

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

#### **1.1 Orwell as a Colonial Writer**

George Orwell, the pseudonym of Eric Blair (1903-1950), was born in Motihari, Bihar, the then British colony of India, where his father Richard Walmesley Blair, worked for the opium department of the civil service. He was sent to a small Anglican Parish School in Henley and won a scholarship to Eton. He was relatively happy at Eton College. His academic performances at Eton vary: Some claim he was poor student, others deny this. His schooling at Eton played a vital role in moulding his awareness as regard to the financial gulf that separated him from the rest of his school mates. In this connection M.H Abrams makes the following remarks. "It was at Eton that he first became conscious of the difference between his own background and the wealthy background of his second mates" (250). This clarifies that his childhood was poverty- stricken.

He was affected by his poverty stricken life so much that he thought it better to take up some job rather than pursue his study. He was compelled to choose a different career altogether because of his aversion for study. As a result, he joined the imperial police in Burma. He did not develop any liking for his service because of his hatred of imperialism although he served in Burma for five years. He was depressed by the idea that he belongs to a force engaged in oppression. He was now determined to be a

writer, and adopted a pseudonym as one way of escaping from the position in which his birth and education had placed him.

In his first novel, he used his recent experience with poverty as inspiration and wrote *Down and Out in Paris and London* (1933). While teaching at a private school he published his second major work, *Burmese Days* (1934). The publication of his first work, which was an account of his years living among the poor of Paris and London, marks the beginning of a more stable period for Orwell, in which he taught, opened a bookshop, and continued to write. At the end of 1936 Orwell went to Spain to fight for the Republicans and he was wounded in his account of the civil war. He was admitted to a sanatorium in 1938 and from then on he was never fully fit. He spent six months in Morocco and there he wrote *Coming Up for Air*.

During the second World War Orwell served as a sergeant in the Home Guard and also worked as a journalist for the BBC, Observer and Tribune, where he was literary editor from 1943 to 1945. It was toward the end of the war that he wrote *Animal Farm*, and when it was over he moved to Scotland. It was *Animal Farm* that made finally Orwell prosperous. His other worldwide success was *Nineteen Eighty-Four*, which Orwell said was written "to alter other people's idea of the kind of society they should strive after." Sadly Orwell never lived to see how successful it would become.

*Burmese Days* is Orwell's only novel to draw on his experience of Burma as a colonized country. This novel has a different theme than the rest of his novel. Orwell has expressed his hatred to the imperialism and at the same time his hatred to the native Burmese people. A host of critics have analyzed the novel from various perspectives but they have ignored the seemingly dominant aspect of the novel, i.e,

love-hate relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. Gordon B. Beadle and many other critics have criticized the novel differently, ignoring the dominant aspects, like representation, othering, marginalization and so on.

Those critics raised the issue of poverty but not of representation. So this study will help to dig out the inner or hidden colonial mentality of Orwell. The significance of this study is that it will enable the readers to comprehend how Orwell has expressed his misattitudes to the native people. This study also intends readers to understand Westerner's concept about the Easterners and how they misrepresent the Orientals as others to claim them superior. While many scholars have examined the different aspects of the novel, this aspect of the novel is also equally important. So, it is significant to explore this side of the novel to fully recognize Orwell as a colonial writer.

This study attempts to bring out deep misrepresentation of the colonized in Orwell's *Burmese Days* in the light of how Westerners dominated and represented the East. The misrepresentation of the Burmese people is the central focus of the study. Orwell presents the picture of colonial Burma in the novel *Burmese Days*. Orwell as a colonial writer misrepresents Burma and its people for his own western taste even though he is claimed an anti-imperialist, who always detested imperialism and its exploitation of the helpless and downtrodden colonized people. However, this study studies how he has expressed his colonial mentality as a superior white in the novel by misrepresenting the Burmese people as barbaric, uncivilized, inferiors, others, and so on. The novel reflects the conflict between the colonizers and the colonized. The conflict illustrates the hostility between these two cultural contestants. Through the

presentation of the Burmese characters in different manners, Orwell misrepresents Burma and its people. Burmese characters are given trivial role. They are not independent to act with their own native identity. They are shown completely servile and subordinated to the European characters. This misrepresentation is characterized by the love-hate relationship between the white colonizers and the black colonized.

Orwell's *Burmese Days* textualizes the colonial Burma as the land of barbarians. Similarly it also textualizes acute mutual hatred between the white Europeans and the Burmese to each other. This study also helps to show how such colonial discourses have helped the Westerners to orientalize the East. It demonstrates their colonial nature as well. The subsequent chapters will attempt to justify the issue of misrepresentation in colonial discourse.

## **1.2 Orwell's Major Works**

Orwell made his first attempt at writing after he resigned his job from Burma and joined a new job. His first book '*Down and out in Paris and London*' (1933) recorded his experiences in Paris and in England. He wanted to learn the life of the poor at first hand; therefore he voluntarily made a trial of destitution. He learned from actual experienced what he felt like to be unemployed and hungry. In this sense Gordon B. Beadle argues, "The dehumanizing effects of poverty and the multiple consequences of economic injustice are the primary or secondary themes of nearly all of his books and occupy a sizable portion of his political journalism"(188). So, Orwell's selection of the theme of poverty as the initial outlet for his creative aspirations might also be viewed as a logical consequence of his early literacy interests. Similarly, A

*clergyman's Daughter* (1935) described a number of scenes of destitution of northern England.

"The Road to Wigan Pier"(1937) was the outcome of the couple of months that Orwell spent in north of England. The book reveals a profound insight into the squalor and demoralization of the working class life that he saw there. In this reportage, he further explains his experiences with the unemployed people. He experiences the suffering of destitution himself with other poverty stricken people.

Orwell left for Spain at the close of 1936 to fight for the Republican Cause.

*"Homage to Catolina"* (1938) describes his experiences during the Spanish Civil War. He went to Spain during the civil war of Spain as a reporter but he stayed to fight for the loyalists. This book was also the outcome of what he saw the communist in Spain. In it he described his admiration for the apartment absence of a class structure in the revolutionary areas of Spain he visited. He also depicted what he has the betrayal of the workers' revolution in Spain by Spanish communist party, abetted by the Soviet union and its Secret police after its militia attacked anarchist in Barcelona in May 1937. Along with his book the essay " looking Back of the Spanish War" (1943) reveals that what he chiefly discovered in Spain was personal discomfort and political disillusionment.

George Orwell was down-to-Earth writer who chose to direct his intelligence and his literary skill to some of the things that matter to ordinary people as well as to bookish people: problems of war and peace, work and pleasure, and the politics of the time he lived in. Orwell's works are directly connected to the events of his life. He wrote only about the things he has observed first hand his works directly commented

on the societies times in which he lived, and his strong feelings about social injustice and oppressions. These were the motivating forces behind all his writing. David

Daiches makes the following remarks:

His autobiographical works, *Down and out in Paris and London*, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, and *Homage to Catalonia* cut through the sentimentalities of fashionable left wing reporting by stressing uncomfortable truths ignored by left as well as by Right. There is an almost masochistic honesty in his works, for he insisted on living with ills exposed before exposing them. (1169)

The threat of the coming war hung over his novel, *Coming up for Air*, (1939). By this time, Orwell saw himself primarily as a political writing, democratic socialist who avoided party label, hated totalitarianism, and was to become progressively disillusioned with the methods of communism. Orwell never wavered in his belief that the so-called socialism was a pre-version of socialism and a wicked tyranny.

*Animal Farm* (1945) was the popular novel of Orwell. This was a political allegory. It is a story of struggle of animals against exploitation and dictatorship of human being. The animals of Manor Farm of Mr. Jones were underfed the wise boar known as old major by his name calls the secret meeting of animals. They decide to revolt against their master. They formulate the seven commandments as the code of conduct. all of them start to work except the pigs that command and inspect the farm. At last the pigs start to disobey the commandments and take themselves as the

leaders. So, it was an anti-Stalinist allegory. Orwell was widely criticized as an early anticommunist after the publication of this novel.

*Nineteen Eighty four* (1949) is Orwell's prophetic vision of the results of totalitarianism. It is a reverse Utopia or a dystopia—a vision of the future as nightmare rather than paradise. Orwell saw the dangers of brainwashing, rigid social control and political bestiality, which had already been there in his contemporary situation. This book is both a prophecy and a warning of what life might be if individuals allow themselves to be coerced into conformity by the state. Orwell's concern over the power of language to shape reality is also reflected in his invention of new speak the official language for the imaginary country of Oceania in his novel *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. All his sympathizes lay with common people, but he saw with complete clarity how their sloth could lead to a welfare state from there to the horrors of regimentation he attacked in 1984.

Jeffrey Meyers in his book *George Orwell: The Critical Heritage* quotes many writers who have directly or indirectly come in contact with George Orwell. He says that apart from numerous book reviews, there was little written about Orwell during life time Cyrid Connolly's "Enemies of promise", which was published in 1938 when Orwell was not very well-known, described him as a boy at St. Cyprian's and Eton. It contrasted to Orwell's own bitter memories when *Such, Such were the Joys* appeared posthumously in 1952.

