THE CREATIVE WRITER IN POLITICS: GEORGE ORWELL'S BURMESE DAYS -
A STUDY OF IMPERIALISM AT THE LOCAL LEVEL

by

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ABSTRACT

This study examines George Orwell's contribution to our understanding of imperialism and to political writing in general. The basic assumptions of the study are that for a creative writer plot performs essentially the same function as model-building does for the political scientist and the role of the imagination is paramount both in the drawing of a novelist's picture of environment and in a social scientist's selection of variables.

To show how a creative writer can offer the student of politics an unusual perspective of various systems of government (in this case, imperialism), the study draws upon concrete examples from Orwell's novel *Burmese Days* and other of his related writings to illustrate a number of political science's theoretical concepts.

The study is also concerned with showing how Orwell was a pace-setter, as it were, in rejecting jargon as a means of expression and instead pressing vigorously, particularly in his description of imperialism in *Burmese Days*, for a straightforward yet imaginative prose in describing political as well as other events. The study assumes that Orwell's plea is echoed in a succeeding generation by others such as Landau and asserts that *Burmese Days* has either rendered many of imperialism's more harmful clichés impotent or has at least exposed them to closer scrutiny.

At the same time, despite Orwell's often vehement denunciation of imperialism, it is assumed that there is implicit in the dialogue of some of his characters a recognition that while the system of uninvited foreigners exploiting and governing another people's country may be morally repugnant, in the light of an all-embracing and privacy-invading
industrialism. British imperialism may have been the least offensive kind of such exploitation.

The study argues that our understanding of the motivations for group behaviour may, in some cases such as imperialism, be best pursued through more intensive studies of individuals within the group rather than by investing all of our attention in observing the collective action of the group.

The study has evolved not from the notion that a creative writer can ever replace the perhaps more disciplined approach of the social sciences in understanding our world, but that he can significantly aid the academic world in illustrating its theoretical concepts. Finally, it is the overriding conclusion of this study that the moderately experimental nature of its juxtaposition of social science theory and fiction is mutually beneficial to both the social scientist and the student of literature in offering them new perspectives in their respective fields of interest.
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It is only when you meet someone of a different culture from yourself that you begin to realize what your own beliefs really are.

--George Orwell.
INTRODUCTION

George Orwell (1903-50) has been called the "conscience of his generation" of writers, a title which I feel sure he would have typically dismissed, not so much from his sense of modesty but quite simply because there were so many other consciences around at that time (the mid-thirties).\(^1\) Even so, although the title and others like it may have sprung to mind from a belated generosity on the part of his admirers and critics alike it does represent, I think, a widespread belief that Orwell, even in his earlier works, which were not particularly well-received, somehow stood above his contemporaries who, like himself, voiced their opposition against what they believed were the injustices of their time.

In retrospect it does not appear that it was his prose style which made him stand out from other social critics. Indeed many, it seemed, shared critic Q.D. Leavis' conclusion that from an examination of his novels during the thirties "Mr. Orwell must have wasted a lot of energy trying to be a novelist," and "I think I must have read three or four novels by him and the only impression those dreary books left on me was that nature didn't intend him to be a novelist."\(^2\) What did make Orwell gradually stand out, I believe, was an early decision to settle, not without some nagging reservations (such as later referring to himself somewhat derisively as "a sort of pamphleteer"),\(^3\) that basic tension between subjective and objective reporting which afflicts most writers. The conflict was largely resolved in favour of a strongly perceived social responsibility. Orwell's growing disdain for writers who did not share this broad, albeit ill-defined, sense of responsibility was expressed in the *New English Weekly* in 1936 where he wrote:
On the last occasion when *Punch* produced a genuinely funny joke, which was only six or seven years ago, it was a picture of an intolerable youth telling his aunt that when he came down from the University he intended to 'write.' 'And what are you going to write about, dear?' his aunt enquires. 'My dear aunt,' the youth replies crushingly, 'one doesn't write *about* anything, one just writes.'"

Whether or not he was entirely correct in his analysis, Orwell goes on to say,

This was a perfectly justified criticism of current literary cant. At that time, even more than now, art for art's sake was going strong . . . 'art has nothing to do with morality' was the favourite slogan . . . To admit that you liked or disliked a book because of its moral or religious tendency, even to admit noticing that it *had* a tendency, was too vulgar for words.4

That Orwell believed his time was not sufficiently civilized for writers to conscientiously afford themselves the luxury of "art for art's sake" is evidenced in his autobiographical piece *Why I Write* (1946) in which he said, "In a peaceful age I might have written ornate or merely descriptive books, and might have remained almost unaware of my political loyalties."5 In the same article he wrote that the "starting point" of his writing was "always a feeling of partisanship, a sense of injustice" and while confessing that he was incapable of writing "even a long magazine article, if it were not also an aesthetic experience,"6 he lists earlier among the "four great motives for writing" that of "Political purpose - using the word 'political' in the widest possible sense," describing this purpose as a "desire to push the world in a certain direction, to alter other people's idea of the kind of society that they should strive after" and adds that "the opinion that art should have nothing to do with politics is itself a political attitude."7 Finally he ends *Why I Write* with the conviction that "looking back through my work, I see that it is invariably where I lacked a political purpose that I wrote lifeless
books and was betrayed into purple passages, sentences without meaning, decorative adjectives and humbug generally."^8

Still, though Orwell's voice may have been raised against "art for art's sake," he was of course not the first to do so nor to give his pen over to writing from a sense of injustice "because there is some lie that I want to expose, some fact to which I want to draw attention."^9

For, as Raymond Williams suggests after reading Orwell's essay, Writers and Leviathan, which deals with the all-pervasive influence of contemporary politics on literature, "One might never remember the English novelists from Dickens and Elizabeth Gaskell to George Eliot and Hardy" who were very much "aware of 'the enormous injustice and misery of the world' and who in different ways made literature from just this experience."^10

Even remembering such writers, however, the question remains: why is Orwell still regarded as not only probably the most important political writer (in terms of fiction) of his own time but as one of the "finest prose writers of any English age"?^11

The major reason for his success, I think (and this is what I hope to show in the following pages), is that Orwell, largely through his vigorous rejection of jargon, his outstanding honesty in criticizing his own political beliefs as well as others', and perhaps above all by his meticulous choice of fresh metaphor, developed an extraordinary ability to reduce the big political problems of his day, and thus perhaps of most days, down to the concrete events and to interpret them in terms of personal (often intensely personal) everyday experience and so could simplify complex issues without making them appear simplistic.

In these ways he has, I believe, not only contributed significantly to the common currency of despair (e.g., "Big Brother," "Newspeak,"
"Doublethink") but has enabled us to see politics as a man-to-man, rather than a conceptual, relationship so that we may diagnose, through the help of more vivid imagery, some of the more general problems of politics.

Furthermore, while unashamedly stating his bias yet being determined to retain an unbiased eye, he began, I think (by acting out his belief that "the more one is conscious of one's political bias, the more chance one has of acting politically without sacrificing one's aesthetic and intellectual integrity"), to make it acceptable, even respectable perhaps, to approach the study of politics with moral conviction rather than with amoral intellectuality. He said in effect that a man who studies politics can, among other things, be angry yet truthful and even useful in putting things right or at least in making them better than they are.

In support of the above, it is my intention to show how, as a creative writer, George Orwell has contributed to our knowledge of imperialism and certain related aspects and for this purpose I will be primarily considering his second novel, *Burmese Days*, first published in 1934 after (as Eric Blair) he had left the Indian Imperial Police (serving in Burma) in 1928 and in 1933 had begun using the name of George Orwell. It will of course be necessary to look at some of his other works as well, seeing how his ideas progressed, reflecting what we might properly call his political maturation. With this in mind I have not assumed that the reader is especially familiar with Orwell's works.

*Burmese Days* in some ways is atypical of the main body of his work insofar as it relies heavily on what might reasonably be called the "naturalistic" metaphor rather than the "mechanistic" metaphor which was often present in his later novels such as *The Road to Wigan Pier* (which
contains the first broad statement regarding Orwell's "basic political position")\(^{14}\) and of course *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where the imagery of the machine is savagely and depressingly dominant. Having said this, however, does not interfere with our viewing *Burmese Days* as a highly political novel which, while reflecting a fundamental moralist position in regard to imperialism, also reflects the latter as an intensely personal experience which, as I hope to show, permeates not only the nine-to-five life of a colonial bureaucrat but the twenty-four-hour-a-day, seven-day-a-week existence of all those who come in contact with it. If *The Road to Wigan Pier* is a statement of Orwell's "basic political position" then *Burmese Days* is, I believe, a statement of Orwell's basic political position on imperialism and most of what he thought was wrong, and sometimes right, with it.

After his imperialist experiences Orwell reports how his "thoughts turned toward the English working class"\(^{15}\) and he became obsessed with what he considered almost a social duty to become intimately aware of class differences before tackling larger problems of social reform.\(^{16}\) He wrote of how he wanted to "submerge myself, to get right down among the oppressed"\(^{17}\) in order to "expiate" the "immense weight of guilt"\(^{18}\) he had accumulated during his time as an Imperial Police Officer in Burma, and he noted,

> It was the first time that I had ever been really aware of the working class, and to begin with it was only because they supplied an analogy. They were the symbolic victims of injustice, playing the same part in England as the Burmese played in Burma.\(^{19}\)

Convinced that imperialism was the natural extension and propagator of class differences and all the social evils which emanated from these differences,\(^{20}\) Orwell continued to strip the traditional imagery associated
with imperialist ventures (e.g. "The White Man's Burden") until we finally see imperialism in its highest and ugliest form in the faceless dictatorship of Big Brother and the "super-states" of Eurasia, Eastasia and Oceania in *Nineteen Eighty-Four* where whole populations are reduced to slavery and where wars over "disputed territories" make for a "bottomless reserve of cheap labour."²¹

The theme of imperialism as an "unjustifiable tyranny,"²² a master-slave, rich-poor relationship (see page 16) in which not only do unwanted foreigners practice "direct or indirect exploitation of the coloured peoples"²³ but also practice it upon the proletariat of their own race threads its way through all of Orwell's work, manifesting itself as being either colonial (*Burmese Days*), indigenous (*The Road to Wigan Pier*) or global (*Nineteen Eighty-Four*) in nature. And insofar as *Burmese Days* was where he first confronted the problem of imperialism head on in true fictional form (*Down and Out in Paris and London* was much more a documentary than a commentary though it is sometimes said to be his first novel), it seems to me appropriate to begin any study of his contributions to our understanding of politics from that point in time.

Before entering into a discussion of *Burmese Days* I think it appropriate to make some general remarks regarding the authenticity of a fiction writer's work as compared with that of a political scientist. The overriding reason, it seems, that the study of so-called fictional works (the novel, for example) is pursued outside the mainstreams of political science is very simply that a creative writer's work is seen largely as one of imagination and that even if the author has bothered to involve himself in some measure of empirical research it is still his imagination which is viewed as the most unreliable factor and inevitable
variable of his work.

The dominant role of imagination in a creative writer's work, such as Orwell's *Burmese Days*, may indeed be cause for some skepticism on the part of academics but as Spegele suggests in *Fiction and Political Theory*:

Both scientist and novelist share the advantage and disadvantage of model-building: their models both illuminate and distort reality. And, just as in science models are rejected because they appear clumsy, far-fetched or improbable, so, too, some novels are regarded as didactic (and therefore unreliable) or as embodying implausible descriptions of characters and situations. Spegele goes on to say, however, that while "scientific hypotheses are rejected on the basis of falsifying evidence . . . novelists' models can only be rejected because we are convinced they are inauthentic." Insofar as my intention in this thesis is to argue that George Orwell's work, mainly the didactic novel *Burmese Days*, can contribute to but not replace the work of the political scientist, it seems unnecessary to belabour the above points beyond saying that it does seem important at the outset to offer some information regarding George Orwell's familiarity with his material.

Eric Blair (Orwell's original name) was born in 1903 at Motihari in India where his father worked in the Opium Department of the Indian Civil Service. At one time his paternal grandfather served in the Indian Army while his maternal grandfather had been both a teak merchant and rice grower in Burma. When he was eight Blair went to England and was educated there, winning a scholarship to Eton which he left in 1922 to join the Indian Imperial Police at Rangoon. He served as a police officer in Burma until 1927 when he resigned, greatly disillusioned by his first-hand experience of imperialism. It should be noted that while
Orwell's familiarity with his material is self-evident (and this is not meant to suggest that first-hand experience is necessarily superior to astute observation from afar) and so suggests a measure of authenticity in his work, the novel is at times nevertheless didactic and reflects the fact that Orwell plainly "hated the imperialism I was serving with a bitterness which I probably cannot make clear." The more vehement anti-imperialist passages are tempered, however, by a tone of commiseration as when he writes:

He had no tie with Europe now, except the tie of books. For he had realized that merely to go back to England was no remedy for loneliness; he had grasped the special nature of the hell that is reserved for Anglo-Indians. Ah, those poor prosing old wrecks in Bath and Cheltenham! Those tomb-like boarding-houses with Anglo-Indians littered about in all stages of decomposition, all talking and talking about what happened in Boggleywalah in '88! Poor devils, they know what it means to have left one's heart in an alien and hated country.

And again while Flory, our anti-hero, "had come so to hate them [the English of the East, the sahiblog] from living in their society, that he was quite incapable of being fair to them" Orwell nevertheless notes that

after all, the poor devils are no worse than anybody else. They lead unenviable lives; it is a poor bargain to spend thirty years, ill-paid, in an alien country, and then come home with a wrecked liver and a pine-apple backside from sitting in cane chairs, to settle down as the bore of some second-rate Club.

Finally, I hope to make the point that if most of Orwell's characters in Burmese Days appear to be stereotypes of rather extreme imperialist views this is not so much a negative measure of Orwell's imaginative powers as, I would argue, an essentially accurate reflection of the system of imperialism and how it forces people (particularly the exploiters) to conform to a bureaucratically imposed set of norms and the exploited to seek refuge in relationships such as those which
contemporary political scientists have referred to as patron-client ties.

The main characters in the story are Flory, a young timber merchant of about thirty-five whose youth seems to have been sapped by the trials of living in

Kyauktada, a small and fairly typical Upper Burma town, that had not changed greatly between the days of Marco Polo and 1910, and might have slept in the Middle Ages for a century more if it had not proved a convenient spot for a railway terminus. In 1910 the Government made it the headquarters of a district and seat of Progress - interpretable as a block of law courts ... a hospital, a school and one of those huge, durable jails which the English have built everywhere between Gibraltar and Hong Kong.30

In addition to Flory the only other Europeans in the population of four thousand-odd are the heavy-set, middle-aged Macgregor, Deputy Commissioner of Kyauktada district; Mr. Lackersteen, a middle-aged, alcoholic manager of a timber firm; his wife, whose complaints against the natives are as frequent as Macgregor's anecdotes; Westfield, the soldierly and moustachioed District Superintendent of Police; Maxwell, the young Forest Ranger with a blood lust; and Ellis, another timber merchant whose dialogue is nearly always offensive and whose vehemence against the natives is never ending. Later in the novel we see the arrival of the Lackersteens' niece, Elizabeth, and Verral, an arrogant young cavalry officer.

