

Tribhuvan University

Working Class Culture in Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London*: A Cultural Studies Perspective

A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences Central Department of English In the

Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the

Degree of Master of Arts in English

By

Pitambar Bhattarai

Central Department of English

Kirtipur, Kathmandu

December 2013

Acknowledgement

I would like to express my profound gratitude to Sankar Subedi, Lecturer of Central Department of English, for making constant supervision and guiding me with regular inspiration, encouragement, and insightful suggestion throughout the study. His vigorous efforts made me present this research work in this form. I am also indebted to the Head of the Central Department of English Dr. Amma Raj Joshi for the valuable directions in conducting the research.

I would like to extend sincere acknowledgements to the entire group of Professors, Readers and Lecturers of the Department for their valued inspiration. I would like to express my sincere thanks to my colleagues and all my well-wishers who directly and indirectly helped me to complete this work.

December, 2013

Pitamber Bhattarai

Abstract

As the culture is defined as the total way of life - it encompasses varieties of lives. A life has to bear multidimensional conditions, circumstances, time and realities. It includes sophisticated, medium, lower, poor, rich, kings, beggars and tramps and so on. Every type has own way of life that is to say culture. Working class people and sophisticated people have different way of life which confirms their own typical culture. One cannot be opposed in expense of other. So this thesis dives to the depth of Orwell's *Down and out in Paris and London* only to unearth the total way of life of working class people in the dominated and handful control of capitalist world through the lance of cultural studies.

Contents

Letter of Approval

Acknowledgements

Abstract

I: Representation of Hierarchical Culture in Orwell's *Down and Out In Paris and London*

1- 12

II: Working Class Culture in Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London*: A Cultural Studies

Perspective

13 – 36

III. Cultural Complexities in *Down and Out in Paris and London*

37 –40

Works Cited

I: Representation of Hierarchical Culture in Orwell's *Down and Out In Paris and London*

The present research deals with the issue of hegemonic culture and the different customs and identities it has created upon the poverty-trodden people. The proposed thesis will be a literature based research: will use a close, discursive, analytical study of various scholarly works to assess for this situation of poor workless people. As the focus of research is a Marxist critique which establishes the narrator, Boris etc. as important characters through a capitalist discourse. It mainly focuses on the issue of poverty, unemployment, starvation, money and so on resulted by capitalist society. Therefore this research aims at bringing into light how these poor's lives have been made complicated and complex by the capitalist force. Major responsible factors which force the system towards unsuccessful direction will be explored in this research that matches the application of the theoretical tool of Marxism.

Down and Out in Paris and London, first novel by George Orwell, has immensely contributed to establish Orwell as one of the major novelists in English literary arena. The novel has drawn attention of many critics since its publication. As many critics are pouring their critical sensibilities on it, the criticism on the text also vary owing to different perspectives.

Published in 1933 *Down and Out in Paris and London* is the first work by the English author George Orwell. It is a memoir in two parts on the theme of poverty in the two cities. The first part is an account of living on the breadline in Paris and the experience of casual labor in restaurant kitchens. The second part is a travelogue of life on the road in and around London from the tramp's perspective, with descriptions of the

types of hostel accommodation available and some of the characters to be found living on the margins.

After giving up his post as a policeman in Burma Orwell moved to rooms in Portobello Road, London at the end of 1927. While contributing to various journals, he undertook investigative tramping expeditions in and around London, collecting material for use in "The Spike", his first published essay, and the latter half of *Down and Out in Paris and London*. In spring of 1928 he moved to Paris and lived at 6 Rue du Pot de Fer in the Latin Quarter, a bohemian quarter with a cosmopolitan flavour. American writers like Ernest Hemingway and F. Scott Fitzgerald had lived in the same area. Following the Russian Revolution there was a large Russian emigre community in Paris. Orwell's Aunt Nellie Limouzin also lived in Paris and gave him social and, when necessary, financial support. He led an active social life, worked on his novels and had several articles published in avant-garde journals.

Orwell's first version of *Down and Out* was called *A Scullion's Diary*. Completed in October 1930, it used only his Paris material. He offered it to Jonathan Cape in the summer of 1931. Cape rejected it in the autumn. A year later he offered "a fatter typescript (the London chapters had been added)" to Faber & Faber, where T. S. Eliot, then an editorial director, also rejected it, stating: "We did find it of very great interest, but I regret to say that it does not appear to me possible as a publishing venture." (12)

It was in the home of Mabel Fierz that Orwell then discarded the typescript. She had, with her husband, a London businessman named Francis, been for a number of years a visitor to Southold in the summer and was on friendly terms with the Blairs. Fierz at this point took it to a literary agent, Leonard Moore, who "recognized it as a

'natural' for the new house of Gollancz." Victor Gollancz was prepared to publish the work, subject to the removal of bad language and some identifiable names, and offered an advance of £40. The title improvised by Gollancz, *Confessions of a Down and Outer* bothered Orwell. "Would *The Confessions of a Dishwasher* do as well?" he asked Moore. "I would *rather* answer to *dishwasher* than *down & out*." At the last minute, Gollancz shortened the title to *Down and Out in Paris and London*. The author, after possibilities including "X," "P.S. Burton" (an alias Orwell had used on tramping expeditions), "Kenneth Miles" and "H. Lewis Allways" had been considered, was renamed George Orwell. Orwell did not wish to publish under his own name Eric Blair, and Orwell was the name he used from then on for his main works—although many periodical articles were still published under the name Eric Blair. *Down and Out in Paris and London* was published on 9 January 1933 and received favourable reviews from, among others, C. Day Lewis, WH Davies, Compton Mackenzie and JB Priestley. It was subsequently published by Harper & Brothers in New York. Sales were low, however, until December 1940, when Penguin Books printed 55,000 copies for sale at sixpence.

John Rodden points out the undeniable conservative features in the Orwell's physiognomy and remarks, "To some extent Orwell facilitated the kinds of uses and abuses by the right that his name has been put to. In other ways there has been the politics of selecting quotation" (103) Rodden refers to the essay "Why I Write" in which Orwell refers to the Spanish Civil War as being his watershed political experience. Rodden goes on to explain how, during the McCarthy era, the introduction to the Signet edition of *Animal Farm*, which sold more than 20 million copies.

If the book itself, *Animal Farm*, had left any doubt about of the matter, Orwell explains it in his essay "Why I Write":

Every line of serious work that I have written directly or indirectly against Totalitarianism....dot, dot, dot." "For democratic socialism" is vaporized, just like Winston Smith did it at the ministry of Truth, that's very much what happened at the beginning of the McCarthy era and just continued (103).

Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris and London* basically portrays the abnormal conditions of the working classes people which he ever experienced. He had himself experienced the suffering and compulsions the working class felt. Here the zest spirit he wants to reflect is the actual demonstration of two big cities London and Paris. Almost as the poor people especially lower level is tramping around the cities. But the outcomes they receive are hopelessness, helplessness, depressions, alienation, isolation and fragmentation. The very ironical situation the writer Orwell wants to highlight. Not only this, his other literary products also revolve around the miseries of the grass root level people.

In the *Adelphi*, C. Day Lewis wrote, "Orwell's book is a tour of the underworld, conducted without hysteria or prejudice [...] a model of clarity and good sense." JB Priestley, in the *Evening Standard*, considered it "uncommonly good reading. An excellent book and a valuable social document. The best book of its kind I have read in a long time." Compton Mackenzie wrote of Orwell's "immensely interesting book [...] a genuine human document, which at the same time is written with so much artistic force that, in spite of the squalor and degradation thus unfolded, the result is curiously beautiful

with the beauty of an accomplished etching on copper. The account of a casual ward in this country horrifies like some scene of inexplicable misery in Dante."