After Orwell's death his major essays were collected and published as *Shooting an Elephant* (1950), *Such were the Joys* (1953), *England your England*. His collected *Essays, Journalism and Letters* (1968) have appeared in four volumes. Jeffrey

Meyres opines that Orwell's essays form five major groups: autobiographical, literary, political, cultural and sociological. Some of his autobiographical essays are *Such were the Joys*, "Shooting an Elephant", "A Hanging", "How the poor Die", "Confession of a Book Reviewer" and "why I write" The literary essays on novelist influenced him.

The political essays concern literature and totalitarianism and are closely connected to *Nineteen Eighty-four*. The essays like "The prevention of literature", "Politics and the English language" and "Looking Back on the Spanish war" are his political essays. They are centered on the discussion of the political issues of different countries. He himself said in his essay "Why I write", "The Spanish war and other events in 1936-37 turned the scale and there after I knew where I stood. Every line of serious work that I have written, directly or indirectly against totalitarianism and democratic socialism as I understood it" (28). "England your England", "The English People" and "Notes on Nationalism" are Orwell's sociological Essays. Likewise, his cultural essays included "Coming Up for Air" and "Decline of the English Murder."

Orwell wrote an essay on Charles Dickens, which is the longest of all his essays. This essay explores Dickens' attitudes to Society, class, money, sex and politics. But the essay is also important for what it tells us about Orwell, for he says as much about what he is trying to do in his own work as about Dickens. "Inside the Whale" is another important essay in which he meant that writers should hide and write, they are always charged otherwise of encroaching into politician's area and thus may find themselves at stake. The writers should not textualize the political issues and problems in their works. Orwell says that remaining inside the while and

unaffected by tyranny and fear in the modern world is an attractive, comfortable declaration of irresponsibility.

Divided into four chapters, the first chapter is a general introduction to the area of this study and the whole direction this study is going to take. To explain the issue of misrepresentation in the novel, the second chapter will outline the concept of Orientalism and the issue of Representation and Othering in Postcolonial discourse. This study is based on the assumption that Orwell's representation of Burma is the outcome of his colonial mentality. Likewise, the third chapter, the close reading of text, will reveal the misrepresentation of Burmese people. The chapter analyses the misrepresentation of others in the novel on the basis of love-hate relationship between the Colonizers and the colonized. the final chapter will present and illustrate the findings of this research in brief.

## **Chapter Two**

### **Meaning of 'Others' in Post Colonial Theory**

#### **2.1. Context of Orientalism**

The emergence of multiple post colonial literary theories has provided us numerous opportunities to interpret a text from various views and perspectives. Orientalism is also a recent postcolonial theory propounded by Edward Said, a Palestine born English writer. Orientalism is a discourse formed by West about the non-west. It is a created reality of the orient by the occident. It is a discourse which is made by the west to govern the non- western countries. The authors who write such discourse are Orientalist, as Said defines it "Anyone who teaches, writes or researches about the orient is an orientalist and what he or she researches the orient is an orientalist and what he or she does is orientalism" (*Orientalism 2*). Orientalism represents the first phase of colonialism i.e. generally later part of 14<sup>th</sup> century to early part of 16<sup>th</sup> century. The publication of this theory is regarded as the principal

catalyst and reference point of post colonial theory. It is the western experience of East or western thought about the Orient. In this regard, Said defines it as a "style of thought based upon ontological and epistemological distinction made between the orient and the occident" (*Orientalism 2*). Here, Said clarifies that Orientalism is the western taste of the orient. It differentiates between the orient and the occident. While differentiating these two contestants, the former one is placed at inferior position and the latter is placed at superior position. It creates hierarchy between the whites and the non-whites. It marginalizes the orientals. During the colonial period, westerners visited the non-western countries for various purposes and later on they made discourse about those countries on the basis of their own understanding and own imagination.

Orientalism, according to Said, is not an airy European fantasy about the orient but a created body of theory and practice in which, for many generations, there has been considerable material investment. Said opines that "Orientalism is rather a distribution of geo political awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, sociological, historical and philological texts" (11). In this context, post colonial criticisms like Orientalism attempts to reexamine the colonial relationship and colonial perspective employed in discourse of cultural of cultural representation and the text dealing with colonial relations.

Ramen Salden writes in "From postcolonial perspective "that "Western values and traditions of thought and literature, including versions of post-modernism, are guilty of repressive ethnocentrism "because" models of west thought and literature have dominated world culture, marginalizing or excluding non-western traditions and

forms of cultural life and expressions" (189). The colonial critics and writers have deconstructed the reality of non western and produced colonizing myths about Laziness, deceit and irrationality of the non-western people. The post colonial theory deals with the issues like images, representation, hybridity, diaspora, nationalism, problem of migration and so on.

Regarding issues under the study of postcolonial theory, the editors of *'Post Colonial Studies Reader'* mention, "migration, slavery, suppression, resistance, representation, difference, race gender, place and responses to the influential master discourse imperial Europe... and the fundamental experiences of speaking and writing by which all these come into being" (2). This means that postcolonial theory is not a single index of linguistic, philosophy, literature and culture. It is, rather, a mixed identity of these items all together.

So far as this research is concerned, it is based on the theoretical terms like 'Representation' and 'Other'. These terms are relevant to the theory Orientalism. That's why the common ideas and definitions of Orientalism have been discussed above. The author under study of this research is mostly presented as the hater of imperialism but the research shows his misattitude to the colonized, especially to the Burmese people. It demonstrates the misrepresentation of the Burmese people and it also confirms author's Eurocentric prejudices. In this connection the relevant terms are discussed below:

## **2.2 "Representation" in Post Colonial Discourse**

The concept of representation is connected with the basic issues of cultural theory. The concept of representation is always related to the notion of 'memory' and

'interpretation' which pervade each and every cultural phenomenon. The postcolonial theory, Orientalism, incorporates the problem of representation and promotion, the role played by content organization as well as by the use of specific techniques and forms of representation, is of great significance in the distinction between the "original" or the "authentic" and the 'copy' or the 'simulacrum'. Since the term is directly connected with culture, it signifies cultural identity. But the signification may not be the real one. So far as the importance of the term representation in this research is concerned, it is directly relevant to the hostility between the West and the East.

In the contemporary theory of postcolonialism, representation is connected to the Foucauldian concept of discourse as representation. According to Foucault, we can find the chain or network of power in discourse. Discourse is Power. Every discourse bases on certain knowledge which helps to form power. The discourse by West about East based on the knowledge they have gained about East during the period of colonization. Said shares similar attitude when he writes, "Orientalism is the generic term that I have been employing to describe the western approach to the orient; Orientalism is a discipline by which the orient was (and is) approached systematically as a topic of learning, discovery, and practice" (71). Here also Said acknowledges Foucauldian concept and argues that western discourse always form images and stereotypes about the East and aim at ruling and dominating over the orient.

Orientalism is also meant the similar kind of discourse which attempts to represents orient from western perspectives. It always creates the hierarchy of superior and inferior or the creator and the created. The non -westerners get their

identities only by the mercy of their creators, i.e. Westerners. The Easterners are not what they are but what the Westerners represent them. Edward said in this theory Orientalism also explores how the East-the orient, is created through western discursive, practices, which can, however, be known by the dominant discourse of the west and thus assimilated in practices pronounced as inferior or as 'the other' as it does not come up to representation. as Said writes:

... orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as a corporate institution for dealing with orient by making statement about it describing it teaching it, setting it and ruling over it in short, orientalism, is western style for domination restructuring and having authority over the orient." (*Orientalism 3*)

Postcolonial criticism, which attempts to re-examine the colonial relationship, emerged in resistance to colonial perspectives employed in discourses of cultural representations and the text dealing with colonial relations.

The history of representation goes back to the Greek period when the great writer Homer in his *Illiad* and similarly Euripides and Aeschylus in their books *The Persians* and *The Bachhe* respectively deconstructed Asians loss and European's victory the tradition of representation is still continuous in various forms. The great writer Dante also used the same stereotypic images and representation in his work *Inferno*. Dante presented the prophet Mohammed being eternally chained from brain to anus in his book.

In this way, the white authors of different centuries have been representing the Easterners, in the history, according to their taste. The modern American orientalist

create the images of the Easterners as terrorists and give them a new identity. They represent them in many Television programmes. Said seems to be saying so when he write, "My analysis of the orientalist texts therefore places emphasis on the evidence, which is by no means invisible for such representation as representations not as 'natural' depictions of the orient" (*Orientalism 19*).

Since Greco-Roman period, the westerners have been attempting to marginalize the non-westerners by creating the fictitious reality about the orient according to their own taste. They have been endeavoring to represent the Easterners through their imagination. In some context, they show some living or sympathetic attitude towards the orient and they exploit even their sentiments. Edward Said explains that cultural discourse and exchange within a culture is commonly circulated is not truth but representations. Said adds further, "The relation between occident and orient is a relationship of power, of domination, of varying degree of a complex hegemony..."(*Orientalism5*)

As we know there is (and was) always an unequal distribution of power among cultures, and that ultimately affects representation of one culture by the other. There we can find the mingling of loving and hating attitude between the Eastern and Western in term of representation. We can find inequalities in various modes and process of representation Said unmasks the ideological disguises of imperialism reciprocal relationship between colonial power and knowledge. In this regard, discussing Said, Padmini Mongia writes, "...that cultural lands play a part in the great games of colony an empire, of race and its development, so that the last two hundred

years of European imperialism had to be understood Vis a Vis the cultural texts that laid the ground work for the buttressed the structure of imperialism" (4).