The plot revolves about a native magistrate's (U Po Kyin) attempt to gain favour in the eyes of his British superiors and to thereby make himself eligible for membership in the hitherto all-white Kyauktada Club. In order to do this, however, U Po Kyin must first rid himself of an unwitting competitor, Dr. Veraswami, an Indian doctor and good friend of John Flory, the timber merchant. U Po Kyin's scheming is often in-
spired by a clumsy kind of inventiveness such as using an ex-mistress of Flory's to publicly disgrace him before the eyes of Elizabeth Lackersteen whom Flory falls in love with and plans to marry. Flory's plans of a reinvigorated life with Elizabeth, however, are dashed, as are Dr. Veraswami's hopes of joining the Club, by U Po Kyin's intrigue.

Superficially this is the structure of the story but of course many other factors are involved such as the oppressive tropical climate, an element which some political scientists would recognize as part of a "geographic approach to politics," that is insofar as "the facts of geography are clearly among those that influence many kinds of political decisions." Also Flory's love-hate feelings about Burma in general and his special hatred of imperialism and what it does to people imprisoned by it (both rulers and ruled) play their part in causing the sensitive man to lose the battle and, in the final and consummate alienation from his original environment, to commit suicide.

USE OF IMAGERY

It would be an unwarranted assumption to suggest that Orwell's use of imagery in _Burmese Days_ reflects the care with which he approached its later use (and displayed his obvious maturation as a writer), say in _Nineteen Eighty-Four_, but I have assumed that his imagery is important to our understanding of imperialism as gained through his first novel for while greater care with use of metaphor and the like may have come with age it would, I think, be equally erroneous to assume that he cared little or nothing for it when he wrote his first novel.

In either case, however, one should not underrate Orwell's overall contribution not only to political writing (and here I include the
writings of political science as well as political reporting) but to the language in general, through the care he showed in selecting imagery which would most accurately reflect his conceptions of politics. In *Burmese Days*, for example, it is the constancy of the naturalistic metaphor which is important to my mind and not so much whether the individual reader agrees or disagrees with Orwell's interpretation of imperialism and it is this constancy which, insofar as it reflects his refusal to mix metaphors, offers an alternative to the haphazard or unwitting kind of acceptance of current politically orientated metaphors which Martin Landau discusses in his recent work, *Political Theory and Political Science*. Warning us of the temptation to mix metaphors and our willingness to transport images from one discipline into another without properly examining their applicability Landau notes how a decisive if gradual change from the Newtonian, or "mechanistic," image of the universe to the more "organic" or naturalistic image of the Darwinian concept of nature resulted in the infusion of new biologically-based metaphors into the language of political science and how this infusion gave way to new models which, because "a change in image is a change in method . . . profoundly affect the 'received axioms' of the past."32

In support of his view Landau cites Wilson's "ringing protest" that

government is not a machine, it is a living thing. It falls not under the theory of the universe, but under the theory of organic life. It is accountable to Darwin, not to Newton. It is modified by its environment, necessitated by its tasks, shaped to its functions by the sheer pressure of life.33

In *Burmese Days* Orwell, in his use of the naturalistic rather than the mechanistic image in describing imperialism demonstrates, I think, not only a belief in the importance of environment amid the change from the
Newtonian to Darwinian approach in all sciences but what Van Dyke in particular sees as a peculiarly Marxist historical approach wherein history is viewed as a "being with life processes that are regulated by laws beyond human control." 34

Landau also argues how together with the misapplication of the mechanistic metaphor and Newton's methods of reasoning in the nineteenth century the study of politics was largely "mechanistic in form, and moral in character" 35 wherein the arguments of experience were considered subordinate to the arguments of logic. But he says, "The Darwinian metaphor overthrew all of this," and under its influence there emerged a "new empirical temper" together with a pragmatic and evolutionary approach, an approach which in *Burmese Days* concludes with the survival of the fittest, least sensitive participants, what we would now call an example of "Social Darwinism." "The fact became the thing;" Landau writes, "this was the goal of the new pragmatist and of the generation that followed." 36 One of the following generation was George Orwell whose passion for empirical research and reflections upon the activities of his own life seemed more strongly than those of most to reflect a growing tendency to trust experience before logic. It is precisely for this reason I think that Orwell's *The Road to Wigan Pier* has been heralded by some not only as a "masterpiece" but as a basic document in the intellectual history of this century. 37 And it was the experience of seeing in his *Burmese Days* "a dull, decent people, cherishing and fortifying their dullness behind a quarter of a million bayonets" 38 and hearing such first-hand remarks as "Of course we've no right in this blasted country at all. Only now we're here, for God's sake let's stay here" which finally led him to assert that "the truth is no modern
man, in his heart of hearts, believes that it is right to invade a foreign country and hold the population down by force."\textsuperscript{39}

From the very beginning of the book Orwell uses naturalistic metaphors and imagery to create the atmosphere of evolutionary growth - of struggle. We are told later that this jungle where "creepers were huge, like serpents" could be "so dense ... that one's eyes were oppressed by it,"\textsuperscript{40} and are almost constantly made aware that climate and vegetation play an important part not only in changing and moulding a man physically (more rapidly than, say, in England) but in forming his outlook, his political beliefs and, finally, his behaviour.

As Flory walked down to the elites' (the whites') club the heat throbbed down on one's head with a steady, rhythmic thumping like blows from an enormous bolster ... In the borders beside the path swaths of English flowers - phlox and larkspur, hollyhock and petunia - not yet slain by the sun, rioted in vast size and richness. The petunias were huge, like trees almost. There was no lawn, but instead a shrubbery of native trees and bushes - gold mohur trees like vast umbrellas of blood-red bloom, frangipanis with creamy, stalkless flowers, purple bougainvillea, scarlet hibiscus and the pink Chinese rose, bilious-green crotons, feathery fronds of tamarind. The clash of colours hurt one's eyes in the glare.\textsuperscript{41}

Amid this luxuriant growth, this undisciplined riot of colour, this disorder, which reflects nature's over-indulgence, there occurs a concomitant sapping of a man's will, a lack of discipline one might say which is at least partially reflected, it seems, in Flory's increasing degeneracy, his gin-swilling before breakfast, his refusal to shave and the gradual erosion of his integrity, partly measured by his growing reluctance to speak "seriously on any subject whatever."\textsuperscript{42} His behaviour constitutes a kind of personal revolt against order, an order so often mirrored in the artificially created and highly ordered polity; a revolt which can find no other way of expressing itself beneath
the omnipresent stare of the fellow imperialists than by a slovenliness which at once vulgarly asserts both the remnants of individualism and a desire to be at one with the immediate environment, an environment which is characterized by the growth of an unrestrained jungle.

The naturalist image continues to assert its presence and even after redeeming his earlier cowardice of failing to support Rangoon's directive that a native member (in this case his friend, Dr. Veraswami) be admitted to the Club Flory frantically asks Elizabeth just before his suicide, "Do try and understand. Haven't I told you something of the life we live here? The sort of horrible death-in-life! The decay, the loneliness, the self-pity?" (Italics mine.)

The important point here is that Orwell presents his story in terms of a naturalistic image, without necessarily equating imperialism with some vast plant, a jungle perhaps, which relentlessly strangles all who stand in its onward thrust for territory (though it should be noted that at times Orwell's use of metaphor in drawing analogies, say between the jungle and imperialism, is so persistent in *Burmese Days* that what Landau calls the "as if" proposition does indeed seem to have become the "'it is' statement of supposed fact," [see p. 22] particularly when he suggests ways in which an individual's behaviour may be actually caused by the jungle environment. [See above, pp. 10-14]. In short, the jungle-orientated metaphors used to describe the overall structure of imperialism cease to be models on the individual level, as in Flory's case, and instead actually become an explanation of, rather than a way of conceptualizing, the individual imperialist's behaviour.) Only rarely does he use a mechanistic metaphor and refer to imperialism as represented by the British Empire as "the machine" or as a "device."
and even then Flory's question: "Well, doctor, and how are things? How's the British Empire? Sick of the palsy as usual?" and Veraswami's reply that the patient is suffering from "septicaemia, peritonitis and paralysis of the ganglia" bely the mechanistic form. Despite the humourous undercurrent of such conversation Flory is very serious when he once more reverts to the naturalistic image and bitterly refers to "Pox Brittanica" which he sees as a pax only for "the money-lender and the lawyer." With these words in mind I think it worthwhile to digress somewhat from our considerations of the use of imagery in the novel and to make some general remarks concerning what Orwell saw as the constant and unchanging relationship between the term "imperialism" and the practice of outright economic exploitation.

IMPERIALISM AND EXPLOITATION

In Marxist terms it would be fair, I think, to say that Orwell saw imperialism as a world condition in which the "government and the state . . . were class instruments, employed to protect and promote the interests of those in control - under capitalism, the bourgeoisie . . . exploiting others economically and oppressing them politically" by developing "political ideologies and religious and moral principles as rationalizations and justifications of its class interests." Indeed long before Orwell reached Burma it certainly did seem that some distortion of original motives had taken place in the Englishman's rationale for colonization. It was Clive who, under no illusion that trade constituted the only reason for the British presence, wrote to the directors of the East India Company ten years after Plassey that "to do any act by an exertion of the English power which can be equally
done by the nabob, would be throwing off the mask and declaring the
Company soubah [governor] of the province. (Italics mine.) Thus
there was, even in a man who saw trade as England's paramount concern
in India, a dual realization that political power, overt or otherwise,
was essential to the successful long-range interests of British trade
and that the maintenance of such power had best proceed under guise.
Rightly or wrongly Orwell recognized the profit motive as the major
reason, if not the sole one, for the white man's exploitation of the
East and through Flory and his naturalistic imagery he both describes
and gives vent to the oversimplified, post-Boer War, Hobsonian view
that at root imperialism was nothing more than "the endeavour of the
great controllers of industry to broaden the channel for the flow of
their surplus wealth." Also, like Hobson, Orwell saw imperialism as
largely a parasitic venture of the upper classes undertaken to create
jobs for their sons as well as to maintain and increase their power at
home and has Flory describe the imperialists as constituting "a kind
of up-to-date, hygienic, self-satisfied louse." And, presaging his
sustained and spirited attack upon one of the most pervasive metaphors
of his time, Orwell decried what he believed to be the guise of the
"slimy white man's burden humbug" (italics mine) which, he suggests,
perpetuates "the lie that we're here to uplift our poor black brothers
instead of to rob them" and "corrupts us in ways you can't imagine"
which in turn leads to "an everlasting sense of being a sneak and a
liar that torments us and drives us to justify ourselves night and day."
He concludes that the imperialists' awareness of this condition is "at
the bottom of half our beastliness to the natives."

Orwell proceeds, later in the book, to give us examples of how
the moral hypocrisy of imperialism (though he did believe that there was a time when British imperialism "was not entirely despicable") corrupts Flory and has him sign a notice at the Club postponing discussion of the possibility of electing a native (his friend, Veraswami) to the Club. Flory is ashamed of the latter action but nevertheless at the time he succumbs to the temptation of what he earlier describes as the "kind of spurious good fellowship between the English and this country ... hanging together, we call it. It's a political necessity" and adds, "Of course drink is what keeps the machine going." It is significant, I think, that Orwell's reversion to the mechanistic image of government as a machine comes at the bitter moments of alienation when, as in his essay, *Shooting an Elephant*, he discovers "the hollowness and futility of the white man's dominion in the East." It is at such times, when Orwell sees the imperialist merely as an "absurd puppet," that the mechanistic image is evoked and it is the political puppet which listens to Veraswami say to him, "If truly you disapporve of the British Empire, you would not be talking of it privately here. You would be proclaiming from the housetops. I know your character, Mr. Flory" and it is the political puppet again who answers,

> Sorry, doctor ... I haven't the guts. I "counsel ignoble ease" ... It's safer. You've got to be a pukka sahib or die, in this country. In fifteen years I've never talked honestly to anyone except you. My talks here are a safety-valve, a little Black Mass on the sly.\(^59\)

It is Flory's acute awareness of his own guilt (which I will discuss later) and the hypocrisy of the whole community in general which lead him to spend as much time among the natives as he can and to confess to Elizabeth during their visit to the bazaar that "I try - just sometimes, when I have the pluck - not to be a pukka sahib."\(^60\) And it
is during this visit also that he counters Elizabeth's charge that "These people must be absolute savages" by saying, "Oh no! They're highly civilized; more civilized than we are, in my opinion,"\(^6\) and comments that the Chinese, in particular, are "very democratic in their ideas. It's best to treat them more or less as equals."\(^62\) These are the kinds of comments which to my mind suggest that unlike many other imperialists at that time he saw no direct or even indirect correlation between Christianity and civilization in much the same way as he remained unconvinced, again unlike many other imperialists, that "modern-progress" and "civilization" were interdependent.\(^63\) Instead he pined for some golden utopia in the time of Thibaw when he imagines that a more primitive, uncommercial and therefore morally superior society was in existence. Such "anti-imperialist" attitudes of Flory mirror Orwell's conviction (the theme of *Keep the Aspidistra Flying*) and that of many others, I would suggest, that success in one's career, which is inevitably, if wrongly, measured by the world at large in material terms, is always concomitant with commercial exploitation.\(^64\) And indeed it seems that this attitude might go part way at least in explaining how, in the language of the Left particularly, "imperialism" and "exploitation" have become synonymous. (See below, p. 55.)

This does not mean that in *Burmese Days* Orwell attacks only those traditional, often missionary-inspired, idioms and metaphors which had often been used to justify imperialism as a moral responsibility of the white man, for he also ridicules, through frequent exposure, those clichés which were almost purely derived from an amoral and non-religious belief in the white man's all-round physical and mental superiority in the natural order of things (Social Darwinism). Examples of this abound
throughout the novel as when Mrs. Lackersteen irritably proclaims,

Really I think the laziness of these servants is getting too shocking. We seem to have no authority over the natives nowadays, with all these dreadful Reforms, and the insolence they learn from the newspapers. In some ways they are getting almost as bad as the lower classes at home, (also see below, p. 59).

or when Ellis vehemently asserts, "The only possible policy is to treat 'em like the dirt they are . . . We are the masters." Elizabeth displays her sense of superiority when upon Flory's pointing out to her that statistically it is really more natural to have a brown skin than a white one she concludes, "You do have some funny ideas."

In any event it is important to note that Orwell was one of the first to warn not only the political scientist as Landau does but political writers at large that "once you have the habit" (italics mine) of using phrases invented by someone else (like "white man's burden!") without examining the appropriateness of the image then "if thought corrupts language, language can also corrupt thought" because "a bad usage can spread by tradition and imitation, even among people who should and do know better." And

when you think of something abstract [such as imperialism] you are more inclined to use words from the start, and unless you make a conscious effort to prevent it, the existing dialect will come rushing in and do the job for you, at the expense of blurring or even changing your meaning.

I think one must acknowledge, however, that in constantly reflecting the Hobsonian belief that economic imperialism was synonymous with imperialism Orwell no doubt succumbed in part at least to that "habit" which he warned us about, one which, as Landau warns, "makes us think the likeness obvious." And it is true that the likeness in this instance between economic imperialism and imperialism tended to exclude the possibility of sincerity amongst those who did espouse what was
claimed to be the moral obligation of the white man's burden.  

Nevertheless, despite the excessive scorn which the "white man's burden" now receives, the fact that nowadays the phrase can no longer be used to camouflage the profit motive, however small or large a part it played, is due very much to those like Orwell who were prepared to attack what they saw as the habitual invocation of the metaphor.