Following the American publication, James T. Farrell, writing in *The New Republic*, called it "genuine, unexaggerated and intelligent," while Herbert Gorman wrote for the *New York Times Book Review*, "He possesses a keen eye for character and a rough-and ready 'styleless style' that plunges along and makes the reader see what the author wants him to see." In contrast, the reviewer for *New English Weekly* wrote, "This book [...] is forcefully written and is very readable, Yet it fails to carry conviction. We wonder if the author was really down and out. Down certainly, but out?"(11)Cyril Connolly later wrote, "I don't think *Down and Out in London and Paris* is more than agreeable journalism; it was all better done by his friend Henry Miller. Orwell found his true form a few years later." Orwell agreed with this assessment. Henry Miller's controversial work *Tropic of Cancer* (1934) is based on Miller's experiences in Paris around the time Orwell was there.

It is specifically notable for highlighting the existential crisis which results the identity crisis itself. Regarding the main thematic content of the novel, *Down and Out in Paris and London* Kermit Lansner has written:

All the incidental commentary on poverty on its boredom, usefulness, hopelessness, squalor and brutalization is caught up in the symbol of the plongeur's who represent slavery in any of its many forms. "From the start", Orwell tells us, "Poverty entangles you in a net of lies". The lies fosters the illusions: the pawnshop and the jail, emblazoned with the motto Liberate, Fraternic, the trick of smacking one's cheeks to give the glow of

health when looking for a job, or of rubbing garlic on bread to give the feeling of having eaten recently, the ruses to dodge the text (556).

Kermit Lansner intends to expose the philosophy of human life that advocates the human beings day to day activities are futile, meaningless and senseless. He is specially picking up the point of being machine due to the routinized life. In routine work people become happy until they know the boredom inherited in it. Due to the existential crisis to live in such society, the people of the society are compelled to move frustration, alienation, isolation, helplessness, fragmentation and depression. In the same way Daniel George, an English critic and anthropologist, has propounded his views in the following way:

The Parisian with whom the writer associated is fascinating creatures. I cannot get over Charlie, "very pink and young, with the fresh checks and soft brown hair of a nice little boy, and lips excessively red and wet, like cherries, "You should hear him talk." Ah, I'am our,! Ah, que les femmes m'outtue!" he claims (13).

Through this extract Daniel George attempts to encapsulate a romantic vision of Parisian people. It basically refers to the passionate, enjoyable and exciting life which reflects to both English and Parisian people in general. Here both pain of love are lauding to each other in a very romantic way. Anyway, the romantic aspect of them especially dramatized here as the main thematic content.

Similarly, a little different idea about the very novel and a distinct perspective is adopted in the Gessen's journal. In his journal, Keith Gessen says:

George packer points to what Orwell said about his guilt over his service in Burma, but it didn't end there. It never ended. If you look at the three

books of reportage he wrote- "Down and Out," "Road to Wigan Pier", then "Homage to Catalonia"-there is a progression not just in their quality but in the danger and discomfort Orwell put himself in (15).

Gassen extends his view a little differently than other critics. He forwards a concept of globalization adopted by the native's which is generally represented by the major characters. Despite a lot of difficulties and obstacles before them, they even don't lag their legs to be employed. They are seen moving from one country to another with the hope of getting jobs. To examine the raised issue regarding the practice of cultural studies and especially the effects on the part of class and the hierarchy as raised by capitalist culture appropriate the application of the theorem of Cultural Studies.

Cultural Studies, as a distinctive problematic, emerges from one such moment, in the mid-1950s. It was certainly not the first time that its characteristic questions had been put on the table. Quite the contrary. The two books which helped to stake out the new terrain--Hoggart's *Uses of Literacy* and Williams's *Culture and Society*--were both, in different ways, works (in part) of recovery. ...The *Uses of Literacy* did set out--much in the spirit of "practical criticism"--to "read" working class culture for the values and meanings embodied in its patterns and arrangements: as if they were certain kinds of "texts." But the application of this method to a living culture, and the rejection of the terms of the "cultural debate" (polarized around the high/ low culture distinction) was a thorough-going departure. *Culture and Society*--in one and the same movement--constituted a tradition (*the* "culture-and-society" tradition), defined its "unity" (not in terms of common positions but in its characteristic concerns and the idiom of its inquiry), itself made a distinctive modern contribution to it--*and* wrote its epitaph. The Williams book which succeeded it--*The Long Revolution*--clearly indicated that the "culture-and-

society” mode of reflection could only be completed and developed by moving somewhere else--to a significantly different kind of analysis. The very difficulty of some of the writing in *The Long Revolution*--with its attempt to “theorize” on the back of a tradition resolutely empirical and particularist in its idiom of thought, the experiential “thickness” of its concepts, and the generalizing movement of argument in it--stems, in part, from this determination to *move on*. The “good” and the “bad” parts of *The Long Revolution* both arise from its status as a work “of the break.” The same could be said of E. P. Thompson’s *Making of the English Working Class*, which belongs decisively to this “moment,” even though, chronologically it appeared somewhat later. It, too, had been “thought” within certain distinctive historical traditions: English Marxist historiography, Economic and “Labour” History. But in its foregrounding of the questions of culture, consciousness and experience, and its accent on agency, it also made a decisive break: with a certain kind of technological evolutionism, with a reductive economism and an organizational determinism. Between them, these three books constituted the *caesura* out of which Cultural Studies emerged.

Cultural studies is an academic field of critical theory and literary criticism initially introduced by British academics in 1964 and subsequently adopted by allied academics throughout the world. Characteristically interdisciplinary, cultural studies is an academic discipline aiding cultural researchers who theorize about the forces from which the whole of humankind construct their daily lives. Cultural Studies is not a unified theory, but a diverse field of study encompassing many different approaches, methods and academic perspectives. Distinct from the breadth, objective and methodology of cultural anthropology and ethnic studies, cultural studies is focused upon the political dynamics of contemporary culture and its historical foundations,

conflicts and defining traits. Researchers concentrate on how a particular medium or message relates to ideology, social class, nationality, ethnicity, sexuality and/or gender, rather than providing an encyclopedic identification, categorization or definition of a particular culture or area of the world.

Cultural studies combines feminist theory, social theory, political theory, history, philosophy, literary theory, media theory, film/video studies, communication studies, political economy, translation studies, museum studies and art history/criticism to study cultural phenomena in various societies. Thus, cultural studies seek to understand how meaning is generated, disseminated, and produced from the social, political and economic spheres within a given culture. The influential theories of cultural hegemony and agency have emerged from the cultural studies movement as well as the most recent communications theory, which attempts to explain the cultural forces behind globalization. So, this project research is based on Cultural Studies in general and in Marxist stream of studies where the plight of the poor people is created by the culture of the socially so called high cultured sophisticated people in specific. Being based in this stream the project highlights the pangs, pains, hardships, hopelessness and helplessness of the poor people through the typical protagonist of the novel.

In order to understand the changing political circumstances of class, politics and culture in the United Kingdom, scholars at the CCCS turned to the work of Antonio Gramsci, an Italian thinker of the 1920s and 30s. Gramsci had been concerned with similar issues: why would Italian laborers and peasants vote for fascists? In other words, why would working people vote to give more control to corporations and see their own rights and freedoms abrogated? Gramsci modified classical Marxism in seeing culture

as a key instrument of political and social control. In this view, capitalists used not only brute force (police, prisons, repression, military) to maintain control, but also penetrated the everyday culture of working people. Thus, the key rubric for Gramsci and for cultural studies is that of cultural hegemony.