The main mission of imperialism is to govern the countries geographically, politically, and culturally. For these reasons, they represent the colonized as they like. In other words, the representation means misrepresentation. The Easterners are always misrepresented by the westerners to clarify that they have been always superior. Some colonial writers try to express their loving or sympathetic attitude towards the subservient colonized people along with their sense of superiority which always resides in the core of their minds. For example, E.M. Forster, Rudyard Kipling, Joseph Conrad etc represented the East as the land of 'others' in various manners.

Forster in his novel '*Passage to India*' did misrepresentation of the Indian people. Indian people are represented as friendly, loving, and helpful in one land and they are misrepresented as barbaric, uncivilized, other, and mysterious on the other hand. Such writers have made the romantic representation of the orient as exotic locale. These numerous representation of the East/orient by the west is also the outcome of the colonizer's will to govern the Colonized. The representation is just a created medium for the colonization. They misrepresent the East in order to prove that they are not, in fact, willing to govern the orient but it is mandatory for them. So, they exhibit colonial experiences and perception, and are written from the imperial perspective. It is, as Boehmer writes, "informed by theories concerning the superiority of European Culture and the rightness of empire". So, colonial literatures have created channels for the exchange of Colonial images and ideals.

During the time of the peak of imperialism, writers felt it necessary to write about new places and the people. They began writing about the people who inhabited the lands they (Colonizers) claimed the natives, the Colonized. But the problem was that of truly understanding the native people, alien people, native culture, geography and the landscape. They were surprised to see the situations or the life styles of the native people. They found the behaviours and attitudes of people completely unreadable. Then after they commenced to represent these people and culture according to their own taste and with the use of their own familiar vocabularies, their own metaphors and tropes as Boehmer argues that "Strangeness was made comprehensible by using everyday names, dependable textual conventions, both rhetorical and Syntactic" (Boehmer 14). This process was continued by classifying them as barbaric and degenerate, either dangerous or alluring. The most important function of the colonial writings is to reveal the ways in which the world is dichotomized in various manners. They could represent the degradation of other human beings as natural, an innate part of their degenerate or barbarian state. The non-European people were represented as less human, less civilized, as child or Savage or headless mass or, they were depicted as inferior only because they were different from the whites. The writers and their works were centered only in the issue of justifying the mission of Colonization. Their endeavors were centered only in the issue of justifying the mission of Colonization. Their endeavors were only to cherish the idea of white superiority. As Said argues that "It is Europe that articulates the orient; this articulation is the prerogative, not of a puppet master, but of a genuine

creator, whose life giving power represents, animates, constitutes the otherwise silent and dangerous space beyond familiar boundaries" (*Orientalism*56).

Any process of colonial writing exposed the love hate relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. Colonial writings were centered on the power relation between the occident and the orient. Boehmer reminds us the very idea when she writes, "Stereotypes of the other as indolent malingers, shirkers, layabouts, degenerate versions of the pastoral idler, were the stock in trade of colonialist writings. The white men represented themselves as the archetypal workers and provident profit maker"(39). Thus, colonialist writings always have represented the whites as intellectual, Superior, Civilizer, Master of the world and apostle of light and the non whites as degenerate, barbaric and in need of European masters to civilize and to uplift them out of their filth. They also created a hierarchy of race, which represent 'we' for the race belonged to the superior position and 'they' for the race belonged to the inferior position. In this regard the reputed critic Edward Said clarifies about Conrad and his representation as:

Conrad seems to be saying 'we' westerners will decide who is a good native or bad, because all natives has sufficient existence by Virtue of our recognition. We created them, we taught them to speak and think, and when they rebel they simply confirm our views of them as silly children duped by some of their western masters. (*Culture and Imperialism*)

This above quotation shows that Conrad is an imperialist and thinks that imperialism is a system since he is the product of his own time and brought up and

educated from the western Colonial heritage. Thus, his representation of Africa is filtered through the stereotypes of Africanize discourse. In those above extract Conrad means to say that African needs guidance and light from European rational Civilization. He cannot see and believe that Africa has its own intact history and culture distinct from European one. Thus the orient must pass thought the learned grids and codes provided by the orientalist.

The colonial writers always create binaries regarding the orient as inferior, 'other, indigenous, uncivilized, female, patient; and which place Westerners as 'Superior', universal, male, doctor, civilized and so on. These epithets promote an awareness in the part of the non westerners to create their own existence, These kinds of binary opposition constitute a gap between what they do or write. Texts sometimes represent the unconscious bias of the writers as clarified by Said in *Orientalism*:

In any instance of at least written language, there is no such thing as delivered presence, but a represent or a representation. The value efficacy, strength, apparent variety of a written statement about the orient therefore relies very little and cannot instruct mentally depend, on orient as such on the contrary, the written statement is a presence to the render by virtue of the having excluded, displaced mode supererogatory any such real thing as "the orient". Thus all of orientalism stands forth and away from the orient that orientalism makes sense at all depends more on the West than on orient. And these representation rely upon institution, traditions, agreed

upon codes understanding for their effects, not upon a distant and  
amorphous orient. (21-22)

Said, in the above extract, demonstrates the gulf between the orient it actually is and the orient that is represented in various genres of literature. He further clarifies about misrepresentation of the orient by the Westerners or the travelers who have never seen the orient as it is. It also further adds an inevitable fact that the representations that are made by the westerners are partially real and mostly these objects have only a fictional reality. In this connection, Said argues that "this universal practice of designating in one's mind a familiar space which is "ours" and an unfamiliar space which is "theirs" is a way of making geographical distinction that can be entirely arbitrary" (Orientalism 53). These lines explain the hostile relationship between Colonizers and Colonized.

The central subject matter of any colonial writing is the encounter between the Western colonizers and the Eastern colonized. The presentation of the character is influenced by the colonial mentality. It means the colonialists always fractionalize the social, economical, individual, political and geographical situations of the orient. Such writings are always characterized by the relationship between the colonizers and the colonized. As Ashcroft, Bill, Biffiths and Giffithsh had defined ambivalence along with Bhaba's lines," It describes the complex mix of attraction and repulsion that characterizes the relationship between colonizers and colonized. The relationship is ambivalent because the Colonized subject is never simple and completely opposed to the colonizer"(12). The process of acculturation is not simple, so both of these groups always have conflicting relation with each other. They misrepresent the

problems of establishing intimate and meaningful relationships between two social and cultural groups.

The Colonial writes rarely present the non-European or non-whites as the leading characters of their works. The indigenous characters are denied to give any significant role. If any role is given, that is always a negative one. One of the Colonial writers Joseph Conrad is branded as 'thorough racist' by Chinua Achebe and he has made a sever critique of Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* in his paper entitled "An image of Africa: Conrad's Heart of Darkness" as:

Heart of Darkness projects the image of Africa as "the other world" the antithesis of Europe and therefore of civilization, a place where man's vaunted intelligence and refinement are finally mocked by opens on the River Thames but the actual story will take place on the River Congo, the very antithesis of Thames. The River Congo quite decidedly no service and enjoys no old-age pension. We are told that going up river was like traveling back to the earliest beginning of the world. (*The story 1373*)

In this above extract Conrad, as Achebe mentions, not only dichotomizes Thames and Congo; good and bad, but implicated that Thames has overcome its darkness and bestiality, whereas Congo is still in darkness and bestiality and it needs guidance, help and light from European rational civilization to rescue its people from the barbaric situations.

Thus, it is surprising to the readers like us that the world represented in colonialist fiction shows strangely empty of indigenous characters. The European or white

characters are demonstrated as adventurous and courageous. The European characters play important role. Boehmer also thinks similarly and she argues that "The drama that there is in their drama. Almost without exception there is no narrative interest without European involvement and intervention(69). Even though the natives are represented in the novel they are shown in headless mass lacking individual identity as human beings. So, the colonial discourses, infact, focused on the love-hate relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. The colonized were always shown as inferior, barber, uncivilized and in need of leadership, incapable of self-governance and in managing their resources. The whites were always at the apex of everything, and source of every significant activities. Said presents 'Canonical' view of orientalism that is supposed to have been existed even in the time of Chaucer, Shakespeare, Dryden, Pope and Byron. Orientalists have certain stereotypes to represent land, people, culture and politics of East. Said's work on orientalism shows how the western image produces myths about the laziness, decent and irrationality of the orientals. Colonial discourses presented the orient as the liar, suspicious and lethargic. In contrary the white race is presented as clear, direct, noble mature, rational and virtuous, West always represents oriental people as unruly inscrutable or margin. Orient is not what it is but how it is orientalized by the Westerners. Said in "Crisis in Orientalism" argues that, "the political and cultural circumstances has flourished, draw attention to the debased position of the East or oriental as an object of study (298)".