With this in mind one could argue that Orwell's contribution to English prose in general took the form of an unrelenting attack on the phrases of pretence, particularly in the sphere of politics where he believed such phrases were used largely in the "defence of the indefensible" which for him included the "continuance of British rule in India, the Stalinist purges and deportations and the dropping of the atom bombs on Japan." Orwell argued that such actions could "be defended, but only by arguments which are too brutal for most people to face . . . thus political language has to consist largely of euphemism, question-begging and sheer cloudy vagueness," a vagueness which together with "sheer incompetence is the most marked characteristic of modern English prose, and especially of any kind of political writing." By way of example, he noted in 1946 how "defenceless villages are bombarded from the air, the inhabitants driven out into the countryside, the cattle machine-gunned, the huts set on fire with incendiary bullets: this is called pacification." Aware of a propensity to violate his own rules of writing Orwell was to view "the huge dump of worn-out" and "incompatible metaphors" or what Landau later called the "confusion of different models" with alarm, realizing that they could lead to what Landau calls "contradictory results." And he observed that such a phrase as "the hammer and the anvil" is "now always used with the implication that the
anvil gets the worst of it" while noting that "in real life it is always the anvil that breaks the hammer, never the other way about." Noting his eagerness to make the point one can be excused for thinking that Orwell's essay on *Politics and the English Language* and his dialogue in *Burmese Days* are somewhat tendentious, yet when one sees, for example, in Merton's *Social Theory and Social Structure* (despite the otherwise lucid prose) how the hitherto impersonal image of the "machine" has been used so that the author can confidently write,

> In our prevailing impersonal society, the machine, [political machine] through its local agents, fulfills the important social function of humanizing and personalizing all manner of assistance to those in need,

one realizes, I think, that Orwell's concern bears repeating. The above, however, is not so much a criticism of any one individual, in this case Merton, as a commentary upon what seems to be the general willingness or tendency of social scientists, among others, to condone the continued use and acceptance of inappropriate metaphors.

Having said this it is important to understand that while Orwell in his novels as elsewhere underscored his attack on gibberish (particularly in *Politics and the English Language*) by writing straightforward English his attack, I think, should not be taken as one upon what is commonly referred to as the "jargon" of the social sciences. In truth, of course, the meaning of jargon is "gibberish or meaningless words and phrases" but it is precisely through the habit of using the word "jargon" so often when we mean "terminology" that it is possible to misconstrue Orwell's attack as one against "terminology." The lesson he teaches us is that the use of terminology should always be a highly conscious act, particularly when, as Landau points out, so much terminology
is imported wholesale from one discipline to another. Thus hopefully habit will not result in a blurring of precision in analogy allowing what Landau refers to as the "'as if' proposition" becoming an "'it is' statement of supposed fact."81 (See above, p. 14.) The previous reference to the hammer and anvil is a case in point where, through sheer habit, the analogy has not only been blurred but quite simply turned on its head. A more recent example of how word meanings can suffer over time appears in the January, 1972 issue of Comparative Politics where, in their article Political Clientelism and Development: A Preliminary Analysis, Lemarchand and Legg, noting an obvious contradiction in terms, write, "Indeed, if one is to subscribe to the argument advanced by Fallers and Lombard, feudal relationships can only obtain among equals (i.e., among nobles)." In writing Burmese Days Orwell, well aware as we shall see of the dangers of living with the lies of unconscious propaganda or, if you like, the slogans of imperialism, warned of a time to come when "all the gramophones would be playing the same tune."82 (See p. 40, n. 158.) This warning of course became the central thrust of his later and better known works but it is in Burmese Days, I think, that he first raises fears that through our surrender to inverted and distorted analogy we may learn to tolerate the most flagrant and illegitimate imposition of power.

It is necessary to bear the above implications of Orwell's attack on "jargon" in mind as we examine how Burmese Days affords a "common laboratory," as it were, for all specialists in the social sciences to examine, a laboratory which is described in forthright language and so not one in which (for example, as Lemarchand and Legg point out) "the field of clientage relations [U Po Kyin and his co-conspirators]
has tended to become the exclusive preserve of sociologists and anthropologists" nor in which "professional boundaries continue to raise major obstacles in the way of meaningful interdisciplinary dialogue." Again this approach of studying a novel in the belief that events described by the author reflect common political phenomena and serve as a laboratory in which theoretical concepts can be examined and perhaps evaluated is not an attempt to denigrate professional terminology but, being based on the author's own experience and observation, the novel, it seems, does allow specialists to set their theoretical lenses at a common focal length as it were and to see in, say, a "colonial situation" where the difference between "two types of personality is greater probably, than in any other" whether the images gained from the creative writer's account fit their models and if not, why not. This isn't to suppose that the author is necessarily correct but he at least offers a new way of looking at the phenomenon of, for example, patron-client relationships in imperialist Burma and for some readers this account may in fact be the closest thing to being there. And if Simon Bolivar is correct in claiming that "To understand men and revolutions you must observe them at close range" then "judge them at a great distance" the very least which Orwell can offer us are his first-hand observations of an imperialist's life in Burma.

PATRON-CLIENT RELATIONSHIPS

The character of U Po Kyin and his relationship to the community of Kyauktada can, I believe, be seen as a case study in patron-client relationships. U Po Kyin represents the corrupt bureaucrat with initiative who, through denunciations of his colleagues and selective bribery,
manages to develop a high level of what political scientists and others would today call "social mobility." At the age of seventeen he had been working "in the stinking labyrinth of the Mandalay bazaars" and "when he was twenty a lucky stroke of blackmail put him in possession of four hundred rupees and he went to Rangoon and bought his way into a Government clerkship." While this was a different kind of social mobility than was afforded in traditional Burma where the sangha (Buddhist priesthood) provided a ladder to possible financial success to all classes, it was nevertheless a mobility which, together with other benefits, depended largely on the traditional patron. U Po Kyin recognizes this for example when he correctly prophesies that once Flory is discredited then so is Veraswami, not because Flory affords Veraswami social mobility through financial patronage but because in many ways he provides the more important patronage of prestige, thus confirming the traditional fact of life in Burma, that "A government officer of whatever rank could fall when his patron fell."

U Po Kyin's behaviour, however, does not necessarily lend weight to the view of those like James Scott who writes that "nominally modern institutions such as bureaucracies and political parties in Southeast Asia are often thoroughly penetrated by informal patron-client networks that undermine the formal structure of authority." On the contrary, despite his penchant for bribery and corruption, U Po Kyin seems to support the structure of the bureaucracy (though it certainly isn't as modern perhaps as the bureaucracy which Scott discusses) and is outraged by the suggestion that

I am rebelling against the Government? I - a Government servant of thirty years' standing! Good heavens, no! . . . I should have thought even a fool would have seen that I am raising this rebellion
merely in order to crush it ... Do you realize that the Governor of Burma will very probably pin an Order on my breast for my loyal action in this affair?91

In short, U Po Kyin, having attained great wealth under the British imperialist system, has a stake in that system (colonialism being the system and "resource base" he has known best) and has no intention of undermining that which allows him a relatively free hand in native affairs.

To the reader of *Burmese Days* it may seem unlikely, or even incredible, that U Po Kyin's bribery and corruption would not have been known to the British authorities, especially Deputy Commissioner Macgregor, who must therefore either have condoned it unofficially and/or looked the other way. However, Orwell had, it seems, taken into account a fact later reported by the Bribery and Corruption Enquiry Committee in 1940 that "the startling aspect of corruption during British rule is that the superior officers were so little aware of it and scant effort was made to control what went on between their subordinates and the public."92 Also U Po Kyin's ability to take bribes from both sides and then to decide the case on "strictly legal grounds"93 would surely not have survived the outrage of unhappy litigants had not the "strictly legal grounds" reflected what James Guyot refers to as "the traditional flexibility of principle and variety of practice" and "the old practices of co-operation and compromise."94 In short, to give U Po Kyin his due, what Orwell refers to as corrupt practices in general may very largely have reflected the old way and not the new British way which was often at odds with time-honoured methods of dispensing justice and, as Myrdal points out, gifts and tributes "sanctioned in pre-capitalist society" may continue in the form of what we erroneously
call and perhaps as Orwell (through Flory) has erroneously called (in a Western moral sense) a "bribe." And so when contemporary political scientists also claim that "politicians and administrators who exploit their office in this way [through bribery] to reward clients while violating the formal norms of public conduct are, of course, acting corruptly, (italics mine) it becomes important to note whether or not the "norms of public conduct" are local and traditional, or imported norms. Furthermore U Po Kyin's apparent invulnerability to official enquiry was partly provided (albeit unwittingly) by what Flory describes as "perhaps the most important of all the Ten Precepts of the pukka sahib . . . not to entangle oneself in 'native' quarrels . . . Even to know the rights and wrongs of a 'native' quarrel is a loss of prestige." This assertion is significant I think in that Orwell adds that "most of this, [i.e. corruption, illegal taxes and even proceeds of robberies] of course, was known to everyone except U Po Kyin's official superiors ('no British officer will ever believe anything against his own men.') One could well argue, I think, that Macgregor's reluctance to interfere with the natives according to the sacred imperialist precept may have been in fact the ritualization of a tacit understanding by many imperialists that a gap between the traditional Burmese and the new British way must perforce exist and that the most pragmatic solution available, at least for the time being, was to give people like U Po Kyin wide discretionary power (which he obviously had) to deal with local native matters of fairly minimal importance (at least to the British). This would certainly be one argument in favour of lessening what we now call the "cultural shock" and hostile reactions which natives may display (such as their potentially violent demand that Ellis be handed over to
them for punishment) in the face of a confusing new system of justice. In short the Macgregors of Burma and Colonel Blimps of Empire may not have been as stupid or as insensitive to native problems as we are often led to believe and their relative non-interference in local native disputes may indeed have expressed a certain wisdom gained from earlier colonial experiences when white men were not officials but wanderers and adventurers who found it prudent to let natives practise their own laws, as far as a white man's safety allowed.

In the sense that U Po Kyin delivered the British law, at least to some degree, to the native inhabitants of Kyauktada, he was no doubt acting, in Scott's terms, as a "broker", as well as a patron to a large number of clients including such figures as Ba Sein, the head clerk of the Deputy Commissioner's office, and Hla Pe, the apprentice clerk whom he uses to undermine Veraswami's and Flory's reputation and to raise the short-lived rebellion which he crushes. Again it was a case of the individual administrator interpreting "western concepts of the rule of law, abstract justice, and impersonal authority which undergirded British guardianship in Burma" which "ran counter to traditional habits of accommodation and compromise in the arbitration of disputes" and made U Po Kyin's presence so necessary to the natives. Through his actions the abstract, impartial British law which they did not understand at least became partially interpreted and personal and could be explained in traditional terms.

Thus U Po Kyin demonstrates to us that through knowledge of the British system, insofar as local judicial affairs are concerned, he has what Scott refers to as a "resource base of Patronage," namely his magisterial authority which, through enforcing the British legal code,
he may see as the extension of a traditional role providing security and well-being to the client. This allows him to be not only a patron but a broker as well and confirms Scott's view, I think, that "such a role combination is not only possible" but may in fact be "empirically quite common." Indeed it has been argued, convincingly I think, that what has led western studies to concentrate more on comparative analysis (between western and underdeveloped countries) of corruption is the realization that much of what western scholars previously referred to as corruption may have been more of a brokerage action in the same way, for example, as the early American bosses bridged the gap between immigrants and a new and often confusing bureaucracy. Such a realization tends to lessen, I think, some of the more virulent moral indignation against underdeveloped countries which may have both prevented and coloured some research into the area and which may, at the other extreme, also lead into the kind of amoral cost-benefit analysis which we see appearing of late.

In any case the notion that the presence of imported western legal codes in underdeveloped countries is central to the western concept of corruption, and tends to prevent recognition of the traditional norms of the country under investigation is obvious from Orwell's treatment (through Flory) of U Po Kyin whom he plainly sees as being an out-and-out corrupt official with little or no redeeming qualities. He is seen as being so totally evil that one suspects Orwell literally threw the legal book at him.

The "resource base of patronage" which U Po Kyin has to offer may of course come from outright coercion although Scott argues against this by assuming that people like U Po Kyin would not use force alone
to obtain favours and services for fear of eventual reprisal (an action which the natives demonstrate they are plainly capable of during the short-lived and abortive uprising). Furthermore, Scott argues that the singular, most distinguishing feature of patron-client relationships is the sense of "reciprocity" (a mutual understanding and valuing of each other's services). To counter Scott's argument, however, it can be convincingly demonstrated, I think, that U Po Kyin does use outright coercion in his official and unofficial capacity (such as not paying his servant, Ba Taik, any wages "for he was a convicted thief whom a word would send to prison"). In political science terminology such a "patron-client dyad" is the manifestation of a "personal security mechanism" and forms the basis for a "cluster" of such ties which in turn constitute the patron-client "pyramids" which, because of "the persistence of marked inequalities in the control of wealth, status and power," may either support or challenge the growth of post-colonial democratic institutions.

And if we are tempted from this to conclude that Ba Taik is a special case we should note that any of the presents which are offered in the hope of future favours are done so, it seems, not just because of affection, but because of the implicit threat of U Po Kyin's authority in dispensing the white man's law. This might suggest (contrary to Scott's belief that "affective" ties can often prevail over "instrumental" ties) that it is highly unlikely in an indeterminate number of cases that native officials would ever take pains to establish relationships with clients which would depend more on a "durable bond of genuine mutual devotion" than on the implicit threat of coercion. Certainly in *Burmese Days* U Po Kyin is only really liked by his wife and at times
even her affection is outraged as she is quietly appalled by her hus-
band's "unscrupulous behaviour."\textsuperscript{113}

Thus if "the localization of power [as in Kyauktada] is in many senses as striking a characteristic of contemporary as of traditional Southeast Asia" and if indeed "as units of political structure, patron-
client clusters not only typify both local and national politics in Southeast Asia" and are "also as characteristic of the area's contem-
porary politics as of its traditional politics"\textsuperscript{114} it would appear that the implications of U Po Kyin's use of coercion, and of "instrumental" rather than "affective" ties, would prove useful in understanding the kind of personal loyalties which may threaten the viability of democratic institutions should the formal structure of such institutions fail to offer commensurate rewards through, say, nationalistic appeals. And if, as Myrdal points out, "the significance of corruption in Asia is highlighted by the fact that wherever a political regime has crumbled — in Pakistan and Burma for instance . . . a major and often decisive cause has been the prevalence of official misconduct"\textsuperscript{115} and that re-
search on corruption in South Asia is strenuously thwarted and there-
fore avoided\textsuperscript{116} some estimate of the potential of patron-client rela-
tionships to perpetuate and encourage what we would call "corrupt" practices may also aid us in assessing a democratic institution's chances of survival.

Of course the politicization of patron-client ties like those between U Po Kyin and Ba Sein (such as grouping them together for party support during elections) may also explain how patrons who attempt to buy off the electorate may be seen not as the harbingers of democracy's demise but as practical men whose actions are both a recognition of the
inevitable advance of a democratic spirit and polity and an attempt to come to terms with and profit by it in a time-honoured way.\(^{117}\)

Also it seems to me that the extent of what we call the "vertical links"\(^{118}\) of patron-client relationships is important in attempts to measure the degree to which centralization of authority is feasible, for if an official has extensive indirect power, like U Po Kyin (who demonstrates such power through his ability to raise and crush a rebellion, not so much through a small "cluster" of "face-to-face" relationships as by indirect control through his clerk, Ba Sein), such an official may be able, indeed it would be in his own interest, to counteract higher centralized control by strengthening or at least maintaining his indirect patron-client relationships.