Stuart Hall is a cultural theorist and sociologist who has lived and worked in the United Kingdom since 1951. Hall, along with Richard Hoggart and Raymond Williams, was one of the founding figures of the school of thought that is now known as British Cultural Studies or The Birmingham School of Cultural Studies. His work covers issues of hegemony and cultural studies, taking a post-Gramscian stance. He regards language-use as operating within a framework of power, institutions and politics/economics. This view presents people as *producers* and *consumers* of culture at the same time. For Hall, culture is not something to simply appreciate or study, but a "critical site of social action and intervention, where power relations are both established and potentially unsettled." (21)

Hall has become one of the main proponents of reception theory, and developed Hall's Theory of encoding and decoding. This approach to textual analysis focuses on the scope for negotiation and opposition on the part of the audience. This means that the audience does not simply passively accept a text. Crime statistics, in Hall's view, are often manipulated for political and economic purposes. Moral panics could thereby be ignited in order to create public support for the need to "police the crisis". The media play a central role in the social production of news in order to reap the rewards of lurid crime stories.

His works such as studies showing the link between racial prejudice and media have a reputation as influential, and serve as important foundational texts for

contemporary cultural studies. Hall has also widely discussed notions of cultural identity, race and ethnicity, particularly in the creation of the politics of Black diasporic identities. Hall believes identity to be affected by history and culture, rather than a finished product, he sees it as ongoing production. So, here in this research Hall is taken as a critique of ethnicity and cultural identity. He is of the view that cultural identity gets manifested as they live in the society. But most important of all, the unmistakable characteristic of poverty and crime is that they are both geographically concentrated in the same areas. In other words, poverty invites crime. As we know that poverty is the only cause of unemployment. And this reveals the strong connections among the three issues.

In the countries, where the social discrimination factor was not that strong, results have shown that less education meant more offenses ranging from poverty crime, casual theft to drug related offenses. According to J. Jackson, "Poverty was highly visible problem in the 18th century, both in city and in the countryside. In France and Britain by the end of the century, as estimated 10 percent of the people depend on charity or begging for their food" (566).

Poverty is the main cause for the people who are low in their status in terms of class and labor hard to sustain their lives in the so called capitalist society. He points out different obstacles regarding the problems and says:

The laboring classes are comparatively few in numbers, but this is counterbalanced by, and indeed, may be one of the causes of the eagerness by which they call in the use of machinery in almost every department of industry. Wherever it can be applied as a substitute for manual labor, it is universally and willingly resorted to. It is this condition of the labor

market, and this eager resort to machinery whereas it can be applied, to which, under the guidance of superior education and intelligence, the remarkable prosperity of the United States is due (104).

Thus, many critics have criticized the novel from various viewpoints. But the study remains incomplete unless it is read through the eye of Marxism. The narrator of the novel has suffered a lot in the capitalist society due to poverty and unemployment which was the relevant issue of the then society in Paris and London. The writer has very strongly presented the issue of poverty and unemployment. Therefore the present research tries to bring the issue into light as one of the most dominant aspects of the novel and wants to prove that poverty and unemployment of the lower class people is the main hindrance in fulfilling the dream of the employee in the novel.

The proposed thesis is a library-based research. The research is based on the authentic cites. Guidance from the lecturers and professors is taken as the supportive tool. In addition to it the notion Cultural Studies conceptualized by the thinkers such as Foucault, Raymond Williams Stuart Hall and Gramsci are used to make the thesis prove the hypothesis. Marxist, Cultural and Social streams of Cultural Studies are applied the this thesis to prob in to the hypothesis. Different extracts from the novel related with the notion of Class, domination, hierarchy and particularities of specific culture are brought to prove the appropriateness of implementation of Cultural Studies.

II. Class of the People Formed by Economic Culture in Orwell's *Down and Out in Paris to London*

Down and Out in Paris and London is published in 1933. It is Orwell's technically-fictional account of indigence in two of the great European capitals. The protagonist, more than loosely based on Orwell himself, washes dishes in Paris at the "Hotel X," tramps from lodging-house to lodging-house in London and, of course, moves ever closer to his dream of becoming a writer, for which he left his post in the Burmese police force in 1927.

The first half of the book is set in Paris, and the second in London and its surroundings. It's hard to avoid conjuring Ernest Hemingway during Part One (though I think Orwell was about a thousand times as talented as Hemingway), not just for the Latin-Quarter-in-the-twenties setting but the potency of Orwell's plain, straightforward prose. Orwell's depictions of the lives of the invisible underclass in a city like Paris, with its veneer of glamour and glitz, is not just poignant but a necessary wake-up call for people (including the so-called liberals) who, to this day, think that if you're poor you somehow deserve it.

By describing the horrific, dehumanizing conditions of poverty, Orwell's texts seek to illustrate what it indeed is like to be poor. His characters, such as Gordon in *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* and Dorothy in *A Clergyman's Daughter* witness and feel the unfairness, the helplessness, the desperation and the despair that come with poverty. It is not merely the lack of money; it is about having your physical and mental needs neglected, and having no rights, being an outcast of society and an unwanted burden to the state. In short, Orwell's poor end up as less than human. Living on the threshold of humanity in the sense that they are subject to the law of the state which they inhabit,

while deprived of the rights of ordinary citizens functioning within the economy of production and consumption, their existence is closer to the animalistic, focused on staying alive. Excluded from the social sphere, they are described by Orwell himself as caring and hard working individuals, but at the same time emerge from the texts as a separate race, as insects, beasts and demons. This is what this thesis intends to explore; the complexities, contradictions, and threshold existences of poverty conveyed in the novels *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* (1936) and *A Clergyman's Daughter* (1935), the memoir *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933) and the essays 'How the Poor Die' (1946) and 'Common Lodging Houses' (1932).

Orwell's first work *Down and Out in Paris and London* is a documentary Novel. Jenni Calder clearly points out the documentary nature of Orwell's early novels including *Down and Out in Paris and London* thus:

We cannot read these novels as political novels. They are novels about class, and they are documentaries. In many respects their picture of contemporary Britain is devastatingly accurate, and although politics do not feature in them the tone of Orwell's description is as fiercely committed as the tone of documentary in *Down and Out or Wigan Pier*"(1)

Though there is some place for politics, we cannot take it as a political novel, Jenni Calder claims. He says that it is documentary novel. Orwell has presented the very painful condition of poor in his semi autobiographical novel *Down and Out in Paris and London*. David Wykes mentions that Orwell's Novels such as *Down and Out in Paris and London*, *The Road to Wigan Pier* and *Homage to Catalonia* are called as: Documentaries.

Richard I. Smyer also shows documentary aspect of the novel: "Orwell's first book certainly exhibits some of the characteristics of a documentary. Implicit in Orwell's circumstantially detailed account of his experiences among French workers and English tramps is the disturbing truth that below the comfortable world of middle class life exists a shadowy republic of the poor and oppressed.

In the words of Martin Gray the adjective documentary can be applied to:

Any play or novel based on documents of various kinds, which attempts therefore a reconstruction of an event in an exact historical rather than imaginative manner. The author will, of course, provide his own interpretation of events and may be forced by gaps in the documentary evidence into invention"(3).

Here Gray mentions that there are various kinds of documentaries. The only way to distinguish documentaries from novel is to see the historical manner of the work rather than imaginative one. Not only that the author of the documentary provides his own interpretation of events relating it with the real streams of the life.

The novel has two distinct parts. Orwell as a narrator is omnipresent in the novel. The first part deals with Orwell's time in Paris in the late twenties and it describes his experience of poverty starvation and his subsequent job as a plongeur or scullion first in the kitchens of a very large hotel and then in a fashionable restaurant. The second part of the book deals with his continuing poverty upon his return to England and his experiences living among down and outs in and around London. First twenty three chapters are devoted to 'Paris Section' and the remaining fifteen chapters to 'London Section'. Both sections are logically and spatially juxtaposed with the thread of poverty and starvation. The characters such as Charlie and Boris dominate the Paris

section and Paddy and Bozo dominate the London section. In the documentation of hunger, starvation and poverty in Paris Section, three stories are told by Charlie and one by Valenti. Charlie's first sadistic love story with a peasantgirl (chapter II), his humorous still pathetic story of starvation with a girl named Yvonne (chapter 18) , and his third story of Old Roucolle, the miser (chapter 23) and Valenti's story of starvation (chapter 15), clearly show documentary nature of the novel. Orwell, the narrator of the novel observes, explores and participates in the slum life of Paris and East End of London. He documents his observation and explorations minutely. Hence the novel is basically a documetary.