So it carries out a fact that the Westerners do not represent the reality but they always represent the Easterners by used of various unusual images. Though some of

the writers pretend to show their sympathy to the Eastern people and their situations, they are in fact motivated by their will to dominate the orient. They express love and sympathy to the Eastern peoples as a new mode of power to govern them. So the multiple representations which are made in colonial discourses are only to justify their mission of colonization in various forms.

### **2.3 "Others" in postcolonial discourse**

Other is an important theoretical terms in relation to the postcolonial theory and specially to the orientalism, 'other' is a colonial term coined by West to represent East. It directly represents the third world which were once colonized by the West and those which have been still colonized. Since the beginning of the human civilization, the Europe has put itself in the centre and the rest in the periphery. The term other is created in relation to the term 'self' or 'we'. It is directly connected with the theory of exclusiveness. It elucidated the power relation between the occident and the orient. It is created just to dichotomize between the 'west' and the rest'.

A main theoretical source for the term lies in the philosophy of G.W.F. Hegel and his commentary on the mutually defining relations of Master and Slave and then in Psychoanalytical theory of Jacques Lacan, the 'other' is the image of a unified and co-ordinate self the child sees also other children with whom it is in a relation of recognition, rivalry and competition. The other is not a direct interlocutor but the symbolic place, the site upon which the subject is constituted; the something it lacks but must seek. It therefore directs the subject's desire and destiny.

So far as the term is concerned with the postcolonial theory it is the western creation to govern of dominate over the 'orient'. The orient is always 'other' of the

occident. It is to subjugate or subordinate the orient. The term is also relevant to the culture. The western culture always tries justifying itself as the superior or the centre and the non-western culture as inferior or the other. The Westerners always create binary opposition by representing the orient as always away from mainstream in every aspect. So, the term is relevant with the cultural identity and power relation. We live our lives in the context of social relationships with others. The concept of other is related with political ideology. The colonial discourses helped to form the images and stereotypes of the orient. In this connection, Bhaba writes:

An important feature of colonial discourse is its dependence on the concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of 'otherness'.

Fixing as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism in a paradoxical mode of representation. It connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy and daemonic repletion. ('The other question'29)

This above extract clarifies that the colonial writers always follow the fixed and stereotyped construction while representing the countries and people they had once colonized.

The discourse of west, representing everything non-western as inferior, manifests west's desire to govern, to dominate and to control 'the other' and that, this attitude is colonial heart. In this regard Boehmer in her studies of colonial literature and their process of othering remarks:

In Orient, Africa or Latin America is consistently described as mysterious, grotesque, or margin and in general hostile to European understanding. It is an "awful lifelessness", or vast and stupefying, reminding the British observer as O. Douglas noted, of the uncertainty of all things.... It is a condition which appears to have emerged in past out of the radical incongruity between the individual and the alien world in which he finds himself. (90)

On this basis, non-west was compared to woman country. Orientals were characterized as passive, seductive and generally effeminate. Said opines that the colonial discourse serve this colonial purpose in an effective manner. The colonialists attempt to design the fixed geographical, cultural and political concept about the orient in the mind of the readers. It produces a kind of stereotype of the orient describing as an object of study stamped with an "otherness" so as to make it easier to have power and authority over the orient. Said seems to be right in saying that "an unbroken arc of knowledge connects the European or the western statesman and the western orientalist; it forms the rim of stage containing the orient" and that "the scope of orientation exactly matched the scope of Empire" (*Crisis in Orientalism* 204).

The Westerners believed that the Easterners were not able to govern themselves. They also meant that every scientific and technological discoveries were made in the West and the Eastern people were primitive barbaric, lethargic, ignorance, child like and effeminate. The colonizers, with these fake evidences about the orient, tried to justify their mission of colonization. They thought that it was white

man's burden to civilize them, to educate them and to make them human. In this manner they always created hierarchy between the colonizers and colonized as the superior race and inferior race respectively. They believed that the orient would never change if they had not launched their mission to change it.

The white colonizers thought that since we were the superior race, we had a right to punish the Easterners. We could give 'them' even death punishment because 'they' mainly understood force and violence best: 'they' deserved to be ruled. Said, too, opines similarly in this concept in his "Crisis in Orientalism" where he says "when orientals struggle against colonial occupation, you must say...that orientals have never understood the meaning of self government in the way 'we' do"(207).

The colonizers mean to justify the colonization by claiming that the mission of colonization is not to possess the orient, not to practice the power or authority over the orient but to civilize, educate and to teach them the way to govern the state. In this connection, Said refers to Abdel Malek as calling this situation "The hegemonism of possessing minorities and anthropocentrism allied with Eurocentrism: a white middle class Westerner believes it his human prerogative not only to manage the non-white world but also to own it, just because by definition, it is not quite as human as we are (307).

This research is also based on the similar issue that how the colonial literature produced the stereotypical images of the non-west as 'the others' of Europe. Though the colonial literature were heterogeneous in reflecting, Colonial ethos, it's not easy to give precise definition of it. They exhibit colonial experience and perceptions, and are written from the imperial perspective. It is, as Boehmer writes, "informed by

theories concerning the superiority of European culture and the rightness of empire" (3). So, colonial literature created channels for the exchange of images and ideas. The western literatures are almost all the ethnocentric ones. The great Concern here is that orient speaks though and by Virtue of the European imagination, which is depicted as particular the near orient; became known in the West as its great complementary opposite since antiquity.

The Orient is governed and dominated by discourse produced by Orientalists rather than material, military or political power because discourse makes possible orient as subject class. The colonial discourse, not only creates power to rule the other, but it also contains the possibility of resistance to it from the other. The production of otherness is a must for colonialism. We may, thus, say that they 'other' in order to create its identity and, then, consolidate colonial power over 'the other'. Said, in his, *The world the Text and the Critic*, rightly observes that:

the methods and discourse of western scholarship confine non-European cultures to a position of sub-ordination. Oriental texts come to inhabit a realm without development of power, one that exactly corresponds to be position of colony for European texts and culture (47).

Said, here, intensifies that the colonial relation is maintained and guided by colonial discourse, so much , that such a discourse, licensed with power, becomes the sole force of colonialism.

The colonial discourses have created 'other' to institutionalize West's power over 'the other'. So, 'the other' always has the shifting position in colonial discourse.

The identity of the orient as 'the other' always goes on changing in relation of it with the occident. Westerners think the source of Easterner's life is West. They have been existing in the mercy of their creator and savior i.e. 'the occident'. They acknowledge as if the non-western world's regions, as Said puts in *Culture and Imperialism*, "have no life, history of culture to speak of, no independence or integrity worth representing without the west" (XIX).

They have always ignored the fact that the non western worlds also have their own histories, lives and cultures with integrities equally worth representing as the western one. In this connection Said writes that "Most Americans have felt about their southern neighbors that independence is to be wished for them so long as it is the kind of independence we approve of"(XVIII) It means that the colonized ones never want themselves to be independent, they always wait to be imposed by the authority of their master. If they want independence it is not a concern, but if 'we' (Westerners) want themselves to be independent than it only concerns.

So, this research paper centers on the very issues of 'Representation' and 'othering' in colonial discourse. This research focuses on the misrepresentation of the Burmese people as 'the others' in the novel *Burmese Days* by George Orwell.

## Chapter Three

### Misrepresentation of 'Others' in *Burmese Days*

#### 3.1 Geographical Representation of Burma

George Orwell, in his novel *Burmese Days*, represents Burma as exotic terrifying, barbaric, uncivilized and underdeveloped land. To justify the mission of colonization, he demonstrates Burma as untraveled, unvisited, unknown territory of the world. Edward Said in his theory orientalism writes that "The orient was almost European invention and had been since antiquity a place of romance, exotic beings, haunting memories and landscapes, remarkable experiences" (1). Orwell represents Burma as an alien world as Chinua Achebe illustrates the geographical representation of Africa by thorough racist Joseph Conrad and writes:

Africa as setting and backdrop, which eliminates the African as human factor. Africa as a human factor. Africa as a metaphysical battlefield devoid of all wandering European enters at his peril can nobody see the preposterous and prefer arrogance in this reducing Africa. . . . The real point is the dehumanization of Africa and African, which this age-long attitude has fostered and continuous to foster in the word. (*The Story* 1376)

Conrad and Orwell have almost similar attitude to the orient. Orwell describes the Burmese land as barren, "Last year we didn't have a spot of rain till June. Look at that bloody sky, not a cloud in it like one of those damned great enamel saucepans. God! what'd you give to be in Piccadilly now, eh?" (16). In this connection, to valorize the

sense of othering Orwell further adds "These natives don't feel any uneasiness with this weather. They are habituated to it. They can easily endure the sharp heat of the sun" (204). Flory further adds commenting the native people as, "For the native all well, their skulls are adamant. But for us sun stroke ever menaces. Very deadly is the sun upon European. These remarks almost match with Said when he writes that "the Westerners call the non-western world as the land of barbarians. In other words they form a familiar space in their mind as "Ours" and an unfamiliar space beyond 'ours' is 'their'. It is way of making geographical distinctions that can be entirely arbitrary" (*Orientalism* 54).