The existence of U Po Kyin suggests a particularly dangerous case, for while such an official could be stripped of authority by the District Commissioner or Rangoon, his great wealth, acquired through "corruption," means that even if his official authority is withdrawn or curtailed from above, his wealth remains a "resource base" and would provide a challenge to local officials trying to implement policies which may, through design or otherwise, undermine U Po Kyin's power and thus his prestige. In short, while the "periphery" or the "fair-weather" section of his following might fall off should some of his official authority be rescinded by greater centralization the "core" of his clientele would still remain because of the existence of what Scott would call a "multi plex" bond, that is, U Po Kyin's ability to provide more than one service to his clients, namely economic "inducements" in addition to political "sanctions."\(^{119}\) U Po Kyin's position in the community also suggests how, because of the breakdown in communal ownership
of land and exploitation of it by imperialist companies such as the ones Flory, Lackersteen and Ellis work for, the "value of patron-client links increased" because of the patron's ability to protect the indigenous population from what we may call "un-brokered" exploitation in matters beyond the purely governmental level. In any event such relationships seem to have become more marked since the colonial period, particularly as elections have become more commonplace.

It could be suggested that such speculation surrounding U Po Kyin's position as a patron-broker in Kyauktada may be stretching a point. However, if an analogy may be allowed I would argue that if U Po Kyin's kind of influence can be thought of as a pinprick in the elastic band of government control then should that band be suddenly stretched by extraordinary demands of the electorate such a pinprick may quickly enlarge and seriously threaten the effectiveness of the government's administration in a time of crisis.

Apart from these considerations the most important fact for political scientists to note is that U Po Kyin, unlike the patrons of traditional society, is a patron formed as a young man under the influence of the British administration and its attendant bureaucracy. That is, he learned his trade, as it were, within the colonial experience, as many patrons, perhaps most patrons today, have done. In short, he was a product of imperialism insofar as it and not the traditional market place constituted his resource base. In addition he was a beneficiary rather than a victim of imperialism, having gained promotion and social position through working within the imperialist administrative structure.

At this point, after our discussion of patron-client relationships, it is interesting, and central to my notion of how fiction can aid
political science, to refer the reader to Scott's article, *Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia*, in which Scott offers a theoretical framework for what Orwell actually describes, namely,

the unenviable situation of the typical client in less developed nations. Since he lives in an environment of scarcity, competition for wealth and power is seen as a zero-sum contest in which his losses are another's gain and vice-versa. His very survival is constantly threatened by the caprice of nature and by social forces beyond his control. In such an environment, where subsistence needs are paramount and physical security uncertain, a modicum of protection and insurance can often be gained only by depending on a superior who undertakes personally to provide for his own clients. Operating with such a slim margin, the client prefers to minimize his losses - at the cost of his independence - rather than to maximize his gains by taking risks he cannot afford. When one's physical security and means of livelihood are problematic, and when recourse to law is unavailable or unreliable, the social value of a personal defender is maximized.

One might add that the competition between Dr. Veraswami and U Po Kyin for membership in the Club though waged with much less determination and without illegal activity by the doctor who was not, strictly speaking, a patron in the sense that he did not take bribes both reflects the kind of competition for resources which Scott talks about and illustrates how men who may be patrons on one level may indeed be clients (to the imperialist administration) at another level. Certainly the Club in particular was highly regarded as a "resource base" by both native notables. Veraswami laments, "If only I were a member of your European Club! If only! How different would my position be!" Perplexed, Flory asks why and the doctor replies,

My friend, in these matters [his trying to prevent U Po Kyin from ruining his reputation] prestige is everything . . . and you do not know what prestige it gives to an Indian to be a member of the European Club . . . In the Club practically he is a European . . . I should be forthwith invulnerable.

Meanwhile U Po Kyin views possible election to the Club as "the very highest honour an Oriental can attain to . . . the greatest achievement of my life."
POLITICAL POWER

We have already seen how the white man's recognition of the need of political power as a guarantor of lucrative trade in India dates back as far as Clive. In this connection Orwell has Flory citing the Club as "the spiritual citadel, the real seat of the British power" and, in typically blunt fashion, has him arguing with Veraswami (who is the proponent of British superiority which he sees engendered in men like Clive), asserting that the "British Empire is simply a device for giving trade monopolies to the English" and that "the official holds the Burman down while the businessman goes through his pockets." Thus in fictional form Orwell seems to be practising what some political scientists would characterize as the "Power Approach" to the study of politics, this being one which sees the struggle for power in a community as the sole or major focus of interest. Indeed when Westfield reluctantly admits to Ellis that he can't bribe witnesses anymore or carry out torture of suspects because the British population has "got to keep our own bloody silly laws," he testifies plainly, I think, to what Van Dyke refers to in his description of the power approach as those "elements of power identified with the victim" (the Burmese in this case), namely "his habits, propensities, rules and principles," which being even partially taught, or forced, upon him by the possessor of power ironically help to "determine the extent of the power of the wielder." Indeed Van Dyke makes substantially the same point that Orwell did previously, namely that Gandhi's ability to resist British authority for so long and so successfully in India rested largely upon the "principles to which Britain was committed," and that "it is difficult to see how Gandhi's methods could be applied in a country where opponents
of the régime disappear in the middle of the night and are never heard of again."130

In *Burmese Days* Orwell however adds yet another dimension to the struggle for, or perhaps more accurately the maintenance of, "pukka sahib" power, for while the imperialist motives of profit (and to a much lesser extent, civilizing) are laid bare Orwell draws, in the characters of Maxwell and Westfield, particularly the former, the picture of a simple lust for power, a desire for control devoid of any other end, showing how "in spite of the paramount importance of economic conditions . . . they will not explain why colonial exploitation is different from exploitation pure and simple" and that "it is not greater profit, but satisfactions the value of which cannot be entered in the books"131 which sometimes prompt men to become imperialists. In Maxwell it is the thrill and excitement of exercising what could be called "carte blanche" authority in areas as yet unspoiled by the constraints of a more advanced civilization. This does not mean that imperialists of the Maxwell type wantonly opposed all the official "civilized" restraints which tended to moderate their behaviour but it does suggest that they perceived their role in Burma not as furthering the cause of Empire or their personal financial gain but simply as a means to adventure wherein they could exercise direct power over others.132 In this they differed significantly from the likes of Macgregor who, despite his fundamental hostility to the democratic idea,133 was at least an imperialist who believed in something more than merely making money and having the freedom to exercise power over the indigenous population and did at least see some value in imposing order, thus providing a sense of security, if not equal justice, to all.
While on the subject of power it is interesting, I think, to consider how Flory's alienation from the imperialist system is perhaps at root the manifestation of an inability, unlike Maxwell and Westfield, to live outside the comforting restrictions and rules of a more industrialized society (i.e., Britain). For rather than seeing the "carte blanche" of imperialism offering him freedom, as it does Maxwell, it only seems to offer him the nagging insecurity and tension brought about by never really knowing whether one is doing the right thing in a system which one has long since rejected as being morally wrong and which is devoid of many of the security-assuring customs of home such as those which allow you private consolation among friends as a balm for the improprieties of your public behaviour.  

In any case Orwell's concern for the individual's alienation in the struggle for power first murmured its presence in *Burmese Days* and later thundered its omnipresence in forming the overwhelming "focus of interest" of *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.

**INDIVIDUAL ALIENATION, GROUP PRESSURE AND THE CLUB**

Flory's sense of alienation is largely a result of the kind of dubious progress which he sees spawned by imperialism while the fact that this sense becomes overwhelming (suicide) for the sensitive man is seen by Orwell as very largely the result of succumbing to the "pukka sahib"'s code, a code so corrupt that it must inevitably produce the alienation of any essentially moral man (whether he is sensitive or not) and by moral here I mean simply a man who sees a subject people consciously exploited by another race who believe themselves to be superior in all ways to those they exploit - a race of exploiters who above all
cannot "admit that we're thieves and go on thieving without any hum-
bug." And in Flory's counselling of "ignoble ease," he expresses the fear of being alienated from his fellows which he believes, to some degree, permeates all the white men's lives, a fear which forces them to keep acting out

the five chief beatitudes of the pukka sahib, namely:
Keeping up our prestige,
The firm hand (without the velvet glove),
We white men must hang together,
 Give them an inch and they'll take an ell, and
Esprit de Corps

whether his fellows really agree with the code or not.

The observance of such a code can produce people who, like Flory (with his birthmark being the physical symbol of alienation), hide the latter in varying degrees beneath the Club rituals of apparent normalcy and who, in their effort to avoid censure from the rest of the white community, become permanent captives of their conscious hypocrisy by being forced to wear a "mask" (or opt out as Flory did in committing suicide) and so appear to us as stereotypes. And the pressure to conform to the group's views which is exerted upon Flory by "a number of persons who communicate with each other often over a span of time, and who are few enough so that each person is able to communicate with all the others, not at second hand . . . but face-to-face" is exactly the kind of "cognitive dissonance" situation which Verba discusses in Small Groups and Political Behaviour. It is a prime example of "experiments" which Verba suggests may show how "the external pressure that the group places on the individual derives from the threat posed by deviant opinions to the attainment of the group goal," a goal which in Burmese Days is white security through continued control over the indigenous pop-
ulation. Verba's contention that in order to avoid inner group conflict "decisional process [such as informal consensus] will tend to be such as to prevent overt conflicts from coming to the surface" and "formal votes, for instance, will be avoided"\(^{143}\) seems well substantiated during one of the climactic scenes in the book when, finally faced with Flory's intransigence on the issue of considering Dr. Veraswami for membership - a hotly debated issue which no doubt the group realizes is questioning their values – the final formal call for the black and white voting balls by an enraged Ellis is obviously not a measure of normal democratic procedures through which "overt dispute" is studiously avoided but is a measure of abnormal response (at least in the Club) and the seriousness with which the external threat to the "solidarity of the group"\(^{144}\) is regarded. Even the carefree and generally irresponsible Mr. Lackersteen, who has no real sympathy with the British Raj, nevertheless highly values group solidarity and because of this, as Verba suggests, he (like most in the Club) is one of those who fail "to express views that disagree with the majority."\(^{145}\) In this regard it seems especially true in *Burmese Days* that "attachments to face-to-face groups may lessen the impact of the overall political culture on the individual."\(^{146}\) That is, the Club might well provide the newcomer from England with a familiar kind of atmosphere which affords him not only an opportunity to dissipate a certain amount of "cultural shock" but an organization in which each member reinforces the others' views of the outside (especially their view of the natives) and so is able to justify actions and beliefs which individually he might feel distinctly uncomfortable with. For example, Flory admits to himself that the natives can infuriate you and elsewhere Orwell can harbour a secret wish of driving a bayonet through a Burmese priest's
Such "affective" responses must ultimately affect those activities which Verba and others have called "instrumental" activities but individual guilt is assuaged by a sharing of the perceived need to keep the natives in their place as a way of maintaining group security; thus justifying the ultimate blunt reliance upon a "quarter of a million bayonets." In this sense I am sure that Verba would see the ritualized prejudices of the Club as serving "supportive functions" to the "larger political system."

Verba also notes that the proposition that satisfactory affective ties within the primary group will lead to behaviour on the part of the individual that supports the larger political system finds confirmation in a number of studies that link radical behaviour with the absence of such ties.

Flory's behaviour is extremely radical, ending in suicide, and is plainly viewed as the result of his inability to support the larger, home-based system if not through the total absence of such ties then at least through the growing weakness of them. And as the leader of the group which tries to impose its will on Flory, Macgregor, the District Superintendent, is, I believe, an interesting example of what some political scientists would refer to as an "instrumental leader" in that his authority within the group seems to stem much more from his official position and his access to higher external authority than from his "affective" appeal.

In any case, the example of Flory in *Burmese Days* should, I think, offer an alternative, or at least an aid, to the researcher who, following Verba's advice, seeks to create small groups in experimental laboratories to study the reactions to informal group pressure. Orwell's "extraneous variables" may not be the same as those considered by
other students of small group behaviour but at least they may provide a model based on personal experience. 154

It is significant that the sum of Orwell's examples of individuals caught up by the imperialist venture and the kind of Club pressures which they are both the authors and subjects of is an image of people living in what a political scientist would recognize as a condition of "actor dispensability" wherein an "action is one that would have been performed by any actor in the same situation or role [of imperialist]." 155 This is true even of Flory who, despite his individualism, is nevertheless all but indistinguishable in a highly routinized existence. In arriving at this conclusion we must recall how Orwell has consistently used the naturalistic image to convey the almost oppressive dominance of the physical environment among other things in socializing the inhabitants 156 and to convey the helplessness of the individual against a system which, in the occasional mechanistic image also, could be seen as an impersonal giant, strangling moral and physical fibre by the sheer weight of precedent and expectation.

Despite the emergence of stereotypes, however, Orwell, largely through constancy of image, gives us a picture of imperialism not as a moribund entity doomed to destruction amid a sea of bureaucratic inefficiency but rather as a living, growing thing whose extraordinary ability to delineate and form its future rests, through its stereotypes, upon its willingness to draw more heavily upon tradition than upon innovation. This seems particularly important to me in that Orwell's later contribution to our understanding of totalitarianism appears in turn to draw heavily upon his belief that the stereotypes would triumph and that the kind of "world in which every word and thought is censored"
and where "your opinion on every subject of any conceivable importance is dictated for you by the pukka sahib's code" would grow unimpeded and through force culminate in the massive, all-embracing spectre of 1984; a spectre made possible, I would suggest, through the proliferation of the "gramophone mind" of Club-like existence wherein group pressure would be continually mobilized to force the individual into accepting, and adhering to, the official line.

In this regard it is significant that Woodcock in *The Crystal Spirit* wrote how the ruling elite of *Burmese Days* differs from that of *Nineteen Eighty-Four" in one important respect," namely that "it maintains its solidarity not by physical power, but solely by the strength of an amazingly inflexible public opinion." Given the above it is hardly surprising that Orwell uses Club activity as the fulcrum about which the fortunes of all the major characters see-saw. Rather than the tentative romance between Flory and Elizabeth and the third partner in the triangle, Verrall, being the dominating conflict the latter is comprised of the endless wrangle, not in working hours it should be noted but in the off-hours, at the Club. Orwell also saw and shows us that the Club was, in the words of James Guyot, the place where "many of the important administrative decisions, particularly those affecting the big British firms, were made in an environment free from the restraints of formal bureaucratic routine." And despite the objections of those like Ellis who contended that the government in Rangoon had "no right to dictate to us when we're off duty," government business was never far away as when the government directive was forwarded suggesting that "in those Clubs where there are no native members, one at least should be co-opted," demonstrating
quite clearly, I believe, how the Club in the imperialist structure was considered by the central authority in Rangoon as an appendage of its official establishment and functions, in much the same way as Deutsch sees "the neighborhood pub" as an example of how in the United Kingdom "a great deal of government is carried out by all sorts of voluntary associations." Indeed, despite fierce initial opposition within the Club, U Po Kyin is finally elected to the Club by government order.