At the outset of the novel, Orwell takes the readers to his world of down and out by his brisk documentation of the rue du Coq d'Or, the Parisian slum which he describes thus : It was a very narrow street , a ravine of tall leprous houses, lurching towards one another in queer attitudes, as though they had all been frozen in the act of collapse. All the houses were hotels. On Saturday nights about a third of the male population of the quarter was drunk. There was fighting over women. It was fairly rackety place. It was quite a representative Paris slum".(4) This sprightly naturalistic documentation takes us directly into the very spirit of the penury world of the novel. The lodgers with whom the narrator stayed were of every trade cobblers, bricklayers, stonemasons, navies, students, prostitutes, rig-pickers. The first chapter thus serves as an exposition to the story of poverty.

Hereafter starts the documentation of narrator's hunger, starvation and poverty. Day after day, the narrator's money began to ooze out as he was staying in the room of hotel 'Des troisMoineoux' as a lodger in slum area. Day after day he was forced to starve and pawn his clothes. Then he thought it absolutely necessary to find out work

and remembered a friend of his, a Russian waiter named, Boris who might be able to help him.

Cultural studies matches with the notion of agency which emphasizes the possibility of oppression, overlooking the fact that the subaltern have their own politics, and romanticizes agency, exaggerating its potential and pervasiveness. Agency is a theoretical outlook which reinserted the active, critical capacities of all people. Notions of agency have supplemented much scholarly emphasis on groups of people (e.g. the working class, primitives, colonized peoples, women) whose political consciousness and scope of action was generally limited to their position within certain economic and political structures. Popular in the 1990s, many cultural studies scholars discovered in consumers ways of creatively using and subverting commodities and dominant ideologies. In this sense the sense of agency as the study area of Cultural Study is very applicable in the tone and events of Both Borish and the Narrator.

Both Borish and the narrator set their journey on to get a livelihood. They pawned all their belongings and nothing was left to fall back on. Days were passing without a grain of food to eat. They had gone from street to street and from hotel to hotel to get a job but in vain. The narrator was too lazy to do anything but lie in bed. His description of experience of hunger is very effective :

Hunger reduces one to an utterly spineless, brainless condition, more like the after effects of influenza than anything else. It is as though one had been turned into a jellyfish, or as though all one's blood had been pumped out and luke-warm water substituted. Complete inertia is my chief memory of hunger.(5)

One day the luck changed abruptly and Boris got a job at the hotel near the place de la Concorde five hundred francs, a month and food. The narrator also got a job of a plongeur in the Hotel which was a vast grandiose place. He had to go to the kitchen which was a stifflingly low ceiled inferno of a celler, red lit from the fires, and deafening with oaths and the clanging of pots and pans. The narrator thus takes us to the subterranean place of the working class world of the Parisian hotels and to the kitchens where the workers had to burn their body to fill the stomach. The narrator also worked as a scullion in the cafeteria of Hotel X in the hot temperature of about 110 degrees Fahrenheit.

The story of Valenti, a waiter in chapter fifteen, who had not eaten for five days even a crust of bread, is grim documentation of hunger, starvation and poverty. Valenti was living in a dirty cheap little hotel in the Rue Sainte Elosie up in the Latin Quarter. The hotel was called Suzanne May, after some famous prostitute of the time of the Empire. Valenti was starving and there was nothing he could do. All he could do was to lie in the bed getting weaker and weaker, and watching the bugs running about the ceiling. In the afternoon of the fifth day he went half mad. He saw a picture of a woman hanging on the wall and thought that it would be of Sainte Eloise, the patron saint of the quarter. Though he was an atheist, he knelt before her picture, prayed and requested her to give him food, then he would burn a candle for her at her church down the street. Then within five minutes a big fat peasant girl called Maria, who lived at his hotel, came to his room. She saw his most wretched condition and was horrified to learn that he had eaten nothing for five days. Valenti told her that he had nothing to pawn and get money. But unexpectedly she saw an empty oil bid on for which he had paid three francs fifty as deposit. Immediately, he ordered Maria to be quick. Instantly, within

three minutes Maria returned with two pounds of bread under one arm and a half liter of wine under the other. Then Valenti describes the heavenly joy of getting food after five days of starvation and says:

I didn't stop to thank her; I just seized the bread and sank my teeth in it. Have you noticed how bread tastes when you have been hungry for a long time? Cold, wet, doughy like putty almost. But Jesus Christ, how good it was! As for the wine, I sucked it all down in one draught, and it seemed to go straight into my veins and flow round my body like new blood. Ah, that made a difference! I wolfed the whole two pounds of bread without stopping to take breath. (6)

After having the food, Valenti remembered that he had to burn a candle in the church of Sainte Eloise as he had promised her. But to his amazement, he found that the picture before whom he had knelt and prayed was not that of Sainte Eloise-the Patron Saint of the quarter but that of Suzanne May, the famous prostitute of the Empire.

Charlie's story of starvation with a girl named Yvonne, told in chapter eighteen is humorous still pathetic. His third story told in chapter twenty three is that of Old Roucolle, the miser. He died of a broken heart due to the treachery of the Jew. His story is pathetic, melodramatic but still touching. Old Roucolle's story concludes the first part of the novel. The first story told by Charlie is stereotyped and the second is character revealing. The third story can be read as a parable that of miserliness leads to misery. The third story of Valenti is touching but still humorous. These four main stories are fitted in the documentation of hunger, starvation and poverty rampant in Parisian slums. They add documentary flavour to the novel.

On the whole the Parisian episodes are written with enthusiasm and light heartedness. They are rather episodic, while London chapters are of picaresque nature. The London chapters by contrast, are marked by a drabness and tedium, which, despite the liveliness of writing, suffuses the final portion of the novel with rather a grey quality. There is unmistakable difference in tone between two sections. The Parisian section of the novel is more episodic than the London section. It documents the writer's experience of hunger and that of other characters such as Charlie, Boris and Valenti. The documentation is apt to point out the theme of hunger, starvation and poverty.

In the Second Part of the novel, London Section, the documentary aspect is dominant in chapter twenty seven and thirty five. Orwell's essay *The Spike* (1931) is a description of a week end's stay in a casual ward which was later on revised to form chapters twenty seven and thirty five of *Down and Out in Paris and London*. It is visible that while structuring the first novel, Orwell has mostly relied on the genre of documentary as he aspired to project the social realities or the worst conditions prevailing among Parisian and London poor of his times.

Two rather different ways of conceptualizing culture can be drawn out of the many suggestive formulations in Raymond Williams's *Long Revolution*. The first relates culture to the sum of the available descriptions through which societies make sense of and reflect their common experiences. As the narrator of the memoir *Down and Out in Paris and London*, says:

And there is another feeling that is a great consolation in poverty. I believe everyone who has been hard up has experienced it. It is a feeling of relief, almost of pleasure, at knowing yourself at last genuinely down and out. You have talked so often of going to the dogs--and well, here

are the dogs, and you have reached them, and you can stand it. It takes off a lot of anxiety. (21)

Here in this quote the narrator creates the own world of tramps. It takes place in the first part of the novel while he was roaming like a dog in the streets of Paris. He speaks on the behalf of whole poverty stricken people who are living under the root of the sky lying on the bed of the earth. This very quote is able to make the own culture of tramps as their all anxiety is lost in the world of dog. "There was--it is hard to express it--a sort of heavy contentment, the contentment a well-fed beast might feel, in a life which had become so simple. For nothing could be simpler than the life of a plongeur." (91) He is even in the position to think that the life of the plongeur is simpler than anything else.