The colonial writers have always dichotomized the non-western world as the world of 'others' and the western world as the center of everything. The sense of othering through geographical representation is an apparent style of the colonizers. Through the images of the land also they mean to establish a distinct kind of attitudes of the readers to the orient. Said further adds in these lines, "It is enough for the readers to the orient. Said further adds in these lines, "It is enough for the readers to set up these boundaries in their minds, 'they' become they accordingly and both their territory and mentality are designate as different from 'ours' (54).Said here intensifies how the westerners attempt to create the central position for them.

Orwell, as a colonial writer, demonstrates the Burma as the land of others or the land of barbarians in the novel. "O Western wind, when wilt thou blow, that the small rain down can rain?" (230). Even wind has been addressed as 'Western' wind it has not been raining in Burma for a long time, so the narrator has called for western wind. The colonizers deconstruct the geographical reality of the orient according to

their own taste. They represent the orient as an alien world. They believe that the colonizers are charmed, attracted, fooled by the land as in the novel, "Flory had dodged the war because the East had already corrupted him and he has been enchanted by this terrific and exotic land"(64). Flory, a white timber merchant in Burma, is thought to be hypnotized by the geographical charmness of Burma.

In this way, though Orwell was an imperial police in Burma and he had the direct experience of Burma, he created an imaginary geography of Burma to inferiorize Burma and the Burmese people in this novel.

### **3.2 Love-Hate Relationship between Colonizers and Colonized:**

The novel *Burmese Days* is centered on the subject of hostility between the colonizers and the colonized. Mostly the characters are White colonizers and the Burmese colonized. There is conflict between them in case of politics, identity, culture and many other aspects. There is representation of the Burmese people as the 'others' which is characterized by the love-hate relationship between the colonizer and the colonized. As other colonial writers, Orwell represents the Burmese people as inferior, barbaric, uncivilized, corrupt, uneducated, servile and animal like creatures. Said in his book *Orientalism* writes:

Finally, the very power and scope of Orientalism produced not only a fair amount of exact positive knowledge about the orient but also a kind of second-order knowledge-linking in such place as the "Oriental" tale, the mythology of the mysterious East, notions of Asian inscrutability-with life of its own. (52)

In this connection, Said clarifies that the colonialists Create free-floating mythology of the orient. George Orwell also creates imaginary reality of the orient as the other in various manners. Burma and its people are characterized by western experience and thought. Burmese people are not, in fact, what they are but how they are represented by Orwell. As Said says that "what the orientalist does is to confirm the orient in the readers' eyes; he neither tries nor wants to unsettle already from convictions" (65).The readers like us are illusioned that the world represented in colonialist fiction shows strangely empty of indigenous characters. The European or white characters are demonstrated as adventurous and courageous.

U Po Kyin, a sub divisional magistrate, one of the Burmese characters, is represented as corrupt, servile, tricky and barber. The lines "His practice, a much safer one, was to take bribes from both Side and then decide the case on strictly legal grounds. This won him a useful reputation for impartiality" (3) show his corrupt nature. Similarly he conspired against his fellow Burmese to get promoted in the higher rank. "To fight on the side of the British, to become a parasite upon them had been his ruling ambition, even as a child" (2). These lines add his servile nature to the colonizers. The colonial writes create such images and characters to justify their mission. In this regard, Said has an opinion that:

Such "images" of the orient as this are images in that they represent or stand for a very large entity, otherwise impossibly diffuse, which they enable one to grasp or see. They are also characters related to such types as the braggarts, misers or gluttons produced by Theophrastus, L a Bruyere, or Selden. (56)

In this sense, the oriental characters are represented according to the western taste. Similarly, everything which is connected with Europeans taken as supreme and sacred. There is a European club, where only European are allowed and it is named as, "a spiritual Citadel, the real seat of the British power, the Nirvana for which native official and millionaires pine in Vain" (14). As Said opines that the Europeans always keep themselves in the prior and ruling position and the non-Europeans in the secondary or subordinated position.

The Burmese characters are marginalized in comparison to European characters. The Europeans are the power holders and the Burmese are shown to be longing to equalize themselves with those white colonizers. The main Burmese characters, both Dr. Verswami and U Po Kyin, are endowed with the hegemonious feeling or the feelings of inferiority. They are represented in such manners. Dr. Verswami puts his opinion with his European friend Flory that "My friend, my friend, you are forgetting the oriental character. How is it possible to have developed us with our apathy and superstition? At least you have brought us law and order" (37). The Europeans always represent the orientals as Superstitious, powerless and desiring to acquire the power. In this regard Said quotes Abdel Malek who calls the hegemonism of possessing minorities. And he further adds that it is the Eurocentric belief of the Westerners to present themselves as Superior and the other as the inferior.

Both Verswami and U Po Kyin are enthusiastic to get themselves recruited in European club. They represent the Western production of the orient. "They always analogize the club and white skin with prestige and the yellow skin with barbarity. Verswami says Flory" ...if only I were a member of you European club! If only! How

different my position would be!" and similarly, he further adds that "You do not know what prestige it gives to an Indian to be a member of the European club. No clauy can touch him a club member is sacrosanct" (42-43). Verswami neglects his Burmese identity and blindly aspires to be like white Europeans. Said further opines, "It views the orient as something whose existence is not only displayed but has remained fixed in time and place for the west" (107).

Said remarks that the orientals are known and represented as they have been asserted by the Europeans. They always pretend to be sympathizing over the weakness, helplessness and inferiority of the non-westerners. Said says that the westerners always form binaries regarding the orient as inferior, other, indigenous, uncivilized, female, patient and which westerners as superior, universal, male, doctor, civilized and so on. They always create the Eastern characters according to their desire and satisfy their inner desire as governor or creator.

U Po Kyin is also one of them, he is plotting against Verswami because he wants himself to be recruited in the European club. He also relates the club and whites companion with prestige. He states with his wife, "And now I will tell you the real reason why I am intriguing against Verswami. It is to disgrace him in Westerners' perspective and to create an appropriate environment for myself" (139).

Even the Burmese are quarrelling and intriguing with each other in order to attain the so-called higher position. Their mentality is poisoned by the fake beliefs of the white colonizer. They are not the real conscious and patriotic Burmese but they are the western representation of the Burmese people, who want them to be governed by the white colonizers. A part from these vital Burmese characters, there are some

minor characters that are also endowed with the feelings of inferiority. The servants always address their white masters as the holy god. Ma Hla May, Flory's mistress, thinks about Flory that "The whiteness of his skin had a fascination for her, because of its strangeness and the sense of power it gave her" (50).

None of the Burmese characters has their specific identity as a Burmese citizen. They are directly and indirectly depended to the European characters. Verswami gets ruined at the end of the novel because of the demise of his European friend and in contrary U Po Kyin is promoted to higher rank because of his complete servile nature to the colonizers. Either the ruin or the upgrading, both are relevant with European interest. The struggle between the West and East is to achieve the power. In this connection, Said argues that the presentation of characters is influenced by the colonial mentality. The colonialists always fictionalize the social, economical, political, geographical and individual situation of the orient. They represent the Easterners how they want them to be not what they are in fact. They create the characters as the means to gratify their colonial longings. U Po Kyin further expresses his complete servile and subservient nature to the superiority of white masters. Here, in these lines he explains to his wife the European club as a sacred religious spot:

The European club, that remote, mysterious temple, that holy of holies far harder of entry than Nirvana! Po Kyin, the naked gutterboy of Mandalay, the thieving clerk and obscure official would enter that sacred place, call Europeans 'Old chap', drink whisky and soda and Knock white balls to and fro on the green table. . . , It was a prospect that would have dazzled anybody. (140)

Even Kyin's wife seems to have attraction to acquire the power. Earlier she opposes her husband in every aspect and she awares him as well but at this moment for the first time in her life she surverys Kyin's intrigues without disapproval. These kinds of misrepresentations function as power. Behind every reppresentation there can be found the power motives. These lines expressed by Verswami also further assist to confirm the colonizers' attitude towards the Indian people:

... how discouraging is the work of a doctor in this country! These  
villagers dirty ignorant savages! Even to get them to come to  
hospital is all we can do, and they will die of gangrene or carry a tumor as  
large as a melon for ten years rather than face the knife. And such  
medicines as their own so-called doctors give to them! Herbs gathered  
under the new moon, tigers' whiskers, rhinoceros horn, urine,  
menstrual blood ! How men can drink such compound is  
disgusting. (143-144)

These lines mean as similar as Said's opinion of how the non-Europeans are represented as Conservative, superstitious, traditional, back warded, unscientific and so on. They're always inferiorized as interesting to attach themselves to pre-historic age. They're unknown to the modern scientific invention of the world. This concept is further justified by the means of two chokras, who work in European club, When they are ordered to go to call on the police they burst into tears thinking that they will be haunted by Maxwell's ghost, who has been murdered by the natives. In this way the Burmese characters are presented to be more faithful and contributed to be more

faithful and contributed to their so-called masters rather than to their fellow Burmese people. Even in the time of riot also the Burmese officers, without any hesitation, order the policemen to shoot at the agitators.