Dr. Veraswami's belief that membership in the Club would mean that he was "practically" a European and U Po Kyin's belief that it was the "highest honour an Oriental can attain to" are also not only central to the plot of the novel but testimony to what Guyot much later described as one of the "two" remaining "barriers to complete Westernization," namely that "the Burman was not the equal of an Englishman in his own country and he felt it strongly" and that "Burmese members of the I.C.S. [Indian Civil Service, which covered Burmese administration until 1937] could not join Pegu or Gymkhana clubs."

This feeling of white superiority which is recorded with depressing, almost monotonous, frequency in *Burmese Days* was not, of course, confined to British possessions during the colonial period and often manifested itself in non-British colonies in remarkably similar ways. As with Ellis and Lackersteen, the timber merchants in Kyauktada, Geertz, in his "community" study of Modjukuto in Indonesia, notes how there was a similar "plantation-based expatriate community" where the whites were masters in a country they did not understand and to which they did not, whatever they might say, really wish to belong. . . . There was the tight little hierarchical world of patrician civil servants clustered around the District Officer's *grande maison* and attempting, a little wistfully perhaps, to sustain the culture of a nobility without the power of a nobility.
One can hardly be charged with exaggerating the comparison in thinking of the Club in Kyauktada as the grand house with Macgregor as the stand-in for the Dutch District Officer.

The position of the Club as an echo chamber of more or less official policies is well presented by Orwell and by showing how the need for "interest articulation" was at least partially catered for in the white community and how the natives' need to express their wants and desires was effectively shut out (causing the Burmese to resort to violence), he lends particular credence, I think, to later statements of scholars who recorded how the administrative "steel frame" structure of imperialism based, as we have already seen, on "Western concepts of the rule of law, abstract justice and impersonal authority ... so rationally designed in terms of the purposes of government showed little compatibility with the social structure of the province it governed."

Indeed the example of Dr. Veraswami as the local government medical officer can be viewed as an example of how "the medical profession at large was dominated by Indians," and the animosity between him and U Po Kyin, particularly in view of the fact that they meet only once in the novel, reflects, in part at least, Guyot's conclusion that "the relations between areas of those services dominated by Indians and other services were naturally influenced by the fear and contempt Burmese felt for Indians elsewhere in society." The only common bond between these two races seems to be the awe which they accord the white man's institutions except that while U Po Kyin respects the Club as a potential source of consolidating his wealth and increasing his prestige, Veraswami also reveres the Club as the apex of the British civilization and presence which, he believes, "at its very worst is for us an
advance . . . they construct roads, they irrigate deserts, they conquer famines, they build schools, they set up hospitals, they combat plague."171

**IMPERIALISM AND PROGRESS**

Flory, of course, does not agree for as long as he believes that imperialism is no more than economic exploitation in disguise he does not equate progress with either imperialism or modernization, always making a distinction, it seems, between what we would call economic growth and what we might call political development. Veraswami, distressed at his friend's vehement attacks upon "Pox Brittanica" argues that while it is certainly true that Flory and the others are in Burma to trade, the Burmese could not be left to trade for themselves and asks,

> 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? They would be sold immediately to the Japanese, who would gut them and ruin them. Instead of which, in your hands, actually they are improved.

Flory replies,

> Bosh, my dear doctor . . . Look at our schools - factories for cheap clerks. We've never taught a single useful manual trade to the Indians. We've even crushed various industries. Where are the Indian muslins now? Back in the forties or thereabouts they were building sea-going ships in India, and manning them as well. Now you couldn't build a seaworthy fishing boat there. In the eighteenth century the Indians cast guns that were at any rate up to the European standard. Now after we've been in India a hundred and fifty years, you can't make so much as a brass cartridge-case in the whole continent.172

Flory's attitude was echoed in what Huntington was to refer to as the "overwhelming pessimistic" view of social theory of the nineteen thirties which contrasted sharply with the later belief, in the fifties, that modernization is essentially progressive and that while "the costs and pains of the period of transition [from traditional to modern soci-
eties], particularly its early phases, are great . . . the achievement of a modern social, political, and economic order is worth them" and that "modernization in the long run enhances human well-being, culturally and materially."  

Flory, rejecting this thesis which was essentially Veraswami's view, consistently argues against equating "modernity with virtue" and the notion that a kind of political development, a growth in security and justice, has taken place through the replacement of "apathy and superstition" with British "law and order." While he does not deny that "we modernize this country in certain ways" he takes note of some possible effects of what we might now call the imposition of a western superstructure when he states,

Before we've finished we'll have wrecked the whole Burmese national culture [wherein Burmese life was almost entirely "centered round the Buddhist religion and the monastic order"] . . . . We're not civilizing them, we're only rubbing our dirt on to them. Where's it going to lead, this uprush of modern progress, as you call it? . . . I think that in two hundred years all this . . . will be gone - forests, villages, monasteries, pagodas, all vanished.  

Indeed, Flory's pessimistic vision is reflected in Furnival's account of how villages were cut up in the interest of "administrative uniformity" and how, for example, "between 1909 and 1919 the number of headmen declined by over 2,000."  

I think it fair to say that through such passages as those just quoted Orwell was already seeing the dark outlines of Nineteen Eighty-Four (allowing for the later influence of Zamyatin's We on the conception of Nineteen Eighty-Four) and beginning his contribution to what Huntington describes as that part of the pessimistic vision of the thirties which saw "the breakup of human community, the attenuation of religious values, the drift into alienation and anomic, the terrifying
emergence of a mass society." It is with such a vision that Flory predicts how there will be

pink villas fifty yards apart; all over those hills, as far as you can see, villa after villa, with all the gramophones playing the same tune. And all the forests shaved flat - chewed into wood-pulp for the News of the World, or sawn up into gramophone cases. (Italics mine.)

And where, as Orwell was later to write in a preface to Animal Farm, "to exchange one orthodoxy for another is not necessarily an advance," and when "the enemy is the gramophone mind, whether or not one agrees with the record that is being played at the moment." (Italics mine.) Orwell, expressing what Huntington describes as the belief that "at some point . . . western history went off the track, and a special process started" which "led consistently and irreversibly down the steep hill to mass politics, world wars, the purge trials, and Dachau" (the oppressive themes of Nineteen Eighty-Four), notes the irreversibility of the change in that part of Burmese Days which describes Flory's recall to the jungle of his discontent. On the brink of returning home, "pining for England" and the security of the known, he finds a cable waiting for him at Colombo and so modernization, through the telegraph, has condemned him to the captive role of imperialist, of doing what he no longer wants to. It was in The Lion and the Unicorn, 1941, that Orwell elaborated on the irreversibility of modern progress and wrote,

Thirty years ago the Blimp class was already losing its vitality . . . the thing that had killed them was the telegraph. In a narrowing world, more and more governed from Whitehall, there was every year less room for individual initiative. Men like Clive, Nelson, Nicholson, Gordon would find no place for themselves in the modern British Empire. By 1920 [the period of Burmese Days] nearly every inch of the colonial empire was in the grip of Whitehall . . . the one-time empire builders were reduced to the status of clerks, buried deeper and deeper under mounds of paper and red tape. In the early twenties one could see, all over the Empire, the older officials, who had known more spacious days, writhing impotently under the changes . . . and what was true of the official world was
true also of the commercial. The great monopoly companies swallowed up hosts of petty traders. 185

In *Burmese Days* the effects of the telegraph and the centralization it helped bring (an example of the machine's influence upon political institutions) are demonstrated by Westfield's comment on Ellis' proposal to keep the natives down by force: "Hopeless, old chap . . . quite hopeless. What can you do with all this red tape tying your hands? . . . all this paper-chewing and chit-passing. Office babus are the real rulers of this country now." 186

In view of these comments against the growing organization of imperialism it seems that although the telegraph brought increased centralization and thus possibilities for closer liaison between administrators and head office, the element of what I will call "in-the-field" initiative was lost (see above, n. 185) and this negated the advantages of increased understanding and shows, I think, that Orwell in this case (as opposed to his strictly economic interpretation of imperialism) espouses a distinctly un-Marxian view, namely that the laws of historical development are not necessarily against the ruling class, but on the contrary favour them, for although increased communication may provide the means of, say, developing a lower class consciousness it simultaneously strengthens Whitehall's ability to play "Big Brother."

While on the subject of reaction to increased centralized control, an important corollary to Westfield's complaint that "[we've] got to keep our own silly bloody laws" is that in the face of decreasing discretionary powers, largely brought on by advances in the means of communication, a nod, as it were, is being given to the theory of indiscriminate terrorism which in its tone of "much better hang wrong fellow
than no fellow" and "never mind, promise you a couple of chaps shall swing for it. Two corpses against their one - best we can do," argues that in the long run indiscriminate and disproportionate punishment for Maxwell's murder is more efficient in terms of teaching the natives a lesson than risking the possible failings of a more impartial justice.

With this rather vindictive, short-term attitude in mind I think it advisable to question certain recommendations for giving less discretionary power to officials as a way of fighting corruption in developing nations, for, paradoxically, less discretionary power might mean that officials like Westfield (coloured as well as white), while remaining within the limits of the new law, would react to native disobedience in an even more violent manner than before, this being their way of manifesting their dissatisfaction at having their prior freedom of initiative curtailed. Furthermore, the law might well be applied in such a universal fashion as to ignore a case surrounded by special circumstances, and thus fail to make any distinction between law and justice.

THE SECRET WORLD - IMPERIALIST GUILT

The reluctance to discuss official policy caused Orwell to write in *The Road to Wigan Pier* that every Anglo-Indian was haunted by a sense of guilt which he usually concealed because merely to be overheard making a seditious remark may damage his career. All over India there are Englishmen who secretly loathe the system of which they are part, and just occasionally, when they are quite certain of being in the right company, their hidden bitterness overflows.

He goes on to recall a night in Burma aboard a train when he met a stranger, a white educational officer, and how, after each had decided "that the other was 'safe,'" they talked for hours in the darkness,
damning the Empire, but adds that "in the haggard morning light when the train crawled into Mandalay, we parted as guilty as any adulterous couple." Flory's tragedy of course is caused by the absence of "right company" even though Dr. Veraswami affords temporary relief to an overburdened conscience.

Orwell's description of this incident is especially revealing when one thinks of how, in *Burmese Days*, despite the division of the whites into two main parts (first, the civil servants like Macgregor, Westfield the Police Officer, Maxwell the Divisional Forest Officer, and secondly, the entrepreneurs like Ellis, Lackersteen and Flory), all of them behave as if they had the same occupation, that of a bureaucrat. Even Flory who "irritates the others by saying . . . some Bolshie things sometimes," and especially annoys Ellis who considers him "a bit too Bolshie for my taste" nevertheless clings to the Club and displays no hesitation in siding with the Europeans when the Club is besieged by natives clamouring for Ellis who, through a fit of violent temper, has indirectly caused a Burmese boy to be blinded. It was as if in their everyday existence in Kyauktada "none of them thought to blame Ellis, the sole cause of this affair" and "their common peril seemed, indeed, to draw them closer together for awhile." Their instinctive banding together for security and their continual reluctance to jeopardize that security by questioning their very presence in a foreign country also testifies to Flory's conviction, expressed earlier in the novel, that "living and working among Orientals would try the temper of a saint," and "how all of them, the officials particularly, knew what it was to be baited and insulted . . . by yellow faces . . . full of that maddening contempt."
Thus Orwell argues that the life of an imperialist moulds you, whether you like it or not, into a straight-jacket of conformity and in his view it seems that no matter how independently you start out, the pressures and needs of mutual-dependence as a way of guaranteeing a modicum of security and simple companionship make escape from the resulting "stifling, stultifying world" all but impossible - so much so that when Flory can no longer stand it he shoots himself.

In the terminology of the social sciences Orwell's description of the role of the Club is, I think, a good example of how (using functionalist terminology) "large areas of behaviour are controlled by norms and role prescriptions" and how when

the individual internalizes the values of the system [imperialism] and considers them [the five beatitudes of pukka sahibdom] sacred or not open to question, and ... is motivated to perform his role in the manner expected of him, that system may be said to be well integrated.

Flory, torn between the dictates of conscience and the inclination to live "with the stream of life, not against it" gravitates between being a well and poorly "integrated" part of the imperialist system. The pressures of "routinized" or "institutionalized" (the Club) existence finally force him to leave the other characters' well-integrated and "socially homogeneous environment" which is "more conducive to elitist than pluralist politics" and his suicide is the final act, and is indeed the culmination of his alienation against the system. In short, he finally rebels totally against what some functionalists would call the "normative expectations" of his environment. With this in mind it is relevant to note that when Guyot in his *Bureaucratic Transformation in Burma* describes how "the normal bureaucratic pressure to conform was reinforced by isolation from the mainstream of life back home*
and by awareness of the superiority of the institutions the guardians sought to establish in a less civilized land" (italics mine) he acknowledges *Burmese Days* as an example of this very phenomenon.  

One should not forget, however, that Flory's alienation was not solely that sweeping kind of pessimism which we associate, for instance, with Colin Wilson's "outsider" or with Winston Smith in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*. That is, it was an alienation brought about more by the implicit, and at times explicit, existence of a radical-conservative or right-left chasm between Flory and his white contemporaries rather than a total disenchantment with the whole of society and mankind. 

Further I would argue that Flory's alienation illustrates specifically the extreme tension which can result between two fundamentally different approaches to or world views of politics, that is, between what E.H. Carr refers to as the "utopian" view, held by he who "gives paramount emphasis to his wishes or normative standards," and who "believes in the possibility of giving effect to his will, changing the course that events would have taken in the absence of his effort" (e.g., in supporting Dr. Veraswami's nomination and having the police fire over the heads of the natives instead of at them); and secondly, the "realist" view, held by he who "gives paramount emphasis to practice" and who "analyses a predetermined course of events which he is powerless to change" (e.g., Flory's conviction that in a hundred years imperialism will have caused "forests, villages, monasteries, pagodas" to have "vanished"). In Carr's scheme of things Flory must surely be seen as being torn between these two types, vying, albeit unconsciously at times, somewhere between the Utopian, who is the Leftist, and the Realist of the Right. Certainly he is the only one who,
while saying "some Bolshie things sometimes" (perhaps reflecting man's control in history), is nevertheless convinced that nature's way will prevail over the most planned and ordered intervention of man and that "the trees will avenge themselves."206

In a similar sense (i.e. of being torn between the "Utopian" and "Realist" positions) Flory's alienation shows how the social structure of Kyauktada, like any other, "often presents itself as composed of a moral and a factual, a normative and an institutional, level" or what Dahrendorf calls "in the doubtful terms of Marx, a superstructure and a substratum." Dahrendorf warns us, however, that even though

the investigator [in this case, Orwell] is free to choose which of these levels he wants to emphasize more strongly [in Flory's case, the moral or normative level] . . . he may be well-advised, in the interest of clarity . . . not to stress one of these levels to the exclusion of the other.207

That Burmese Days is an example of two ways of looking at the world (the "Utopian" or "Realist" view of society) is evidenced by the many statements in both dialogue and narration which support the two widely contrasting positions. For while Flory at times believes that "one should live with the stream of life, not against it" and that "it would be better to be the thickest-skulled pukka sahib who ever hiccuped over 'Forty years on,' than to live silent, alone, consoling oneself in secret, sterile worlds."208 he also believes that it's best, for example, for the whites to treat the Chinese "more or less as equals."209 At the same time Orwell, in the role of narrator, seems to despair of any hope of harmony between races when "the real backbone of the despotism is not the officials but the Army" which alone makes it possible for "a dull, decent people" to go on "cherishing and fortifying their dullness behind a quarter of a million bayonets."210 Flory's reaction to these incompatible
views is to create a cave of silence, a secret world inhabited by his outraged sense of morality, a morality firmly embedded in a utopian vision of what ought to be and one which is constantly seeking refuge from the harsh realities of the more realistic side of his nature. Accordingly Orwell argues that while in England we "sell our souls in public," secure in the knowledge that one can always "buy them back in private, among our friends," in Burma this is not the case, and he suggests that one's hypocrisy is extraordinarily difficult to bear when "even friendship can hardly exist when every white man is a cog in the wheels of despotism." 211

