qub.ac.uk/english/imperial/india/conan_doyle.htm >
3. Klinger, Leslie.S. "Life and Times of Mr. Sherlock Holmes, John H. Watson, M.D, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, and Other Notable Personages". 1 February 2003. <http://webpages.charter.net/lklinger/Chrotabl.htm >