Culture also emerges from the social practices. It is the root of any kind of the culture that we can found in the world's periphery. Culture is also defined as the "whole way of life." By Raymond Williams. The important point in the argument rests on the active and indissoluble relationships between elements or social practices normally separated out. It is in this context that the theory of culture is defined as "the study of relationships between elements in a whole way of life." (34) Culture is not a practice; nor is it simply the descriptive sum of the "mores and folkways" of societies--as it tended to become in certain kinds of anthropology. It is threaded through all social practices, and is the sum of their inter-relationship. The question of what, then, is studied, and how, resolves itself. The culture is those patterns of organization, those characteristic forms of human energy which can be discovered as revealing themselves--in "unexpected identities and correspondences" as well as in "discontinuities of an unexpected kind" --within or underlying all social practices.

When the narrator is working endless days as a plongeur in Paris, he feels that his intellect is waning, but he also feels that there is great satisfaction in merely finishing a grueling day's work. At the hotel and the restaurant, each employee takes pride in his work, even if the work is mindless and unskilled. It is stated as,

These are instances of unnecessary work, for there is no real need for gharries and rickshaws; they only exist because Orientals consider it vulgar to walk. They are luxuries, and, as anyone who has ridden in them know, very poor luxuries. They afford a small amount of convenience, which cannot possibly balance the suffering of the men and animals.

(118)

So called Occidental and Oriental culture are also depicted in the memoir *Down and Out in Paris and London*. Orientals always keep the easterners in the second and hated step. They think that the work of rickshaw pulling and gharries are only the work for orients. They are only for luxuries. The hardwork of animal and person is not equivalent to the payment that white or Westerners provide to them. So through these lines also Orwell tries to manifest the cultural hierarchy created by the westerners only to suppress and hegemonies the Orients.

An hour later, in Lambeth, I saw a hang-dog man, obviously a tramp, coming toward me, and when I looked again it was myself, reflected in a shop window. The dirt was plastering my face already. Dirt is a great respecter of persons; it lets you alone when you are well dressed, but as soon as your collar is gone it flies towards you from all directions.(129)

At the beginning of the novel, the narrator is living in Paris, teaching English to pay his bills, but he slowly loses his students and then gets robbed, leaving him enough

money to survive for only a week or two. He makes drastic changes in his budget and finds that living in poverty is a complicated ordeal. The narrator's Russian friend, Boris, is in a similar situation, having injured himself and lost his job. The two friends help each other out, pawning their remaining clothing together and sharing meager meals at one another's apartments. Eventually, the friends find a job at the Hotel X, working as plongeurs in the cellar kitchen.

Working in the hotel opens the narrator's eyes to the squalid conditions behind the scenes at upscale Parisian establishments. The kitchens are full of filth, mediocre ingredients, and poor working conditions, but just on the other side of the wall, the dining rooms are lush, clean, and luxurious.

Boris knows a Russian friend who is opening up a small restaurant called the Auberge de JehanCottard and has promised Boris and the narrator jobs. The restaurant is slow to open because the patron has difficulty scraping up enough money for up-front costs, but eventually it opens, and Boris and the narrator begin working there. Working conditions at the Hotel X were wonderful compared with those at the Auberge. Although the pay is the same, working hours are much longer, usually about seventeen hours a day, seven days a week. There is no hot water in the kitchen and nowhere but the floor on which to place the food. After several weeks of this misery, the narrator writes a friend in his native London, asking for help in finding a job there, and the friend replies almost immediately with a prospective job.

He could imagine no other expenses. His food was bread and margarine and tea--towards the end of the week dry bread and tea without milk--and perhaps he got his clothes from charity. He seemed contented,

valuing his bed and fire more than food. But, with an income of ten shillings a week, to spend money on a shave--it is awe-inspiring. (134)

The mindless and useless work of Paris is badly enough for narrator to seed the job in London through the letter to his friend. And the friend replies almost with a prospective job having less expenses. Even he will be able to get clothes from charity his friend writes to him. Here to through the means to letter writer tries his best to represent the culture of London. He becomes a bit mindful to state that the condition of the poor is quite easier and respectful to the poor.

The first half of the book is set in Paris, and the second in London and its surroundings. It's hard to avoid conjuring Ernest Hemingway during Part One, not just for the Latin-Quarter-in-the-twenties setting but the potency of Orwell's plain, straightforward prose. Orwell's depictions of the lives of the invisible underclass in a city like Paris, with its veneer of glamour and glitz, is not just poignant but a necessary wake-up call for people who, to this day, think that if you're poor you somehow deserve it.

It was a queer, rather disgusting scene. Below were the handful of simple, well-meaning people, trying hard to worship; and above were the hundred men whom they had fed, deliberately making worship impossible. A ring of dirty, hairy faces grinned down from the gallery, openly jeering. What could a few women and old men do against a hundred hostile tramps? They were afraid of us, and we were frankly bullying them. It was our revenge upon them for having humiliated us by feeding us.(183)

In *Down and Out in Paris and London*, Orwell follows a penniless British writer through two great European cities as he works seventeen-hour workdays in the squalid kitchens of trendy Parisian restaurants. After working himself ragged and never getting ahead, he tries his luck in London where he lives the life of a vagrant, sleeping in lodging houses and taking charity tea at the Salvation Army. Through these scenes, Orwell explores one of the classic themes in most of his writing, that of man vs. society. The narrator travels to London, but when he arrives he finds that his new employer is out of the country and will not return for at least a month. He doesn't have much money saved from his job at the Auberge de Jehan Cottard, so he immediately pawns some clothes and takes up a life as a vagrant, or tramp, as they're called in the novel.

The narrator learns all about the life of a British tramp. He lives in spikes, lodging houses, even under a bridge when it's necessary. He meets an Irishman named Paddy, and the two become friends, traveling together from spike to spike. The narrator spends some nights at the Salvation Army shelters, which he despises, and he thinks of ways that the legal system in England could change in order to help tramps to lead more productive and satisfactory lives. In the end, the narrator does get a job when the employer returns to England, but he has changed his perspective about many things. He no longer judges vagrants or thinks that they're not "working" when he sees them standing around waiting for the shelters to open. He gains a great respect for people who can see through their trials and be happy anyway. And he doesn't expect beggars to be grateful when he gives them a penny.

In England, however, where the narrator doesn't have employment and exists among throngs of other employed men, work is the envy of all. Without work to do, these men waste away. They have no self-esteem, and they become drones, just walking

from spike to spike with nothing to show for their efforts. The one semi-employed man in London that we get to know well, Bozo is resourceful, intelligent, and full of life.

In his concluding remarks, Orwell says that work is imperative to the well being of man. He suggests that the British government institute some kind of meaningful work for the vagrants to do in the spikes, such as gardening or farming to provide nutritious food for themselves. He believes that work is essential to a person's happiness. Man vs. society is a traditional literary theme wherein the character is oppressed by or victimized by society. In *Down and Out in Paris and London*, the unnamed narrator and his friends face opposition from society on several fronts: the government, their employers, religion, and their landlords.

The government, especially the British government, maintains policies that make it very difficult for poverty-stricken people to survive. One example of this is the law that forbids men to stay more than one night at a spike. To comply with the law, they must walk great distances every day to get to a different spike, which is a waste of time and energy, especially for someone who has not eaten a good meal in a long time.

Employers in the novel make unreasonable demands on the characters. At the Hotel X, the characters work very long hours in oppressive heat as high as 110 degrees when the ovens are firing. At the Auberge de Jehan Cottard, the narrator works 17-hour days in squalid conditions. None of the characters are religious, but they take charity from religious institutions. The characters detest these charities because religion is forced upon them in return for tea and toast or a crowded bed. Generally, they put up with the forced prayers, but they don't respect themselves afterward. In order to keep their landlords from finding out about their destitute conditions, Boris and the narrator

make themselves look nice when they walk past the landlords. They fear that if the landlords discover their poverty, they will be kicked out on the streets.