However, despite the contrast and tension between Flory's private world and the harsher reality (with its coercive elements) about him Orwell, I think, shows us how the stability of the imperialist structure (and I would suggest therefore many less coercive political systems) owes much to the propensity of its officials and home population to accommodate both world views at the same time. That wealth and stability at home demanded a willing blend of the two views is made clear in The Road to Wigan Pier where Orwell writes that, despite the hollow retorts of the Left against imperialism, "in the last resort, the only important question" for everyone is "Do you want the British Empire to hold together or do you want it to disintegrate? And at the bottom of his heart no Englishman, least of all the kind of person who is witty about Anglo-Indian colonels, does want it to disintegrate" for "the high standard of life we enjoy in England depends upon our keeping a tight hold on the Empire, particularly the tropical portions of it such as India and Africa." 212 Again Orwell brings us down to earth and gives a concrete example of what is really, in the end, a political act when
he says (admittedly through some exaggerations) that although it is wrong that millions of Indians must live at near starvation to satisfy the British standard of living, nevertheless "you acquiesce in it every time you step into a taxi or eat a plate of strawberries and cream."²¹³ This suggests then that the consumer needs of British society (which, despite its class differences, is relatively harmonious with its commonly shared inter-class traditions and tolerances) may well support a policy abroad which its masses would never tolerate at home, for although the question of imperialism may be considered a large and controversial moral issue by some individuals it remains, for the mass, a matter of multifarious needs and desires (such as wanting strawberries) which individually do not trouble the consumers' conscience even though the fulfillment of such needs and desires may only be possible through the coercion of a foreign proletariat. And in Burmese Days, by showing how normative values (rather than purely consumer needs and desires) at the Club, for example, form the basis of institutionalized policy, Orwell demonstrates how easy it is for a whole group (with the exception of Flory) to pass from a condition of almost passive acquiescence into one of vindictive and whole-hearted support for something as exceptionally harsh and coercive as Dyer's treatment of the natives at Amritsar.²¹⁴

Woodruff, in The Men Who Ruled India, describes how "Amritsar city from April 10th to the 12th was in the hands of a mob"²¹⁵ and how Brigadier-General Dyer, who arrived on the 11th, forbade public meetings. The population defied the order and subsequently Dyer ordered his troops to fire into a civilian crowd, killing over three hundred people and wounding about one thousand. His action, which was followed by his order that "any Indian" passing through a certain area "must
crawl along the street where an English woman, a missionary teacher, had been attacked by the mob and left for dead,"\textsuperscript{216} was fiercely debated, not so much in India but at home where many of those who, as Orwell points out, depended so much upon the fruits of imperialism held him to account and were referred to by Ellis as "those cowards in England" who had "something to answer for. . . . Even Mr. Macgregor, who detested bloodshed and martial law, shook his head at the name of Dyer. 'Ah, poor man! Sacrificed to the Paget M.P.s. Well, perhaps they will discover their mistake when it is too late.'\textsuperscript{217}

At this point it should be noted that some of Orwell's statements about mass support for imperialism and his tendency to think of imperialism as being more or less synonymous with exploitation (see above, p. 19) and always turning a profit rather than (as others have claimed) being an economic burden on the home country, involve sweeping assumptions, to say the least, and invite a scrutiny which is beyond the scope and intentions of this study. The importance, however, of reporting Flory's perhaps rather simplistic assumptions about the nature of imperialism (although moderately challenged by Veraswami) in this study is that they presumably reflect both the frustrations and confusion of a sensitive individual undergoing a crisis of identity when confronted by the pukka sahib's code in the outposts (and not in the head offices) of empire.

**SUBJECT EXPECTATION AND OFFICIAL AUTHORITY**

It is appropriate, having mentioned Flory as an example of a man torn between the individual and institutional levels of behaviour, to consider for a moment a later essay of Orwell's, *Shooting an Elephant*,
which was prompted by the author's own experience as a Police Officer in Moulmein, Lower Burma. The conclusion of the essay in which Orwell describes how he was called upon to execute an old elephant who had temporarily gone berserk and destroyed some native property is a good example of how the secret world of the individual and the requirements of institutional imperialism often clashed. Orwell writes:

All I knew was that I was stuck between my hatred of the empire I served and my rage against the evil-spirited little beasts who tried to make my job impossible. With one part of my mind I thought of the British Raj as an unbreakable tyranny, as something clamped down, in saecula saeculorum, upon the will of prostrate peoples; with another part I thought that the greatest joy in the world would be to drive a bayonet into a Buddhist priest's guts.

Orwell adds that "feelings like these are the normal by-products of imperialism, ask any Anglo-Indian official, if you can catch him off duty."218 (See above, p. 48.)

Orwell then proceeds to describe a process which I regard as a concrete example of not only the tension which exists between individual standards and institutional requirements but of what Dahrendorf refers to as "the important difference between power and authority," namely that "whereas power is essentially tied to the personality of individuals, authority is always associated with social positions or roles" and that while

the demagogue has power over the masses to whom he speaks or whose actions he controls . . . the control of the officer over his men, the manager over his workers, the civil servant over his clientele is authority, because it exists as an expectation independent of the specific person occupying the position. 219 (Italics mine.)

The example of this particular "actor dispensability" is found as we read how Orwell, going to find the by now passive elephant, is followed by an ever-growing crowd and although he initially decides that he ought not to destroy the elephant who is "peacefully eating . . . looking no
more dangerous than a cow," upon looking around at the "immense crowd,
two thousand at the least and growing every minute" he suddenly realizes

that I should have to shoot the elephant after all. The people
expected it of me and I had got to do it. . . . and it was at this
moment, as I stood there with the rifle in my hands, that I first
grasped the hollowness, the futility of the white man's dominion
in the East. Here was I, the white man with his gun, standing in
front of the unarmed native crowd — seemingly the leading actor of
the piece; but in reality I was only an absurd puppet pushed to and
fro by the will of those yellow faces behind.

Orwell thus argues that "when the white man turns tyrant it is his own
freedom that he destroys" and that "in every crisis he has got to do
what the 'natives' expect of him."²²⁰ (Italics mine.)

It is the idea that the white man destroys his own freedom (or
at the very least that imperialism is a two-way street) which is highly
significant in this passage and not only adds to Dahrendorf's idea that
expectation "independent of the specific person" separates pure power
from authority but also shows how the "dominant" party's action in an
authoritarian relationship can not only be influenced by subjects'
"expectation" but can actually be constrained and even changed into
a gesture of partial subjection rather than of dominance, thus contrib­
uting to those factors which in some cases, Dahrendorf claims, may even
make it "empirically . . . not always easy to identify the border line
between domination and subjection."²²¹ It should be mentioned here
that while Orwell's example of "actor dispensability" reflected the
unconscious dominance, in many cases, of a subject's expectation over
the strong personal characteristics of the role-player (in this case
an assistant district officer), it seems that such dispensability was
often embraced, if not planned, by high-level imperialist administrators
as a means of limiting the discretionary powers of subordinates in the
field, thereby assuring a large measure of stability through creating for the administration what one writer has referred to as "a continuity of influence independent of their [the administration's] personnel." 222

In any event when Orwell concludes his essay by wondering "whether any of the others grasped that I had done it [shot the elephant] solely to avoid looking like a fool" he has succeeded once again in crystallizing several political adumbrations into one intensely personal and easily understood experience.

While *Burmese Days* inculcates the same kinds of observations regarding authority as does *Shooting an Elephant*, the former concentrates more upon the overwhelming imperialist belief in the efficacy of the coercive approach to solving the problems of society. By way of a social manifestation of this predominant belief in coercion Orwell shows us how in Burma (and India) there was "dichotomy of positions of authority" 223 to a far less degree than in England for while an English top civil servant at that time may have been the subject of authority in, say, a local church committee, in Burma the imperialist structure by and large always placed him on top of the social ladder according to how much authority he could officially exercise. And even if it can be argued that the Club in Burma contained a "dichotomy of positions of authority" the fact remained that the Club (see above, p. 42) was the social extension of official attitudes and policy and being such its members were certainly not willing subjects insofar as the general populace was concerned, and if occasionally they did find themselves somewhat bound by the constraints of the general population's expectations it was seldom, if ever, to the same degree that their counterparts in England were. It was as if everyone in the Club was of the same class. In any
event Orwell, it seems, did not see what we might call a "plurality of competing dominant aggregates" among the white society of Empire, or at least not as many as there were at home in England.

CLASS AND IMPERIALISM

Orwell's Burmese experience was an important influence on his interpretation of the reasons for and the nature of class structure. In *The Road to Wigan Pier* he asserts that most of the white men in Burma were not of the type who in England would be called "gentlemen," but except for the common soldiers and a few nondescripts they lived lives appropriate to "gentlemen" - had servants, that is, and called their evening meal "dinner" - and officially they were regarded as being all of the same class (italics mine)

and as Flory says they are all "ex-officio, or rather ex-colore, a good fellow . . . it is an honourary rank." Indeed it is Elizabeth Lackersteen who, on her way to Burma, testifies to the absence of the kind of classifications one would expect in England and how, on the contrary, irrespective of their background at home, the majority of whites assumed a one class stance; and how simply being white meant that "it was almost as nice as being really rich, the way people lived in India." But it is left to Mrs. Lackersteen to express what for Orwell was to become the dominant theme of his later contributions to the nature of class differences when she says of the natives, "In some ways they are getting almost as bad as the lower classes at home." The "analogy" between natives and the English "working class" appears to have seriously influenced many imperialist perceptions of non-white communities throughout the British colonies. And it is this analogy which led Orwell to write later that the "English working class . . . were the symbolic
victims of injustice, playing the same part in England as the Burmese played in Burma." Elizabeth is obviously used by Orwell to typify the cultural shock experienced by the English, particularly the middle-class, when they first encountered another culture. In this regard it is interesting that Orwell believed that white people did not find the Burmese physically repulsive, noting that even "white men who had the most vicious colour prejudice" were quite willing to be "physically intimate" with the Burmese and, rather than colour emphasis, he placed much more emphasis on our developed sense of smell as the basis for much racial and class hatred. This is evidenced by Elizabeth's revulsion at the native smells during her visit to the bazaar. And although we see how she is revolted by the odours (and taste) of the natives' food rather than by their body odours it is clear that she associates the unfamiliar smells with an inferior people. When she asks Flory, for example, "What is that dreadful smell like fish?" and is told that it is "only a kind of sauce they make out of prawns" after the latter are buried and dug up several weeks later, she comments, "How absolutely horrible." And again, after being repulsed by what she perceives to be the dirty ways of the Chinese and their uncivilized customs, such as foot-binding and making tea which "tastes exactly like earth," she concludes that not only are they "disgusting" people but "savages" as well.

It should also be mentioned here that intimacy with the natives, while not so repulsive to the white men (at least as long as it was white men with native women and not native men with white women), was rejected by the white women and while Mrs. Lackersteen lives in fear of being raped by "a procession of jet-black coolies" Elizabeth believes that "only a very low kind of man would . . . have anything to
do with native women."  

To simply infer from Elizabeth's experience in the bazaar that the notion of class and racial difference is based solely upon physical revulsion is. I think to stretch the credibility of just one example beyond reasonable bounds, but when one discovers the emphasis which Orwell placed on what we might call quite normal physical revulsion (i.e. smell) as an indicator of class and racial bias, his scenes in *Burmese Days* must, I think, be seen in a different light. Such incidents cannot simply be dismissed as the still warm recollections of a novelist indulging in a process of catharsis, for in *The Road to Wigan Pier* which appeared ten years after he had left Burma Orwell vividly recalls his posting to a British regiment in Burma noting that while "a soldier is probably as inoffensive, physically, as it is possible for a male white person to be" he nevertheless found them offensive, confessing that "All I knew was that it was lower-class sweat that I was smelling, and the thought of it made me sick."  

Indeed Orwell tells us with utter conviction that the "real secret of class distinctions in the West" can be "summed up in four frightful words which people nowadays are chary of uttering, but which were bandied about quite freely in my childhood. The words were: The lower classes smell."  

Orwell pressed the point arguing that "race-hatred ... even differences of moral code, can be got over; but physical repulsion cannot. You can have an affection for a murderer or a sodomite, but you cannot have an affection for a man whose breath stinks - habitually stinks; I mean."  

Intellectually speaking this kind of approach to class and racial conflict may well be considered repulsive itself and
grossly simplistic but if we can suspend our familiarity with and expec-
tation of North American hygiene for a moment Orwell may indeed have
a point.\textsuperscript{242} Certainly while Madison Avenue may not relegate the pos-
sessors of body odour to a lower class such people are very definitely
portrayed as being socially repugnant even, I suggest, to those of us
who take delighted offence at the inanities of the television commer-
cial. In any case the point here is that Orwell once again reduces the
theory of class structure to a very concrete, personal (albeit unpleas-
ant) experience, perhaps modifying and at least challenging any high-
mindedness which may obscure some of the implications of our less redo-
lent reality.

Orwell's freedom to speculate upon the role of smell in class
outlook and indeed in the formation of class structure suggests a basic
difference between the creative writer and the social scientist, namely
that while the former may have more licence to make what are perhaps
socially offensive and controversial statements the latter, even if he
is no more concerned with aesthetic considerations than the creative
writer, is probably bound more by the conventions of academic responsi-
bility which may very well censure him should he give voice to such "gut"
reactions. Perhaps this restraint is right and proper, perhaps not, but
in any event it may mean that social scientists are prevented from say-
ing certain things, and if they do say them they do so at far greater
peril than the creative writer who, improperly or not, does not seem to
be held as responsible for his views; views, incidentally, which perhaps
because of a lesser professional stake in what he says, a creative writer
is allowed to change with more frequency than I think an academic com-
munity, properly or improperly, allows. In any event, Orwell, in dis-
cussing the role of smell in the formation and perpetuation of class differences, may direct a political scientist's, if not other social scientists', attention to a factor which he seldom bothers to observe (for whatever reason) in class relationships in general and in imperialism in particular.

THE WOMEN AND DEPENDENCE IN BURMESE DAYS

There is only one native woman of any real consequence in Burmese Days and that is Ma Hla May, Flory's mistress whom he later dismisses when he is attracted to Elizabeth Lackersteen. Apart from Ma Hla May's role as U Po Kyin's puppet in bringing about Flory's disgrace, she is an interesting character insofar as she is a good example not only of how the natives were so often thought of as children by the whites (and the condescending attitudes this gave rise to) but of what Mannoni in Prospero and Caliban refers to as the high degree of dependence of some native peoples upon their rulers and the feelings of acute insecurity and resentment which are often engendered upon the breakdown of such dependence relationships.