The discourse of the west, representing everything non-western as inferior, manifests west's desire to govern, to dominate and to control 'the other' and that attitude is colonial at heart. They focus on the sense of othering and marginalizing of the non westerners, and sometime this process is characterized by the love-hate relationship between them. This novel also centers on the subject of conflict between these two cultural contestants. There are White Europeans and Burmese characters who share misattitude to each other. Such discourse assists the colonizer to govern the Easterners. They essentialize the Easterners as they like U Po Kyin's lines justify this concept when he says, "No European cares any thing about proofs when a man has a black face, suspicion is proof." Similarly , "No European has any faith in a man with black face" (8). These lines are likely to Said's opinion when he says, "In a sense the limitations of orientalism are, as I said earlier, the limitations that follow upon disregarding, essentializing, denuding the humanity of another culture, people or geographical region." (107). They determine the truth about East not in an actual form but by the superficial generalization of their own mind. As in the novel, the only black face of the Burmese characters is sufficient enough to understate them, to demoralize them and to inferiorize them.

Some of the white characters share misattitude toward the down trodden Indian people. Flory, the protagonist of the novel, has an attachment with Dr. Verswami and similarly with other Burmese people as well. Said has an opinion that even the good

relationship between the European and the orient is fluctuating. Europeans exploit even the sentiments of the orientals. In spite of the fact that Flory is a white man, he distastes the imperialism partially. He shares almost similar attitude with Said, when he discusses about the colonial mission with Dr. Verswami in this manner:

We're living with a lie that we're here to uplift our poor black brothers instead of to rob them. I suppose it's natural enough lie. But it corrupts us. It corrupts us in ways you can't imagine. There's an everlasting sense of being a sneak and a liar that torments us and dries us to justify ourselves day and night. It's at the bottom of half our beastliness to natives....We're thieves and go on thieving without any humbug. (35)

The above extract oozes out the underlying intentions for the colonizers. As Said writes that the mission of civilization is just a fake one, they, in fact, intend to exploit the every treasuries of the East. Moreover, these following remarks by Flory again add the similar idea when he reveals the fact that:

. . . before we've finished we'll have wrecked the whole Burmese national culture. But we're not civilizing them, we're only rubbing our dirt on to them. . . all this will be gone\_forest, villages, monasteries, pagodas all vanished. They build a prison and call it progress. They introduced venereal diseases into this country (37-39)

Said, in his theory orientalism, shares the similar opinion when he writes that the colonizers always pretend that they are colonizing not to fulfill their self-interest but

to develop civilize and uplift the orient. But, behind the bush of civilization and development, there always lies the intoxication of the colonization. Flory also clarifies the same fact in the novel, he means that the mission of colonization is different from what the colonizers say. They are the real hypocrites, they are not what they are. They are in East not to upgrade the East but to degrade it. Another important white character, Mr. Macgregor has also the misattitude towards the natives. He is the deputy commissioner in Burma. Commissioner orders him to elect a native member in the European club. Though he proposes the subject in the club, he himself seems to be in dilemma. He is not as frank to the natives as he is to the whites. He also shares the similar nature as other whites have; the nature of superiority. Dr. Verswami rejects even Flory's opinion and becomes furious also when Flory reveals the hidden reality of the white colonizers. Verswami, in this context, disapproves Flory and says, "Your officials are civilizing us, elevating us to their level, from pure public spirit. It is a magnificent record of self- sacrifice" (36)

Said in *Culture and Imperialism* assumes that the Europeans always characterize the non- white characters as inferior creatures who always aspire the white colonizers to govern them. The following remarks by Dr. Verswami further supports the idea of Edward Said. "Could the Burmese trade themselves? Can they make machinery, Ships, railways, roads? They are helpless without you. What would happen to the Burmese forests if the English were not here" (36), Verswami's concept is not the real concept is not the real concept of a Burmese officer but the pre determined concept of the westerners about the orient. The Burmese are always represented as passive follower. They follow every principle of white Europeans. They are mentally blank of

their own thoughts and principles. Verswami and U Po Kyin, though they are fellow natives, have a great tussle of being elected to the European club. It shows that their ultimate goal is to parallelize themselves with their white masters. They care less to their native problems and more to their self-interests U Po Kyin weaves an unimaginable conspiracy against Dr. Verswami and says that:

I am tired of eating with my fingers and associating only with Burmans- poor, inferior people and living, as you might say, like a miserable Township officer, Money is not enough; I should like to feel that I have risen in the world as well...and I will tell you the reason why I am intriguing against Dr. Verswami. Europeans are electing a native in the club and if I ruin Dr. Verswami, I will be the next alternative to be elected in the club.

(139-140)

In this connection, Edward Said writes, "The west is the actor, the orient a passive reactor. The west is the spectator, the judge and jury of every fact of oriental behavior"(109). The Burmese citizens are not free to think and act independently. The colonization has imposed the sense of inferiority in them that they always bow themselves in front of the supreme power of the Europeans. The role is already determined. Since the Europeans claim themselves as creator, like God, they think that they're the determiner. As Said, in his *Culture and Imperialism* has put forth an idea that the westerners think independence is not to be awarded by the Easterners' wish but how it is approved by the westerners.

However, among the white characters, the sense of hatred is apparent in comparison to the loving and sympathetic attitude they show to the Burmese people. Through these characters, the author has dichotomized between the western and Eastern people. The Easterners are always represented as other, barbaric, uncivilized and animal like. As Said opines:

The idea of representation is a theatrical one: the orient is the stage on which the whole East is confined. On this stage will appear figures whose role is to represent the larger whole from which they emanate. The orient then seems to be, not an unlimited extension beyond the familiar European world, but rather a closed field, a theatrical stage affixed to Europe.(63)

Ellis, one of the European characters, expresses his acute hatred toward the native when he hears the decision of recruiting the native member in the European club:

...when it's a question of keeping those black; stinking swine out of the only place where we can enjoy ourselves, you'd have the decency to back me up. Even if that potbellied greasy little sod of a nigger doctor is your pal. But, by God, it's a different matter when one talks of bringing nigger in here. (20)

Here, he treats the Burmese people as untouchable being. In this sense, he further add that:

Here's that old fool Macgregor wanting to bring a nigger into this club for no reason whatever, and you all sit down under it without a word. Good God what are we supposed to be doing in this country? If we

aren't going to rule, Why the devil don't we clear out? Here we are supposed to be governing a set of damn black swine who have been slaves since the beginning of history, and instead of ruling them in the only way they understand, we go and treat them as equals. (21)

Ellis is a crazy white fellow who always ignores the identity of the other. He does not want the black Indians to be independent from their governance. He is a kind of European Said explains in his theory.

"There are westerners, and there are Orientals. The former dominate; the later must be dominated, which means their land being occupied, their internal affairs rigidly controlled their blood and treasure put at the dispose of one or another western power." (36)

Said writes that the westerners always want to lengthen their domination over the East in Various changed form. But what they desire is to only impose their superiority over the Orientals. Ellis is such an ill-mannered European that he does not like even the native Christians as well. He does not think them to be appropriate to follow his religion and to shake hand with him. He says, "I can't stick the way these damned native Christians come shoving into our church" (23). Ellis reveals the colonial mentality which always resides in the mind of British people. At any cost, he is not ready to approve those outcast niggers as the fellow Christian. Though they are baptized as a Christian they can never be similar to their masters, Ellis reminds. In the case of the membership of the native in the European club he never approves. He further puts his opinion as:

No natives in his club! It's by constantly giving way over. Small things like that we have ruined the Empire. This country's only rotten with sedition because we've been too soft with them. The only possible policy is to threat them like the dirt they are. This is a critical moment and we want every bit of prestige we can get. We've got to hang together and say, "We are the masters, and you beggars-" (27-28)

This above extract shares similarity with Said's comments on Joseph Conrad and his representation of the Eastern people as:

Conrad seems to be saying 'we westerners will decide who is a good native or bad, because all the natives have sufficient existence by virtue of our recognition. We created them, we taught them to speak and think, and when they reveal they simply confirm our views of them as silly children, duped by some of their western masters. (*Cultural and Imperialism XX*)

As this above extract shows Conrad as an imperialist, Ellis also seems to share the similar attitudes. As Said says that the Europeans take in guarantee that their language is the only supreme language of the world. Ellis is such a proud fellow that he does not like the Burmese servants to use the English language perfectly. He uses vulgar languages and scolds them if they speak English language. "We shall have to sack this fellow if he gets to talk English too well. I can't stick servants who talk English. D' you hear, butler"(22). He seems to be suffering from paranoia, as he feels inferior when he finds the native people using perfect English. He has an attitude that the

native people should not be allowed to behave as a white man does. There should be a gulf; a gap of master and slave. He thinks that the whites are born as masters and the non whites as slaves. George Orwell represents the Burmese people as 'others' by revealing the conflict between the white and black characters. Said connects the issue of representation with the Foucauldian concept of power. Foucauld takes every discourse as power. Every discourse creates certain knowledge about the certain people or area and the very knowledge functions as power. Said acknowledges this Foucauldian concept and further writes that the Europeans also always represent the non-European characters as 'Other', 'inferiors', 'barbers' child like and so on. This helps to form a discourse which creates power and consequently they became successful to justify their false and tricky mission of civilization.