After the narrator has been in poverty for a while, he grows accustomed to the lifestyle and notices which people manage to be happy and which people wallow in their misery. In particular, the narrator compares and contrasts how Paddy and Bozo handle their poverty. Paddy always fears the worst and continually talks about his miseries. He talks about how hungry he is, how badly his clothes are wearing out, how cold and hard the beds are, how little sleep he gets. He refuses to try and improve his worldview by educating himself, fearing books like some people fear goblins.

Bozo, on the other hand, looks for new experiences everywhere he goes. He watches the stars in the sky, considering the constellations to be a "free show." He speaks intelligently and laughs at his misfortunes, which have been great. In the end, it's clear that the narrator much prefers the company of Bozo, even though Paddy is a kind and gentle soul.

The novel is set in two main settings: Paris and London. In both great cities, the narrator experiences poverty. He lives among the lowliest of inhabitants of both cities and is well acquainted with the bridges, side streets, and poorer quarters. However, the narrator makes comparisons between the cities, and Paris usually comes out on top. When the narrator leaves Paris, he is so exhausted from having worked so hard that England seems a paradise to him. But once he arrives in London, he is surprised to see that everything is so neat and tidy and dreary. He misses the rambunctious bistro from his quarter in Paris. He misses the colorful personalities, and he even seems to miss the way the government in Paris stays out of the lives of the poverty stricken. He seems to feel that the government's aid in London is demeaning and more harmful than helpful.

In terms of applying the notion of the state of exception to Orwell's works, the financial crisis of the 1930s, the decade when Orwell wrote on poverty, immediately springs to mind as a time when the situation of the poor would be even more precarious and exposed than usual.

Cultural studies concerns itself with the meaning and practices of everyday life. Cultural practices comprise the ways people do particular things, such as watching television or eating out, in a given culture. In any given practice, people use various objects. Hence, this field studies the meanings and uses peoples attribute to various objects and practices. Recently, as capitalism has spread throughout the world, cultural studies has begun to analyze local and global forms of resistance to Western hegemony.

It is the prevailing culture of capitalists that even doesn't get back to suggest that the poor were worse off in this specific decade. However, perhaps poverty itself, regardless of its historical context, qualifies as an exceptional state of existence, in which the poor are placed outside the system of the law. It must be recognized that poverty is not directly forced on Orwell's characters by the state, as is the lawlessness of the homo sacer, nor do Orwell's characters require the intervention of the state to escape poverty, as the homo sacer requires the state to give him back his rights as a citizen. Nevertheless, the most devastating cases of poverty could have been prevented by the state through intervention and financial aid, and so it is legitimate to hold the state somewhat responsible and consider it an agent of power in this context. Furthermore, the poverty-stricken characters in Orwell's narratives tend to receive different treatment from the state than those who are better off, implying an inequality in rights due to poverty and class background. Orwell also claims towards the end of

Down and Out in Paris and London that a tramp is an Englishman out of work, 'forced by law to live as a vagabond'.

In Walter Benjamin's essay "The Poverty of Experience", Benjamin argues that the post-war period was a time which represented a drastic change in humanity. He speaks of an era that values mass production and technology while neglecting experience and culture - our human heritage, and thus humanism. This results in a 'barbarism'; 'a poverty of human experience in general' which means we start from scratch (Benjamin 1933, 731 - 732). Poverty is then, though inhumane, also a positive notion, in which cultures and societies can start over, untainted by the past. Benjamin uses the example of a modernist building; a glass house, in comparison to a bourgeois room from the 1880s: The bourgeois room, representing the past, is already fully and completely furnished, and there is nowhere for anyone else to make a change to the interior; the only option is to adapt to it. Nonetheless, the interior also 'radiates coziness' (Benjamin 1933, 734), and thus has a touch of humanity.

The glass house however, cold and uncozy, is a place upon which nothing can leave a permanent imprint, everything can be changed, and will always be a place of opportunity. In the decade of the 30s where inflation and war is lurking in the shadows, as Benjamin states, this is the sort of culture needed; a glass culture where one can think in completely new directions without paying respect to the past. Gordon Comstock of *Keep the Aspidistra Flying* initially appears to be well settled in the new barbarian reality. He works in the accounts department for an advertisement company named the New Albion which was 'one of those publicity firms which have sprung up everywhere since the War - the fungi, as you might say, that sprout from a decaying capitalism' (54), at the same time he is also a poet. These two worlds are, at first, on

collision course, and he is picked on by his co-workers for writing poetry in his spare time. His co-workers are of the 'hard-boiled, Americanized, go-getting type - the type to whom nothing in the world is sacred, except money' (55).

When Gordon's boss learns of his poetry however, he is promoted to the promising position as copywriter, and Gordon is able to turn his poetic talent to good use. Gordon then starts from scratch in a company which embodies this new sort of completely profit-driven capitalism, thus participating in Benjamin's 'barbarism' and in the capitalist society. This creates an ironic situation: Poetry, a part of the old human culture which is no longer of much value according to Benjamin, is the very culture that is proving profitable for The New Albion. Gordon's poetic talent lends itself to commodification and is appropriated by the logic and language of the market.

Desire is a fundamental part of capitalism; as a consumer one never has his desires completely fulfilled, there will always be something unfulfilled. "When you are poor, however, desires are hard to fulfill at all", (158) which in Charlie's case has seemingly led to a mind completely dominated by unfulfillable desire:

Ah, the poverty, the shortness, the disappointment of human joy! For in reality - car en réalité, what is the duration of the supreme moment of love? It is nothing, an instant, a second perhaps. A second of ecstasy, and after that - dust, ashes, nothingness (11).

After the act, Charlie is 'full of vain regret' and feelings of pity for the girl. He inquires why they 'should be pray to such mean emotions', but ends the story by stating it was 'the happiest day of [his] life' (12). While realising that he has wronged the girl, he still considers himself a victim, implying that his desires are uncontrollable. In this

sense, desire is an evil, yet he appreciates its pleasures, paradoxically both accepting and rejecting the consumer mentality and its influence on sexuality.

Parasites and Sexuality in *Down and Out in Paris and London* To Gordon, poverty was not devastating. He tasted its devastation, feeling his own consciousness withering and sinking deeper into it. While crossing this threshold, however, he pulled himself up, and thus was never exposed to its deepest miseries. As Rosemary threatened to leave him, and his friendship with Ravelston dying from what Gordon claimed was his parasitical existence, it is not hard to picture what his future would perhaps have been had he not sought employment. His return to the 'money world' was only possible due to his maintained connections and his history. Other of Orwell's characters are not equally lucky, such as those we find in *Down and Out in Paris and London*, namely the English tramps. '...there exists in our minds a sort of ideal or typical tramp - a repulsive, rather dangerous creature, who would die rather than work or wash, and wants nothing but to beg, drink and rob hen-houses' (*Down and Out*, 216). The narrator encounters the stereotype of the typical tramp, which resembles Adam Smith's parasitical beggar. It is this creature Gordon Comstock feared becoming, and almost did. The tramps the narrator describes in *Down and Out* fit this description to a certain extent, as they do not work and do receive (though little of it) welfare whilst staying at casual wards. However, the narrator argues that 'tramps tramp' because there is a law 'compelling [them] to do so' (217), not because they truly want to. While the narrator seeks to create an understanding of the situation of the tramps, he succeeds in disproving that the mentality of the tramps is that of a parasite, along with Smith's point that 'a beggar chooses to depend' (Smith, 2010), underlining that the parasitical behaviour, even where it is present, is not voluntary. The tramp is then pictured as a creature with the

mentality of a conscious human being, trapped in the body of a parasite, stuck on a threshold between an animalistic world and a human world. Nevertheless, the narrator confesses he does not believe it 'absolutely unfounded' that some tramps may be 'impudent social parasites' (218), and that they are not normal human beings, again not able to completely disagree with Smith's accusation.