The dependence of certain native peoples upon the white man is seen by Mannoni as an extension of the natives' extraordinary (by European standards) dependency upon their own social group. This dependency affords the native a measure of security in his society and the world beyond (in much the same way as a sense of security was provided for the white man by his club) but if this social umbilical cord is abruptly severed the individual is left feeling utterly abandoned. This in turn, argues Mannoni, results not only in resentment but can lead to outbreaks of violence, which are not so much the manifestation
of disappointments resulting from rising expectations but rather a measure of the fear which confronts a people when the responsibilities of government (or at least more than they had previously) are suddenly given to them. By way of illustration he notes how "a Parisian newspaper said that it was inconceivable that the Malagasies should have revolted against the suppression of forced labour and the indigénat system" adding that

logically, of course, it seems absurd, but psychologically it cannot be dismissed as easily. The situation was intolerable to the Malagasies because, in spite of the objective security it offered them, it roused in them subjective feelings of abandonment and guilt. They felt abandoned because they could no longer be sure of authority. 246

Certainly it could be argued, I think, that in the short-lived rebellion in *Burmese Days* Orwell poses questions for the psychologist as well as the political scientist when (as Mannoni notes in Madagascar) he shows how "men could have courted death in conditions of combat unbelievably unfavourable to them." 247 It is important to recognize that Orwell's rather cursory treatment of the rebellion and the generally condescending terms which are used to describe it unwittingly reveal, I think, a belief that to the whites at least it is a rather enigmatic affair - almost childish in its incredible naivety - and so we tend to dismiss it as little more than a literary device to demonstrate U Po Kyin's propensity for evil and the native's childish simplicity. It is significant, however, that Orwell, presumably drawing heavily on his experience in Burma, 248 notes almost in passing that U Po Kyin employs a clever magician - "a circus conjurer" 249 - to help him in staging the rebellion. This is, I believe, part of the answer to how "men could have courted death in conditions of combat unbelievably
unfavourable to them" for, as in Mannoni's study of the much larger rebellions in Madagascar, the presence of a weiksa or magician or "invented tales which they would never have put faith in for an instant in normal times" reveals an extraordinary consciousness on the part of the natives of their generally subservient position in the Empire and a concomitant willingness, or need to rebel in the face of overwhelming odds; a need to express feelings of insecurity and abandonment rather than to acquiesce in the continuance of British rule. In short, the presence of the weiksa is a recognition that the natives harbour a high purpose rather than a dim intelligence.

Orwell's failure to explore the apparent gullibility of the rebellious natives reflects, I think, the ignorance of the white man who could not grasp the simple fact that life was probably just as precious to the native as to the white man and, more importantly, that something much deeper than the promise of a few material rewards would be needed to stir men to face death. As Mannoni suggests, the question we have to ask ourselves, once having recognized that "a rebellion requires a vast output of [psychic] energy," is "Where can it [the energy] have come from?"

No doubt much of the energy for rebellion in those days emanated from the widespread dissatisfactions of the Burmese during what has been called their darkest period (excepting, of course, the years of actual war, namely 1824-6, 1852 and 1885) ... from 1919, when the Government of India Act was passed, to 1930, when a peasants' rebellion broke out against the whole might of British rule and which was also the period of Orwell's novel. We have already noted how the characters in *Burmese Days*, particularly Mrs. Lackersteen and
Mr. Macgregor, recognized that "just before the war, they [the natives] were so nice and respectful" but how all this was changing as the "democratic spirit" was "creeping in." But what we need to know more about and what Burmese Days does not tell us, though it suggests it, is to what degree dissatisfactions with British rule were the results of the rising expectations inherent in the democratic spirit and how much dissatisfaction was engendered through the threat of increased freedoms. In this regard it is worth remembering Mannoni's statement that when Europeans tell them they will gain nothing from independence, but rather the contrary, they are wasting their time; the Malagasy know it already. With a Malagasy government in power there would be more arbitrariness, more corruption, more forced labour, heavier taxes, and so on. Political oppression would be greater, penalties would be more severe. All this they know, but it does not deter them. Perhaps the Burmese case is similar and the reason for the mass of people supporting a political ideal like that of "independence" is that though they did not really know what it or "nationalism" meant in terms of increased responsibilities of government, they might have followed a militant minority more from a strong sense of interdependence within their own society than from a sense of thwarted participation in the government of their country. Indeed, in The Unknown Orwell Stansky and Abrahams note that as a result of the Montagu-Chelmsford proposals recommending greater participation of Indians in government, the thought, or the hope, was that the granting of Dyarchy would satisfy nationalist aspirations, whatever they might be - the idea of "independence" had not been strongly brought forth except by a small militant Burmese minority, and it had scarcely entered into the calculations of the British. Then, as if echoing Mannoni's conclusions, they write: In any event, the hoped-for result was not achieved. As often happens when an imperial power grants some measure of political freedom to its subjects, the result was only to make it clearer
to them that they were not truly and fully governing themselves: they were still a subject people.  

In a similar fashion the authors note earlier how

paradoxically, it was the very attempts of the British government to liberalize its own administration and to allow the Burmese voice to be heard that made Orwell more conscious than he probably would have been otherwise of the Empire as a system in which he could not continue to participate and keep his self-respect.

Returning to the case of Ma Hla May it can hardly be claimed that she is aware of any political purpose or motivation in her behaviour but it can be said, I think, that she exhibits acute feelings of insecurity in the loss of Flory as a patron. Insofar as cast-off lovers are expected in most societies, I suppose, to exhibit some feelings of hurt, abandonment, and perhaps even insecurity, I doubt that Ma Hla May's behaviour could normally be considered especially indicative of any special dependence tendencies within her social group. However, the fact that she is not in love with Flory would seem to place her hysterical outbursts, as when "she lay prostrate in front of him . . . as though before a god's altar," well beyond normal expectation (at least a European's expectation). Yet even the sensitive Flory who listens to her beg, "Take Ma Hla May back. I will be your slave, lower than your slave. Anything sooner than turn me away" and whom we would expect to be most capable of understanding this crying need of dependence, fails to perceive the real nature of the woman's (and not the child's) fear of abandonment. Instead he offers the typical occidental's panacea by telling her, "You must go home, and later I will send you money." Finally abandoned, Ma Hla May cries, "How can I live after this disgrace?" and in her bitter resentment becomes a willing tool of U Po Kyin and wreaks a savage psychological vengeance upon Flory.
in the church.

On the subject of dependence relationships Philip Mason, in his foreword to Mannoni's book, points out how several phrases such as "the natives are never grateful" are typical of the European colonizer's vision of the native. With Mrs. Lackersteen's belief that "young men will not come out here any longer to work all their lives for insults and ingratitude" being fairly typical of the white community's view of the natives in Kyauktada, it is worth noting Mannoni's observation that "we have to teach European children to be grateful, and even then there is an element of hypocrisy in it, for the child cannot really learn gratitude until he has attained a certain independence." And he notes further that "the word for 'thank you' (mishoatra) is spoken by the donor as well as by the recipient in Madagascar; the same is true among European children." The Europeans in Kyauktada, it seems, regard the natives as little more than children partly because they, like European children, do not naturally express gratitude but rather express the attitude that "you have done something for me which you were under no obligation to do: therefore I am yours and you may command me but on the other hand I expect you to look after me." The danger of this similarity of behaviour between European children and the natives, however, is that European adults extrapolate from this similarity and thereby create the erroneous concept of the adult native as little more than a physically overgrown child. This situation is made worse of course when the native, as in the case of Ma Hla May, not only fails to show gratitude for gifts received (like a European child) but demands them. But even as she screams at him in the church, asking, "Where is the money you promised me?" it is
not the cry of a creditor but of someone's unassuaged insecurity, one to whom payment of rupees is the last vestige of dependence upon another who once provided her not only with food, physical shelter, and sexual fulfillment but with an emotional umbrella - a sense of continuity for the unknown future.

Another phrase which Mason mentions as being typical of the colonizer, "I never trust a servant who speaks English," and which is echoed by Ellis' pronouncement that "I can't stick servants who talk English," demonstrates, I think, how the European's reaction to any suggestion of equality through language is not so much a fear of equality, measured by linguistic skill, as an unwilling and indeed repressed recognition that the "ungrateful" native is not, after all, a groping child but an intelligent bilingual adult. This in turn, I suggest, makes the European feel insecure and prompts him to suppress the natives' expression of their intelligence lest its presence challenge or threaten the white man's belief in his racial superiority.

Finally, the importance of the dependence relationships of many native peoples (see below, n. 245) explains, I think, why the presence and perhaps even growth in post-colonial times of the kind of patron-client relationships evident in *Burmese Days* continues. For, despite drives for nationalism, there still appears to be a reluctance on the individual's part to seek either any substantial autonomy or social allegiance beyond his immediate social group. Further I would suggest that it is largely the native's reluctance to seek autonomy (often called lack of initiative by the whites) which calls into serious question Orwell's belief that it is solely military force which protects the whites. That is, I tend to believe Mannoni's conclusion that though the whites "made
a show of believing in military force; they knew instinctively, and
barely consciously, where their strength lay— in a certain 'weakness'
of personality on the part of the Malagasy [Burmese]"267 namely the
"network of dependencies" in which they (the whites) played so large a
part. A network of which the whites were conscious enough when, for
example, MacGregor, unarmed and looking out upon the angry and poten­
tially violent mob of natives, pronounces, "No . . . We must go outside.
It's fatal not to face them!"268

Orwell's treatment of the women imperialists in *Burmese Days*
is, I think, politically significant in that, along with Flory's fear
of nominating Veraswami for Club membership, it strongly attests to
what Bachrach and Baratz refer to as the dynamics of non-decision mak­
ing, that is, "the extent to which and the manner in which the status-
quo orientated persons and groups influence those community values and
those political institutions . . . which tend to limit the scope of
actual decision-making to 'safe' issues"269 and how, as Dahrendorf
points out, certain "groups or aggregates can be identified which do
not participate in the exercise of authority other than by complying
with given commands or prohibitions."270

In this sense the Club seems to be a perfect example of how
"organization [albeit informal] is the mobilization of bias"271 within
the white community of Kyauktada, especially when Orwell has so clearly
outlined the specific "values and biases that are built into the polit­
ic system" so that students of imperialism can first make "the dis­
tinction between important and unimportant issues," a distinction which
(agreeing with Bachrach and Baratz) I think cannot be made "intelligently
in the absence of . . . the dominant values and the political myths,
rituals and institutions" of a community. Once having noted the domi­nent values of a community, expressed almost every day at the Club, the admission of a native member, for example, takes on an importance which catapults it from what the above authors would call a "routine" to "key" political decision. 272

As an example of exercising authority through (pukka sahib) prohibitions Mrs. Lackersteen's authority and influence over much of Mr. Lackersteen's action is exerted through her "burra memsahib" expect­ations and these almost solely condition her husband's behaviour, so much so that his dialogue always seems a slightly drunken echo of norms which his wife shares with the other members of the Club. Early in the novel, complaining, as we have already seen, of the loss of some pre­war humility on the part of the natives, Mrs. Lackersteen laments, "We seem to have no authority over the natives nowadays, with all these dreadful Reforms, and the insolence they learn from the newspapers." 273 Then to Ellis' rejoinder that "we don't want natives poking about in here. We like to think there's still one place where we're free of them," Mr. Lackersteen echoes his wife's feeling of superiority over the natives, gruffly adding, "Hear, hear!" and later he assures his fellow Club members that they can "count on me to blackball the lot of 'em [the natives]." 274 Mr. Lackersteen's behaviour away from the Club is decidedly different, however, and at camp he has no objection to a legion of Burmese women frequenting his tent. This is not meant to suggest that interracial fornication is at all incompatible with race prejudice or even race hatred but to show how the restraint which he feels obliged to exercise both in the presence of his wife and in the institution of the Club testifies to "the extent to which . . .
status-quo orientated persons and groups influence . . . community values" and more specifically how the Club had solidified the feelings of race prejudice into an immovable, or at least highly resilient, policy of the ten precepts of the pukka sahib. The result is that Lackersteen's comments are reduced to little more than "Hear, hear!" with occasional bursts of originality exhausting themselves in such silly phrases as "Hear, hear! . . . Keep the black swabs out of it. Esprit de Corps and all that." As Orwell notes,

Mr. Lackersteen could always be replied [sic] upon for sound sentiments in a case like this. In his heart he did not care and never had cared a damn for the British Raj, and he was as happy drinking with an Oriental as with a white man; but he was ready with a loud 'Hear, hear!' when anyone suggested the bamboo for disrespectful servants or boiling oil for Nationalists. He prided himself that though he might booze a bit and all that, dammit he was loyal. It was his form of responsibility.

His wife's expectations in turn were based upon the prohibitions and expectations which she had inherited from others like "our burra sahib at Mandalay" who warned of the natives' "insults and ingratitude," proclaiming "that in the end we shall simply leave India. . . . We shall just go. When the natives come to us begging us to stay, we shall say, 'No, you have had your chance, you wouldn't take it. Very well, we shall leave you to govern yourselves.'" With regard to Bachrach and Baratz's point concerned with non-decision-making it is interesting to note that Mrs. Lackersteen did not nag her husband, she simply made it known that she held certain unalterable beliefs about the natives and expected her husband to support these views at all times. In this context Mr. Lackersteen is representative of all those imperialists who really didn't care about politics at all but who perpetuated some of imperialism's evils for no other reason
than they were afraid of their wives, and who, in their constant eagerness to get out into camp, testified to their having "tired of the restraints of civilized life" (in this case represented by Mrs. Lackersteen and Club), seeking "a more genial home among lawless [or at least less restrained] barbarians." 

It is in the presentation of such characters that I think Orwell has made a contribution to our understanding of how imperialism, in his time, produced social as well as political stereotypes. And it is the restraint placed upon the Mr. Lackersteens by their kind of wives and by all the Clubs in the Empire which formed the cement of Empire at the grass roots; that non-decision-making process which, entrusted to the "gramophone mind," would not question traditional norms and so guaranteed their relative longevity.

Flory is only too conscious of the possibility, never far away in the outposts of Empire, of falling victim through loneliness to an "inner; secret life" and perpetuating it and indeed making it worse beneath the debilitating power of someone like Mrs. Lackersteen, "some damned memsahib, yellow and thin, scandalmongering over cocktails, making kit-kit with the servants, living twenty years in the country without learning a word of the language," a memsahib who, through silent coercion prevents her husband from even uttering let alone practising his capacity for tolerance. Instead, through the medium of the evil eye, she cajoles him into supporting her supremacist philosophy. Indeed it is the final despair of the book that rather than Elizabeth becoming someone who would help Flory "to live with nothing hidden, nothing unexpressed" she ends up as yet another dull stereotype of imperialism.
Her servants live in terror of her, though she speaks no Burmese. She has an exhaustive knowledge of the Civil List, gives charming little dinner-parties and knows how to put the wives of subordinate officials in their places - in short, she fills with complete success the position for which Nature had designed her from the first, that of a burra memsahib.  

CONCLUSION

Finally, it is the emergence of stereotypes from Orwell's experience in Burma which offers an early indication of his later world view of the rich versus the poor and it is the novel's pessimistic though no doubt exaggerated pronouncement that, despite individual exceptions like Flory (or Winston Smith in the last novel, Nineteen Eighty-Four), it is the biparous, imperialist-totalitarian brotherhood which in the end will triumph.