This novel also represents the Burmese as 'murderers', 'rapist', 'Prostitute', 'plotter', 'sexually arrogant', 'animal like' and so on. These representations are supportive to the readers to form a concept about the Burma and its people. U Po Kyin is introduced as a conspirator and rapist in the beginning of the novel. He represents almost all the Burmese people as corrupt, servile, murderer and rapist. Later on in the middle of the novel, the natives kill Maxwell, a white European, to avenge their relatives' murder. The Europeans kill a native while suppressing the so-called native uprising.

In fact, there is not any revolution it is just a rumor prevail by U Po Kyin in order to diminish the prestige of revolutions it is just a rumor prevail by U Po Kyin in order to diminish the prestige of Dr. Verswami. When a white man is killed by the natives, the issue has been given great importance. The natives are tried to be justified

as the real murder. The European want to avenge against murder at any rate. Eight hundred and more Burmese are killed in Burma but they matter nothing but the murderer of a white man is given great importance. In this regard, Ellis reacts the incident as, "Two corpses against their one-best we can do." and similarly he add, "The old German! they knew how to treat the niggers. Reprisal! Rhinoceros hide. whops! Raid their villages, kill their cattle, burn their crops! Decimate them, blow them from the guns" (240-241). These lines show the Europeans concrete hatred to the natives. They want the soldiers to slaughter the natives and to cut their faces in slices.

Edward Said further clarifies about misrepresentation of the orient for the westerners or the travelers who have never seen the orient that they find gap between what they read in book and what they actually find about it. This means that westerners represent the orient what they want it to be but not the orient as it is. In discussion of Graham Greene, George Orwell and V.S Naipaul, Said remarks:

. . .whose representations seem at liberty to visit their fantasies and philanthropies upon a mind, deadened Third world. in this view, the out lying region of world have no life, history or culture to speak of, no independence or integrity worth representing without the west. And when there is something to be described it is, following Conrad, unutterably corrupt, degenerate, irredeemable. (*culture XXI*)

As said remarks, Orwell also represents the Burma as helpless and underdeveloped country without help of Europeans. In this manner, the various colonialists fantasize the East which is always endowed with their will to govern the

Eastern people. As I have mentioned Said's remarks earlier also, sometimes they introduce the utopian and ideal state of the orient but it is also back-up with the grand European mission of dehumanizing and demoralizing the Orientals.

Orwell has used very diplomatic tool in this novel also. Orwell endows the leading characters, Flory, with such characteristics. Flory, sometime, overstates the Burma than it is. He also expresses the Burmese people as more civilized, moral and cultured than the Europeans. Flory disagrees with Ellis in a context and said, " Oh no! They're so highly civilized; more civilized than we are, in my opinion. Beauty's all matters of taste. There are people on this country called the palaungs who admire long necks in women "(126-127). He means to glorify the native people and their belief. But at same time has a different attitude about the Burmese people as, " These peoples' whole outlook is so different from ours. One has to adjust oneself. Suppose, for instance, you were back in middle ages-"(129-130). Here, Flory describes Burmese people in different manner. He generalizes that natives are still adhering to the middle age. They are fully backwarded and uncivilized. In this relation, Said seems to be perfectly right when he says;

Moreover, the affirmative stereotypes attached to this discourse were instrumental in fashioning the 'East' as a utopian alternative to Europe. Countless scholars, writers, polemicists, spiritualist, travelers and wanderers invoked Orientals idealization of India. This idealization is also limited to some extent as the orientalist think it to be appropriate. *(Culture and Imperialism XXI)*

This clarifies that even the idealization and glorification of the orient is European generalization. The Europeans can't conceive of Indigenous society as able to govern itself independently without western guidance. Natives are perceived as below whites unable to govern themselves even they brought to challenge them. So long as this novel and the author are concerned, the issue is quite appropriate to Saidian concept. Orwell tries to create his position his in-between. He attempts to justify himself as an unbiased observer of the Imperialist's exploitation in Burma. But he fails; he slips and cannot adjust his position in in-between. Orwell reveals that at the inner core of his mind, there resides some sense of superiority of his race and the inferiority of the native people's race. The characters are just his instruments to prove his thought. In one context when narrator describes Floy's attitude and at the same time his opinion as well, he reveals the colonial mentality as:

Flory, when he spoke of the natives, spoke nearly always in favour of them. He was forever praising Burmese customs and the Burmese characters; he even went so far as to contrast them favorably with the English. It disquieted her. After all, natives were natives-interesting, no doubt, but finally only a subject people, and inferior people with black faces. His attitude was little too tolerant. (115)

Thus, this extract also justifies Said's concept that the natives are, whatever their positions be, only subject race. Their black faces are sufficient enough to prove them as inferior race and in contrary the only white skin of the colonizers is enough to superiorize them.

Elizabeth, Verall, westfield, Mr. and Mrs Lackstreens are also instrumental to represent or misrepresent the native people. Elizabeth has arrived to Burma from France but her mind is pre-occupied with the feelings and ideas about the native people as irrational, barbaric, inferior, animal like and so on. Thus, she shows her distaste to the natives she thinks herself to be inferior being with the native people and she adds:

Surely it was not right to be sitting among the black people like this, almost touching them, in the scent of their garlic and their sweat? Why was she not beck at the club with the other white people? Why had he brought her here, among this horde of natives, to watch, this hideous and savage spectacles? (102)

As Said claims, Elizabeth has also bias attitude to the native people. Said further says that in each cases the oriental is contained and represented by dominating frame woks. The oriental is irrational, deprived, child like, different, but European is rational, virtuous mature, normal. In certain colonial discourse of course the presence of native people was entirely erased from the land they occupy. Here, Elizabeth is filled up with doubt and fear that she will be highly criticized if the other Europeans know that she has been attending a cultural program of the natives. It does not mean that she is interested but she is fearful, she, herself, does not like to be in touch of with these untouchable creatures. In fact, their identity as human is erased. These following lines further add her distaste to the native people.

Elizabeth sat down in a very uncomfortable frame of mind. She was perfectly certain that it could not be right to accept these

people's hospitality. One of the Burmese girls had begun fanning Elizabeth. Elizabeth felt very foolish with the girl fanning the back of the neck and the Chinaman grinning in front of her. (127)

Elizabeth feels uneasy to stay in company with the native people. Her preoccupied concepts about the non-whites always trouble her. The blacks were represented as less human, less civilized, as child or savage or headless mass or, they were depicted as inferiors only because they were different from the whites. She seems so rude to the natives because she prefers Verall to Flory only because Verall hates Burmese as much as Elizabeth. He does not have any sympathy towards the Burmese people and their poverty. Verall is the perfect racist, he says to Flory, "You ought to know these beggars are not to be trusted" (187). This indicates his hatred to the natives. He shows indifferent nature not only to the natives but also to his fellow Europeans. He is so proud of being a militant and he hates the non-militant.

Elizabeth always represents the Burmese people as the others. Though she has just come from France living a downtrodden and very pathetic life, she marginalizes the Burmese people as untouchable and unbelievable. She breaks her relation with Flory only because she come to know the relationship between Flory and Ma Hla May, a native woman. Said's points of misrepresentation match here when he says that Westerners represent orient as the negative, underground image or impoverished other of Western rationality.

So, the Burmese people are always the others of the Westerners in the novel. No matter, either it is in the sense of civilization or sex or rationality or economy or

education or politics but the Burmese are stereotypic others of the Europeans. As Westfield dichotomizes these two races when he says to Elizabeth, "Remember lady, always remember, we are sahiblog and they are dirt! It sickened him, now, to have to listen to such trash" (190). Yes, this is how they mean to marginalize the Burmese race as their inferior other. The terms "Sahiblog" and 'dirt' contrast with each other and create the different identities. What they deliver, is the unchanging image of, in Said's words, "a subject race, dominated by a race that knows them and what is good of them better than they could possibly know themselves" (35).

*Burmese Days* also reflects the very unchanging images of the subject race, i.e. the Indian race. In Ellis's words the subject race shouldn't be allowed to have any revolutionary spirit or they should not have any patriotic feeling, "these bloody nationalists should be boiled in oil" (65). Said further points out that the whites always mask their faces by calling their mission are to democratize the occident as democratic and the orient as despotic. These lines in the novel also share the parallel attitude:

It is a stifling, stultifying world in which to live. It is a world in which every word and every thought is censored. In England it is hard even to imagine such an atmosphere. Every one is free in England; we sell our souls in public and buy them back in private among our friends. Free speech is unthinkable. All other kinds of freedom are permitted. You are free to be a drunkard, an idler, a coward, a backbiter, a fornicator; but you are not free to think for yourself. (65).