The tramp's place on a threshold between mentality and behaviour is also shown by the narrator's attempt to argue against the tramp as a 'throw-back to the nomadic stage of humanity' (217). Their reason for wandering around is that they are vagrants, and the casual wards will only accept them one night at a time. Again, the narrative illustrates that the behaviour is not out of free will, rather it is out of lack of other options. The nomad comparison, however, explains the seemingly popular perception of the poor as less worthy, as being a 'throw-back' to an earlier stage of humanity implying something less evolved than a modern human being, or even a reversion of evolution.

Where the narrator perhaps best defends the behaviour of the beggar, is in the beggar's way of survival. Adam Smith accuses the beggar of breaking with the principle of exchange, not giving anything back. However, the narrator of *Down and Out* claims that the beggar does pay; in suffering: 'A beggar works by standing out of doors in all weathers and getting varicose veins, chronic bronchitis, etc. It is a trade like any other; quite useless of course - but, then, many reputable trades are quite useless' before concluding that the beggar is 'a parasite, but a fairly harmless parasite' (185); a parasite with a human mind even. In this sense, the beggar does give something in exchange, and fulfills the contract of exchange. However, one might ask who would actually benefit from such a product as suffering. For the beggar to participate in the mutualism

of a healthy economy, he needs to 'sell' his suffering. As the narrator points out, there are many other useless trades which are still reputable, but they are perhaps trades which are in demand. Thus, the narrator succeeds in proving that the beggar puts in the same amount of effort as other tradesmen do, yet not that the beggar is a tradesman.

Nonetheless, the narratives also show that the issue of poverty is not necessarily rooted within the system, rather it is within the people of the system, and while the dehumanizing capitalism is too much ingrained to be changed, it still has its potential and positive notions. In Gordon's case, this potential was both an employment opportunity which would lead to a better life, as well as poverty's way of finally liberating him from the psychic prison which is the mentality of the lower-middle class, freeing him from himself. Dorothy is also liberated from the power of her own consciousness through her experience with poverty. Opening her eyes to a brutal reality, it leads her towards acceptance of her situation in life. However, the lives they end up accepting are in the end quite similar to the ones they were attempting to escape before their descent into poverty, which perhaps shows that even situations which at first appear undesirable or even dreaded, can be turned into something far better merely by having a better understanding of the reality of those situations.

The threshold the beggar or tramp finds himself on is not just one between an animalistic and human existence; it is also one between a social existence and one of social exclusion. According to the narrator, the beggar is viewed as 'a mere social excrescence, tolerated because we live in a humane age, but essentially despicable' (185). The humanity of the beggar is thus what includes him, yet at the same time he is excluded from personal relations due to his poverty. This is, according to the narrator, the root of much of the beggar's misery and spiritual decay, as he is 'entirely cut off

from contact with women', and is 'condemned to perpetual celibacy' (219), due to very few women at the beggar's level of society. The narrator elaborates:

The sexual impulse, not to put it any higher, is a fundamental impulse, and starvation of it can be almost as demoralizing as physical hunger. The evil of poverty is not so much that it makes a man suffer as it rots him physically and spiritually. And it can be no doubt that sexual starvation contributes to this rotting process. Cut off from the whole race of women, a tramp feels himself degraded to the rank of a cripple or a lunatic. No humiliation could do more damage to a man's self respect (220).

The narrator thus describes a situation where, finally, the tramp could end up completely dehumanized, even spiritually. This is slightly different from the situation he describes when defending them against the accusation of parasitical behavior and laziness, where it appears that the only different thing about them is their parasitical behavior which is forced upon them by law, while their mentality remains that of a normal person.

The fear of becoming a parasite is due to the fear of not being able to give something back; to not participate in the exchange economy, and this is also applicable to sexuality. In Michael Tratner's book *Deficits and Desires: Economics and Sexuality in 20th Century Literature*, Tratner explores the idea of a convergence between economic and sexual discourses:

Not to borrow when young leaves one economically weaker, a direct reversal of nineteenth-century logic. Similarly, not indulging in sex is often presented in twentieth century texts as leaving a person weaker

sexually - inexperienced or repressed. Temporary relationships with lenders and lovers have become part of the process of economic and sexual maturation (Tratner 2001, 2).

Furthermore, he roots this new sexual liberalism in Keynesian policies, as people were encouraged to indulge 'economic desires by temporarily borrowing' in order to keep the circulation of money going. Similarly, people were encouraged to spend their sexual desires, as not doing so would lead to a "pent-up state" that was considered deleterious to the economic or the individual body' (Tratner 2001, 3).

The tramps in *Down and Out*, however, find the second best solution to the issue; they turn to homosexuality, in addition to 'occasional rape cases' (220). By turning to homosexuality without necessarily being actual homosexuals, they are building an experience that is only useful in their own sexual sphere, in addition to only meeting their true desires (sexual relations with women) half way, on the threshold between a sexual life and celibacy.

Homosexuality seems to be the norm, as a tramp makes homosexual attempts against the narrator during a night in a casual ward; 'Homosexuality is general among tramps of long standing, he said' (156). Homosexuality also suggests a futility in terms of survival, as it will not lead to any offspring. By excluding the poor from reproduction, society indirectly deems their 'kind' unworthy of existence, perhaps rooted in the perception of the poor as reversions of evolution.

Rape, however, as occasionally happens, according to the narrator, it is a sort of theft, a completely parasitical action, which demands an inhumane mind; a mind driven entirely by the natural instinct of lust. This, perhaps, refers to the tramps who have sunk to the very bottom of poverty's misery and have rotted spiritually as well as physically.

They are no longer human, and so they no longer follow the human norms. Some tramps can also afford prostitutes from time to time, and the narrator listens to the story of a Frenchman named Charlie and his experience with a prostitute at a brothell. Charlie refers to the prostitute as his ‘chicken’, and describes in detail how he ‘pulled her off the bed and threw her onto the floor’ before he ‘fell upon her like a tiger’ (10). His behavior is beastly:

More and more savagely I renewed the attack. Again and again the girl tried to escape; she cried out for mercy anew, but I laughed at her.

“Mercy!” I said, do you suppose I have paid a thousand francs for that?”

I swear to you, messieurs et dames, that if it were not for that accursed law that robs us of our liberty, I would have murdered her at that moment (11).

Thus, the narrative of *Down and Out in Paris and London* illustrates a culture and a society where the economy, and thus poverty, influences sexuality, and the tramps are forced to lead dehumanized lives as parasitic beings, finding themselves in an ambivalent sexual state where they are in fact participants in sexual activity, yet at the same time not the sexual activity they desire. Simultaneously, this sexual threshold will at least eventually lead to their demise, as they are refused reproduction by society, in whose eyes they are unfit. The biology of the tramp is then also in a state between life and death, as he is already condemned to being the very end of his bloodline. On the other hand, not participating in the sexual sphere is illustrated as leading to the sort of bestial, lust-driven state of mind capable of rape, a mind no longer human; merely an animalistic mind in a human body. In either scenario, poverty leads to the demise of the human.

