



## COLONIAL EXPLOITATION OF ANGLO -INDIAN LABOUR: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

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### ABSTRACT

*The Anglo-Indian dream of a nation is not to be identified as a primitive category as in the case of communities like Jews, with unchangeable or fixed expectations. Since the Anglo-Indian is a result of colonialism, their idea of nation, as Anshuman A. Mondal reviewed in Nationalism and Postcolonial Identity: Culture and Ideology in India and Egypt elsewhere, “is the product of specific historical moment” (15). The dream for a separate nation derived here when Anglo-Indians as a cultural community or ethnic group become less culturally comparable as they observe a mutual historical meaning to their survival.*

**Keywords:** *Anglo-Indian, Nationalism, culture, Ideology*

### INTRODUCTION

As a postcolonial cultural artefact, from a Third World nation *The Trotter-Nama: A Chronicle* requires to be studied as an allegory of colonialism on the one aspect and as the allegory of the Anglo-Indian notion of nation as other. Thus the chronicle of the Trotters is an allegory of the embattled form of a culture, where Sealy creates a historical consciousness for his culture/community, which provides purpose to the survival of its members.

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In a broader sense *The Trotter-Nama: A Chronicle* portrays India as a country viewed through the eyes of a minority community that attempts its voice to be recorded in the public sphere of India. What is accomplished in this allegorical venture is indicating the world of a community with a proven historical past that should be understood in connection to the mainstream history.

Sealy provides sufficient hints for the allegorical reading of *The Trotter-Nama: A Chronicle*. The anecdotes named “How History is Made” (339) and “How the Raj is Done” (560) are examples. They are passionate for the objective of the novel as a whole. It builds the history of the Anglo-Indian community and India in the acumen of the history of colonialism in India. It means that separate histories can be built from the point of view of various communities, asserting how colonialism influenced each of them. Thus the colonial experience of the Sikh community is distinct from that of the Muslims, Christians, Parsis or Hindus. All these communities go through the severe reorientations because of their enforced link with the colonial dominances.

In the case of the Anglo-Indians, since they are emerged from colonialism, their experience with them should be closer than the others, and thus their versions of history are also important. Through the two metaphorical phrases in the novel, ‘How Raj is done’ and ‘How history is made’ Sealy epitomises the history of his own community as well as the colonial encounter, including a type of supplement to the mainstream history of the nation as a whole.

The Anglo-Indian community as depicted by the Trotters right from time of Justin Aloysius Trotter cultivated a unique food habit and cuisines, and tried recipes with a variety. Since the community made-up of people from various European nations and India, their food habit also gets a composite quality, including blended varieties of two geo-cultural societies, Indian and European.

The First Trotter picks out several chefs from various religions and cultures when he settled down in Sans Souci, after serving in army for a long time.

*The Trotter-Nama: A Chronicle* is an examiner of the Anglo-Indian ethnic group with more details which cannot be noticed in history books. Even though Sealy adopts a fictional structure for his fiction, he seems to honestly present everything one should know about the community. Yet, the novel does not rank on a stern objective, whether of fiction, a chronicle or history. He composes the fragmented accounts of his community in a single version, by comprising fiction and fact, myth and reality of his community.

In another perspective, as a member of the Anglo-Indian family, he sketches his own history, to discover the origins of his ethnic background which has a history, and which cannot be undervalued, and thus to create the ancestry of his own family in order to settle the tough



doubt of cultural identity. In this manner, he secures the community from the syndrome of forgetfulness and prevents eradication of its past in India.

Sealy attempts to provide legacy to the matter of shattered loyalty by exposing people who served both English and Indian masters. And he also confirms, by the adjacency of the situation of those who left India that India is the long-lasting motherland of Anglo-Indians. While attempting to build the history of the community from the fragmented details, Sealy is attempting to describe or even delineate the subject positions drafted to or enforced on the Anglo-Indian in India.

During the colonial era Anglo-Indians are subject to the exploitation of coloniser of their services, but the affiliation gives the perception that they are party to colonialism. Once they learnt the racial discrimination of the English, they identified themselves as a subaltern class. There are a few among the Trotters who become activists of the nationalist movement. Yet may be due to a dream that one day they will be treated on a par with the English, most of the Anglo-Indians become faithful to England. This is evident in their reaction to Ilbert Bill. The condition changed after the freedom of India.

The Anglo-Indians dream of going to Britain is ruined when the England opposed that. They come to the subject position under the Indian regime. Thus there is a conversion of the imagined position of the high-class to the position of the subaltern in their case, which clearly is unacceptable to most of them. This changeover of subject position happened when the political mobilisation in terms of the kinship relations, and class associations have changed.

The Anglo-Indians cannot recognise themselves with any class in specific in India as they are a separate class which as far the Indians are regarded is more European than Indian. The prosperous Anglo-Indians, as a getaway from this, left for greener meadows like Canada, New Zealand and Australia. Their elimination in India is to a great extent self-imposed, and they still survive with a dream that they will join their fathers' people in Britain. Sealy encapsulates everything like this to complete his purpose of exhibiting his community.



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