Here, Burma is presented as a country where no freedom and justice is. Everything is censored and in contrary England is presented as a free country. So by creating such images about the orient in their discourses, the Westerners just mean to support their mission. Said again puts for the similar words that the orientalist produce stereotypes about orientals and the orient, such as the heat and dust, the teeming market lace, the terrorist, the courtesan, the Asian despot, the child-like, native, the mystical East, the poverty and so on. Dr. Verswami's discussion with his European friend Flory also brings out the similar images of Burma as:

Behold there the degeneracy of the East, said the doctor, pointing to  
Mattu, who was doubling himself up like a caterpillar and  
uttering grateful whines. Look at the wretchedness of this country. We  
Orientals have no humor, as is well known to Europeans. How can  
you pretend, Mr. Flory, that you are not the natural superior of  
such creatures. (40)

Here, Verswami is an agent of the Colonizer to speak out Burma according to European taste. Orwell presents Dr. Verswami and U Po Kyin as the native helpers of the European colonizers. Verswami, though known as decent Burmese man, is not satisfied with his native identity so he desires for higher success in life. Verswami expresses his aspirations for the higher status as , "My friend, how gratifying to me if I should become a member of European club! What an honor, to be the associate of European gentlemen!" (148). This shows how Verswami longs for Sahibdom. And U Po Kyin calls him an agent himself, in his own words, "I am agent provocateur."

However, the native people show their hatred to the white colonizers for their imposed domination over them. Said says that as the colonizers always want to persist their domination, the natives also want to proclaim themselves independent from their so-called masters' domination. In this connection, these following lines concretize the inner hatred of the native people to the white colonizers:

Almost every day, when Westfield or Mr. Macgregor or even Maxwell  
went down the street, the High school boys, with their young,  
yellow faces-faces smooth as gold coins, full of that maddening  
contempt that sits so naturally on the Mongolian face-sneered at them as  
they went past, sometimes hooted after them with hyena-like  
laughter. The life of Anglo- Indian official is not all jam. In  
comfortless camps, in sweltering offices, in gloomy dakhungalow,  
smelling of dust and earth oil, they earn, perhaps the right to be a  
little disagreeable. (30)

This above extract really concretizes the fact that it was easy even to the colonizers to live in an alien and beastly world. They were not safe enough to walk alone in the street. There was a fear of being attacked and murdered by the natives. Said further opines in this sense that:

Sooner or later they will leave our country, just as many people  
throughout history left many countries. The railways, ships,  
factories and schools will be ours and we will speak any language  
without any sense of guilt or a sense of gratitude. Once again we shall

be as we were ordinary people -we will be free, free and free!  
(*Culture,212*)

This extract further clarifies the longings of the native people to free themselves from the existing domination of the colonizers. They want to own everything of their country by themselves. Thus, they hate the colonizers from the time of the colonizers' arrival in their country as the ruler. Even the small kids abhor the Europeans as their enemies. They grin full in Ellis's face as they passed him. They even use mischievous language.

As Said mentions that the white Europeans always misrepresent the non-whites as "the others", "outcasts", "slaves", "barbaric" "cowards", "Lackey" and so on, Orwell represents the natives and some of the non- natives in similar ways. There are two Eurassians who are son of white fathers and native mothers. Flory also has prejudiced and distinct attitudes toward them. He describes them with Elizabeth as:

They're Eurassians-sons of with fathers and native mother. . . there is nothing they can do except cadge, unless they chuck all pretension to being Europeans. And you cant expect the poor devils to do that. Their drop of white blood is the sole asset they've got.  
(118-119)

In this way they are taken as outcasts. They are represented as worthless and foibles. They pretend as if they are whites but they are sharply hated by the whites. Ellis hates them too much, since he is a perfect racist who discriminates the other races except whites as non-humans. The Europeans trademark the natives as criminal because of their physical structures as well. "...a person with a sloping forehead is a criminal

type" and similarly Elizabeth distastes the native women because of their structure and color as, " Aren't they too simply dreadful? So coarse-looking; like some kind of animal. Do you think anyone could think those women attractive?" (116). In this manner, the characters in almost every colonial discourse represent the everything non-western as inferior and manifests the colonial desire to control, to govern, to dominate the non-westerners.

Along with these issues, Orwell has presented Flory, the central white character, being corrupted, ruined, intoxicated and enchanted by the land of barbarians, i.e. Burma. As Said remarks that the orientalist always represented other's land as magical lands. Said further adds "they make romantic representation of the orient as exotic locale, land of barbarians, enchanting land . . . "(118) the Westerners believe that they themselves have to undergo various sufferings and problems while civilizing, educating and enhancing the barbarians. These following lines about Flory help to support the Saidian concept of representation as:

Flory had dodged the war because the East had corrupted him and he did not want to exchange his whisky, his servants and his Burmese girls for the boredom of the parade ground and the strain of cruel marches. . . Eight years of Eastern life, fever, loneliness and intermittent drinking, had set their mark on him (64).

Well, these lines reveal that Flory has been ruined, diminished and disastored by Eastern culture and native people. To escape oneself from the feeling of loneliness in being away from his homeland, England, Flory seems to be adhering to drinking and making love with Burmese girl. He has forgotten almost everything about England.

He kills himself at the end of the novel and the reason behind his death is also his Burmese mistress Ma Hla May. She demands money with him in an open place and Elizabeth also hears her and leaves her alone. Consequently he shoots himself dead. This further clarifies that the Burmese people are responsible for his death. He is supposed to have ruined himself in the course of civilizing the native people.

So far as the novel is taken as Semi-autobiographical novel of the author, Flory partially shares here the inner feelings of the author as well. Flory seems to be benevolent to the native people but he has some bias attitudes to the native people as well. Though Flory is the best friend of Dr. Verswami, he cannot propose his friend to recruit in the European club. As Said opines that Every European has bias attitude to the native, the white Europeans can never be friend to the native people. They just use and exploit the native people as their instruments. They represent the native people nothing more than commodities. Flory also uses Ma Hla May as he likes and he ignores her when he sees Elizabeth in Burma. When comes in contact with Elizabeth he feels, "She had brought back to him the air of England, dear England where thought is free and one is not condemned. . . "(56). Yes, with her he has felt that he gets back England in her companionship and he starts neglecting his Burmese mistress. He marginalizes his Burmese mistress as 'other'.

In this way, Orwell reconstructs the images and reality of Burma in his own western manner. He uses many stereotypes to represent the Burmese people as inferior creatures. And such discourses help to justify the mission of colonization. Said means to share the similar concept and says that these stereotypes confirm the necessity and desirability of colonial government, by endlessly confirming positional

superiority of the West over the positional inferiority of the East. Orwell expressed his misattitudes towards the Burmese people by doing misrepresentation of them. This representation is characterized by the love-hate relationship of the white Europeans and black Burmese people.

## Chapter Four

### Conclusion : Misrepresentation as the Mission of Colonization

Colonial discourses have represented everything non-western as inferior, barbaric, other, uncivilized and so on. Behind every representation there lies the hidden motive of colonization. Colonial discourses have always functioned as power to dominate the orient. A colonial discourse has not only shown how the West exercised institutionalized power over the others to rule them. It is an instrument to create hierarchy of race, color that assists the colonizers to centralize them and inferiorize others. It provides an approach to project Westerner's stereotype of the orient. It characterizes the hostility between the British Imperialists and the native subjects. Their sense of hatred, distrust and resentment to each other are the central focus of such discourse. Having realized such motives of colonial discourse Edward Said, a Postcolonial Critic developed the theory of Orientalism. In this theory, he has discussed such issues of representation, othering and so on. He has also discussed how the westerners dichotomize the non-westerner as other and the Westerner as the civilizer. It has also examined the ways in which colonial discourse operated as an instrument of power.

George Orwell in his novel *Burmese days* represents the Burmese people as the 'others', 'inferior', 'barber', 'sexually arrogant' and so on. The representation is characterized by love-hate relationship between colonizers and colonized. It deals with the complex relationship between colonizers and Burmese people. It has depicted the conflict between the white colonizers and the native people.

The native characters like Dr. Verswami, U Po Kyin, Ma Hla May etc are represented as inferior, barbaric, uncivilized and contrary the European characters like Flory, Macgregor, Maxwell, Westfield, Ellis, Verall, Elizabeth, Lackstreens are characterized as the 'superior', 'educated', 'civilized', 'active' and so on. No matter what is the position of Burmese people, after all the natives are natives. U Po Kyin and Verswami are the natives of higher standards but the way Europeans treat them is not different from the way they treat native servants. Kyin and Verswami are presented as servile to the colonizers as the butlers are.

Flory, the protagonist, seems to be sympathetic, loving and unbiased to the native people; however, he also has the feeling of hatred and distrust to the native people. He prefers Elizabeth to Ma Hla May, he does not want to be insulted for the sake of his native friend Verswami. Similarly, he is also shown to be corrupted and spoilt by Burma and its native people. Ellis and other white characters also share the similar prejudiced attitude to the native people. They assume themselves as superior, powerful and born rulers. The native people share the similar attitude to the colonizers. They think the colonizers are exploiting them and their resources and they want the colonizer to go away from their land. Orwell in some context, has presented the white Europeans as corrupt, exploiter and thief but he has shown the colonial mentality as well. Even geographically, Burma is represented as an exotic, terrific, barbaric and mysterious land.

In this way, Orwell does misrepresentation of the Burmese people as others. This study explores the very misrepresentation of the native people in the novel *Burmese Days*.

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