III. Cultural Complexities in *Down and Out in Paris and London*

This thesis set out to explore the complexities and liminal spaces in Orwell's portrayal of poverty, and through the notions of Stuart, Williams and Foucault which boldly presents the poor being placed in a liminal space between human and inhuman, living outside society and the law yet still subject to it. Depicting their treatment like prisoners and cattle by the authorities, and as scientific specimen and machines by the staff at a public hospital, Orwell's portrayals make clear that the poor are not considered regular citizens. In this sense, as the poor are viewed as something less than human, poverty becomes an intermediate zone, where poverty itself can legitimate dehumanizing actions towards those affected by poverty - be it through persecution from the law, medical experiments, or pure neglect of those in need. The narratives also underline that poverty shapes the individual it affects rather than the opposite, illustrated by Dorothy's fall into poverty and the animalistic state of existence she adapts to, but seemingly cannot influence.

Thus, it is those who use the exceptional state of poverty to legitimize an inhuman treatment towards the poor who simultaneously uphold a poverty which can be viewed as exceptional and thus legitimize their actions. The poverty portrayed by Orwell is then not only a result of lack of money, as it could appear on the surface, rather the poverty is shaped by the attitudes towards it - animalistic treatment eventually leading to animalistic behavior. The state then creates the very situation it needs in order to legitimize its actions, which illustrates its position as a sovereign power: On the one hand, the ruler of the state is inside the law and, like the poor, theoretically open to persecution. On the other hand, he is also a political body with the power to suspend the

law and thus simultaneously outside the law, as exemplified by Noddy's unofficial arrest in *A Clergyman's Daughter*.

However, Orwell also indirectly underlines the fact that the law must be upheld, despite the situation of those who break it. When Dorothy and her peers are not allowed to sleep in Trafalgar Square, it is indeed inhumane and unfair, but the police officer is also performing his duties, as are the officers who arrest Noddy. While the sympathy is certainly with the homeless, this illustrates that even the dehumanizing treatment they receive is perhaps more complex than it first appears.

Due to the poor's lack of participation in the desire-driven economy, which within the logic of production and consumption is viewed as a failure to work for a common goal, they are shunned by society and their fellow citizens. Characters such as Gordon Comstock are torn between the world of consumption and the world of poverty, attempting to fit into the first while stuck in the latter. Through his journey, we witness the complexities of his existence, and the difficulty of breaking free from one's class background, as well as how those who would benefit from change are ironically those who do not have the time and energy to fight for it. The narrative thus shows that the pieces of the puzzle needed for a change to the condition of poverty are there:

Rosemary has the heart and reason, Gordon has the experience and understanding, and Ravelston has the means and influence. However, the puzzle is difficult to put together, as seemingly no single individual has all the pieces needed. This implies a need for a collaboration; a mutualism, by which different roles and different types of people work together towards a better situation for the poor, not by spending money, but by altering their perception of poverty through experience and understanding of the situation of the poor.

Still, both these characters Sal and Boris had an easy way out of poverty as a consequence of their tenuous hold in the middle class, with family who could assist them. This underlines the force of the background one is born into, and that poverty is beyond one's control, freeing the poor from the responsibility of their situation. However, Gordon and Dorothy's mobility between poverty and middle-class life also serves to humanize and even 'normalize' the poor; showing that all that separates the wealthier from the poor is perhaps only a family background, or a stroke of bad luck.

Beneath the inhuman, parasite-like appearance of the poor, Orwell introduces us to regular human beings, whose state of existence results not from free choice but from lack of other options, and who are seemingly judged from birth by their class, which illuminates the unfairness and helplessness of their situation. However, the mental and bodily decay resulting from poverty is inevitable, as shown in *Down and Out in Paris and London*, and at some point they might find themselves fitting the description of the dehumanized creatures they are accused of being. This implies a vicious circle where nothing is done to help the poor due to their inhumanity, and as nothing is done the inhumanity becomes reality, and the lack of action is justified. By being excluded from the sexual sphere, they find themselves being abandoned to a ruthless natural selection, where they are indirectly refused reproduction and thus viewed by their fellow citizens as less worthy.

As Orwell does not tend to suggest political change, his goal is clearly to make people have a change of heart towards the poor by illuminating their humanity, as well as what makes them appear and act differently from the citizens who are better off, and this happens through the complex portrayal of poverty. This thesis strengthens the argument that there is more to George Orwell than the anti-totalitarian essayist, or more

specifically, that there is more to his depiction of poverty than self-pity and misery, as certain critics have argued. While his writing is not necessarily at all times distinguished, as exemplified in Gordon's unconvincing epiphany when returning to his job at the New Albion, his texts illuminate a complex reality where everything from the government and the man on the street to the brutal laws of nature are in some way responsible for the inhuman and dreadful existence which is the reality of the poor. The poor are at heart no less human than the rest, yet the vicious circle of neglect might make them what they are accused of being. As their dehumanized existence is shaped through the exclusion from their society and their effectively revoked citizenship, it is clear that what is required for the situation of the poor to change, is first of all a change in external factors, and in how these factors construe poverty, even though this proves a challenge. With this in mind, Orwell's writings on poverty stand as strong as the insights into totalitarianism, for which he has come to be known for. Making the strange familiar through his vivid depictions of poverty, he opens his readers' eyes to the true face of the poor.

Works Cited

- Adorno, Theodor and Horkheimer. "Dialectics of Enlightenment: The Culture Industry: Enlightenment As Mass Deception." *Critical Theory Since 1965*. Ed. Hazard Adams and Leroy Jearle. Florida: University Press of Florida, 1971.
- Agamben, Giorgio. *Homo Sacer - Sovereign Power and Bare Life*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1998
- Armstrong, Tim. *Modernism*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2005
- Asimakopulos, A. "Anticipations of Keynes's General Theory?" *Canadian Journal of Economics*, 1983
- Beadle, Gordon B. *George Orwell's Literary Studies of Poverty in England*. Twentieth Century Literature, Hofstra University, 1978
- Benjamin, Walter. "Experience and Poverty". Prague: Die Welt im Wort, 1933
- ... "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction." *Critical Theory since 1965*. Ed. Hazard Adams and Leroy Jearle. Florida: University Press of Florida. 1971
- Bennett, Andrew and Royle, Nicholas. *An introduction to literature, criticism and theory*. United Kingdom: Pearson Education Limited, 2009
- Calder, Jenni.: *Chronicles of Conscience, A Study of George Orwell and Arthur Koestler*, London Secker and Warburg. 1968
- Carey, John. "The Invisible Man." *The Sunday Times*, 1999
- Contemporary Literature*, Vol. 2, No. 1. University of Wisconsin Press, 1961.
- Eagleton, Terry. "Capitalism, Modernism and Post-Modernism." *Modern Criticism and Theory*. Ed. David Lodge. London: Longman, 1992.
- Felski, Rita. *Nothing to Declare: Identity, Shame, and the Lower Middle*

- George, Daniel. "Life of Paris." *Chicago Tribune*, Cambridge University Press, 1941.13-23
- Gessen, Keith. "Adventures in Communal Readings" *The New Yorker*. 2009
- Hall, Stuart (1980a) "Cultural Studies and the Centre: Some problematic and problems," in Hall et al. 1980
- Haggard, Richard. *The Uses of Literacy*. New York: Oxford University Press. 1957
- Lansner, Kermit. "The Kenyon Review." *The Frankfurter and The Hotel*. Kenyon College, New York: 12.3 (Summer 1950):556-560.
- Lukacs. *The Historical Novel*. Trans. Hannah and Stanley Mitchell. 2nd ed. London: Merline, 1965.
- Orwell, George. *A Clergyman's Daughter*. London: Penguin, 2000
- ... *Down and Out in Paris and London*. London: Penguin, 2001
- ... *Keep The Aspidistra Flying*. London: Penguin, 2000 67
- Rodden, John. *The Politics of Literary Reputation: The Making and Claiming of St. George Orwell*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.
- Smyer Richard I. *Primal Dream and Primal Crime, Orwell's Development as a Psychological Novelist*, Columbia and London : University of Missouri Press, 2008
- Thompson, E.P. *The Making of the English Working Class*. New York: Pantheon. 1963