As one writer has noted, Orwell shows how there can be "no compromise with imperialism." In particular I think that Burmese Days shows us how sometimes an individual's pride, manifesting itself in the "secret world" of conscience, is not sufficient to counteract the guilt of willful hypocrisy in the outside world and how in "the 'golden period' of imperial rule" the unavailability of viable alternatives to the stereotyped imperialist code of behaviour (alternatives which were almost certain to be branded as part of the antagonistic, creeping "democratic spirit") sometimes led to personal tragedy which made no difference to the system because pervading the system was a sense that no one, absolutely no one, was irreplaceable. This assumption of "actor dispensability" among imperialists often created in addition to a feeling of esprit de corps an overwhelming feeling of total submersion in an even slightly deviant individual; a feeling so oppressive that it
left such a person with two alternatives, either to capitulate totally
to the system or to totally withdraw. Partial withdrawal was seen as
being practically impossible. It is this latter which I believe gave
birth to Orwell's haunting fear of, and later obsession with, totali-
tarianism: the ultimate triumph, not of evil minorities (as amongst the
white population of Kyauktada) but of the mass, the petty imperialists
of self-interest, the gramophone minds to whom the sense of security is
guaranteed by the growth of order and threatened by the deviant individ-
ual who reflects their own fears, doubts, and imperfections.

Paradoxically Burmese Days' successful explication of the willing
stereotype is made possible through Orwell's focussing upon the most
individual - or most deviant - member of a group. This technique, I
think, deserves more attention than it has perhaps received among those
social scientists whose study of the group rests heavily upon collec-
tive actions rather than the single actor in a group. And while Burmese
Days no doubt raises more questions than it can answer about imperialism,
at the very least its treatment of Flory's imperialist imprisoned per-
sonality and what we learn from this reinforces, I think, Mannoni's
belief that (in politics as elsewhere)

the idea of a collective consciousness is hardly admissable, for it is really a contradiction in terms. The contradiction might perhaps be less glaring if we were to speak more loosely of a collective psyche. But we must not allow ourselves to be deceived by a metaphor; the collective psyche [and action] can only be apprehended through individuals; at most it is the group aspect of the individual psyche.286

In Flory's case Orwell shows us how an individual psyche struggled against
collectivist norms and in so doing attacked some of the most deceptive,
if now well-worn, metaphors of imperialism; metaphors which no longer
obscure our vision of imperialism precisely because they have been ex-
amined and at least partially exposed through such works as *Burmese Days*.

Hopefully throughout this study I have demonstrated that the moderately experimental nature of its juxtaposition of social science theory and fiction is mutually beneficial to both the social scientist and the student of literature in offering them new perspectives in their respective fields of interest.
FOOTNOTES


6. Ibid., p. 28.


8. Ibid., p. 30.

9. Ibid., p. 28.


13. Williams, Orwell, p. 11.


17. Ibid., p. 130.

18. Ibid., p. 129.

19. Ibid., p. 130.

20. Ibid., pp. 139-41.


22. George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier, p. 126.
23. In his essay Toward European Unity in The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol. IV, p. 427, Orwell writes, "Imperialism. The European peoples, and especially the British, have long owed their high standard of life to direct or indirect exploitation of the coloured peoples" but in The Road to Wigan Pier, p. 130, as already noted (see n. 19) he saw the English working-class as the "symbolic victims of injustice, playing the same part in England as the Burmese played in Burma," adding that "in Burma the issue had been quite simple. The whites were up and the blacks were down, and therefore as a matter of course one's sympathy was with the blacks. I now realized that there was no need to go as far as Burma to find tyranny and exploitation. Here in England, down under one's feet, were the submerged working class, suffering miseries which in their different way were as bad as any Oriental ever knows." In his essay Not Counting Niggers in The Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol. I, p. 435, Orwell writes, "What we always forget is that the overwhelming bulk of the British proletariat does not live in Britain, but in Asia and Africa."

In The Crystal Spirit, p. 71, Woodcock notes that "though the identity of the victims changed, the essential relationship remained the same. Orwell continued to view society according to the imperialist model he had observed in Burma. Instead of seeing an England populated by people of the same race, divided as it always has been into a number of merging classes and subclasses between which individuals could pass with considerable mobility, he tended always to see it in the simpler terms of a colonial world, a world of master race and subject race."


28. Ibid., p. 65.

29. See Anthony Downs, Inside Bureaucracy (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1966), pp. 24-31. For the purposes of this study the word "Bureaucracy" is used to denote a large organization, in this case the British Colonial Office, in which formal relationships among members dominate informal ones and where members work full-time and are selected mainly on a "merit" basis though ethnic background plays a vital role. Most important of all to this study is that "outputs" of the imperialist administration, largely coming through Rangoon, cannot be directly evaluated in economic terms or, as Downs would say, by "evaluating their outputs in relation to the costs of the inputs used to make them" (p. 30) (though the administration clearly aids other organizations in the private sector in seeking economic gain). This condition tends to make the degree to which a colonial civil servant conforms to and does not question existing policy the sole yardstick of his achievement.
30. Ibid., p. 17.


33. Ibid., p. 93.

34. Van Dyke, Political Science, p. 120.


36. Ibid., p. 99.


38. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 66. I think Orwell places too much emphasis on the presence of the Army as the sole deterrent to native hostility (see above, p. 69).


41. Ibid., p. 18.

42. Ibid., p. 66.

43. Ibid., p. 262.

44. Landau, Political Theory and Political Science, p. 228.

45. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 37.

46. Ibid., p. 38.

47. Ibid., p. 35.

48. Ibid., p. 39.

49. Van Dyke, Political Science: A Philosophical Analysis, p. 168.


51. H. Alan C. Cairns, in The Clash of Cultures (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1965), p. 228, shows how Orwell's belief was shared by some African colonialists recording The Bulawayo Sketch's comment of July 20, 1895 that "the main reason we are all here is to make money and lose no
time about it.'" He also notes how "an examination of that same press [local press] in the first six years of the life of the new colony reveals almost no concern whatever for the welfare of the Africans." Earlier Cairns records how "this economic emphasis was especially pronounced in the propagandistic support for imperial policies in the eighties and nineties," The Clash of Cultures, p. 222.


54. Ibid., p. 37.


56. Orwell, Burmese Days, pp. 139-40.

57. Ibid., p. 37.


59. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 41.

60. Ibid., p. 118. In a particularly revealing passage in The Unknown Orwell, Stansky and Abrahams are all but describing Flory when they write of Orwell (then Blair): "But if in public he conformed to what was expected of him at Headquarters and the Club, in private he could indulge his eccentricities. Beadon, who came out to see him one day when he was living at Insein, found his house a shambles, with 'goats, geese, ducks and all sorts of things floating about downstairs.' Beadon, who prided himself on his own neat house, was 'rather shattered,' and suggested to Blair that perhaps he might bear down on his houseman. The suggestion was shrugged aside: he quite liked the house as it was. Beadon changed the subject — was it true, as he had heard, that Blair was attending services in the native churches? Yes, it was true; it had nothing to do with 'religion,' of course, but he enjoyed conversing with the priests in 'very high-flown Burmese' (Beadon's phrase); and he added in his sardonic (or leg pulling) way that he found their conversation more interesting than that he was forced to listen to at the Club. Whereupon he took Beadon off for a farewell drink — at the Club! — before he set off for Rangoon." (Italics mine.) See pp. 193-94, The Unknown Orwell.)


62. Ibid., p. 124.

63. For an interesting account of how commerce alone, rather than Christianity, could sometimes be seen as the harbinger of civilization in Africa, see Cairns, The Clash of Cultures, pp. 222-47.
64. In *The Crystal Spirit*, p. 89, Woodcock notes how in *The Road to Wigan Pier* Orwell, talking about his immediate post-imperialist days, wrote, "At that time failure seemed to me the only virtue. Every suspicion of self-advancement, even to 'succeed in life to the extent of making a few hundreds a year, seemed to me spiritually ugly, a species of bullying." (See page 130, *The Road to Wigan Pier*.)

65. Orwell, *Burmese Days*, pp. 27-28. Macgregor's comment on p. 28 that "Those days are gone forever, I am afraid" not only laments the passing of easier times for the colonial and, I think, the advances in communication but is also an early indication of how Orwell viewed the first world war as the passing of an era of high personal security, a theme which coloured much of his work, particularly *Coming Up For Air* (Harmondsworth, England: Penguin Books [in association with Secker and Warburg], 1962), p. 107, where he writes how, during the pre-war days, although conditions were often hard, the people nevertheless had "a feeling of security, even when they weren't secure . . . a feeling of continuity. All of them knew they'd got to die, and I suppose a few of them knew they were going bankrupt, but what they didn't know was that the order of things could change." And later he writes, "People who in a normal way would have gone through life with about as much tendency to think for themselves as a suet pudding were turned into Bolshies just by the war." (See *Coming Up For Air*, p. 123.) Flory, if not an example of such a Bolshie, certainly has neither "a feeling of security" nor "a feeling of continuity." (See above, p. 45.) Macgregor's comment can also be seen as an indication of how the white man's failure to manage his own affairs so as to prevent the holocaust and savage inefficiency of world war no doubt encouraged the natives to be more demanding both in terms of their personal and national aspirations. For the analogy between "lower classes at home" and the natives see above, p. 59.


67. Ibid., p. 113. It is worthy of note that the Englishman's sense of superiority over the natives was perpetuated by what John Atkins in *George Orwell* (London: John Calder, 1954), p. 74, refers to as a "large number of minor fallacies, most interesting of which is the sunstroke fallacy, to which Orwell alludes several times." For an example of this and how half-castes tried desperately and pathetically to compensate for their inferior position in both the imperialist and Burmese society see *Burmese Days*, p. 116, where, among other things, Orwell has Flory saying to Elizabeth, "You see, Eurasians of that type - men who've been brought up in the bazaar and had no education - are done for from the start. The Europeans won't touch them with a stick, and they're cut off from entering the lower-grade Government services. There's nothing they can do except codge, unless they chuck all pretension to being Europeans. And really you can't expect the poor devils to do that. Their drop of white blood is the sole asset they've got. Poor Francis, [a Eurasian] I never meet him but he begins telling me about his prickly heat - bosh, of course, but people believe it. It's the same with sunstroke. They wear those huge topis to remind you that they've got European skulls. A kind of coat-of-arms. The bend sinister, you
might say." Elizabeth comments that the two Eurasians "looked awfully degenerate types, didn't they? So thin and weedy and cringing; and they haven't got at all honest faces" and says she has heard that "half-castes always inherit what's worst in both races." (See Burmese Days, p. 116-17.) In 1944 in the October 20 edition of Tribune Orwell, in his column "As I Please," generally debunked the notion that the risk of sunstroke is greater for the European than the native, noting that "the final blow was the discovery that the topi, supposedly the only protection against the Indian sun, is quite a recent invention. The early Europeans in India knew nothing of it. In short, the whole thing was bunkum." Orwell went on to ask "But why should the British in India have built up this superstition about sunstroke? Because an endless emphasis on the differences between the 'natives' and yourself is one of the necessary props of imperialism. You can only rule over a subject race, especially when you are in a small minority, if you honestly believe yourself to be racially superior, and it helps towards this if you can believe that the subject race is biologically different. There were quite a number of ways in which Europeans in India used to believe, without any evidence, that Asiatic bodies differed from their own. Even quite considerable anatomical differences were supposed to exist. But this nonsense about Europeans being subject to sunstroke, and Orientals not, was the most cherished superstition of all. The thin skull was the mark of racial superiority, [or, in the Eurasians' case, the mark of equality at least] and the pith topi was a sort of emblem of imperialism." (See p. 301, Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol. III.)


69. Ibid., p. 154.

70. Ibid., p. 156.

71. Although it seems that traditionally we have tended to associate the word "imperialism" with economic exploitation of non-whites, Koebner and Schmidt, in Imperialism, pp. 248-49, note how it was ironically the Boer War, a clash between whites, which "made the word [imperialism] an international slogan in Europe" giving "rise to the world-wide misinterpretation of the Boer War as a capitalist plot," an interpretation which "became the basis of all subsequent theories of imperialism."

72. Landau, Political Theory and Political Science, p. 81.

73. H. Alan C. Cairns, in The Clash of Cultures, p. 198, points out how some colonizers in fact believed that trade (though not necessarily exploitative trade) was very much a necessary tool of Christian progress, and how to Livingstone, for example, trade seemed to be "an ethical rather than an economic concept."

74. Orwell, Inside the Whale and Other Essays, p. 153.

76. In *Politics and the English Language* in *Inside the Whale and Other Essays*, p. 153, Orwell gives some excellent examples of bad usage and makes the point that the constant "invasion of one's mind" by a ready-made phrase "anaesthetizes a portion of one's brain."


84. My belief that the novel can serve as a laboratory reflects my acceptance of Mannoni's statements that "the personality [Flory's say] represents, not the species and line, but the social group and the family - the latter as human environment and not as genetic source" and that "the best way to approach certain problems of collective psychology is, instead of studying the social group from the outside, to seek its inner reflection in the structure of personalities typical of the [imperialist] group." (O. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban*, trans. by P. Powesland [New York: Frederick A. Praeger, 1956], pp. 25-26.)


97. The widespread practice of respected officials in non-white communities accepting gifts as part of their official duty is further supported by Mannoni in his study of colonization in *Prospero and Caliban*, p. 157, where he describes how "Malagasy chiefs of cantons, for instance, are capable of enforcing the rules with the strictest precision and even pedantry, while at the same time allowing themselves to be influenced by personal relationships, social position, and the small but frequent gifts which they accept without the slightest feeling of dishonesty."


100. Scott, *Patron-Client Politics*, p. 95.


109. For a discussion of these terms see Scott, *Patron-Client Politics*, pp. 96-102.


112. For a discussion of "affective" versus "instrumental" ties see Scott, *Patron-Client Politics*, pp. 94-98.


119. For further discussion of these terms see Scott, *Patron-Client Politics*, pp. 99-100.

120. Scott, *Patron-Client Politics*, p. 103. Scott writes: "As the communal land controlled by the village dwindled, as outsiders came increasingly to own land in the village, and as the villagers increasingly worked for non-kin, the value of patron-client links increased for all concerned."


127. For a general discussion of the power approach see Van Dyke, *Political Science*, pp. 140-44.


131. Mannoni, *Prospero and Caliban*, pp. 203-204, and see above, n. 120.

132. In *Prospero and Caliban*, p. 204, Mannoni gives a fascinating account of such motivation by describing how "there was once a law in Ethiopia according to which a creditor might attach his debtor to him by means of a chain. Thus they were both in exactly the same situation, but in this situation the debtor was to be pitied, whereas the creditor, on the other hand, gains some satisfaction."

Mannoni adds that "this illustrates, in its pure state, the satisfaction of the master who owns a slave" and how "even though it concerns a creditor, no economist can explain it," concluding that "it is essential,
however, to take this sort of pleasure into account in any attempt to understand what is colonial about a colonial situation." Closer to Burmese Days, Mannoni also notes how many a European, finding it almost impossible to "sacrifice the satisfaction of being absolute masters," (p. 203) has elected to accept financial loss as a cost of his continued power.

133. Macgregor's comment in Burmese Days, p. 28, that "I am afraid there is no doubt that the democratic spirit is creeping in, even here" reflects not only Orwell's but Hobson's firmly-held belief that "the antagonism with democracy drives to the very roots of Imperialism as a political principle" and the latter's concern that despotism abroad will inevitably corrupt politics at home. J.A. Hobson, Imperialism: A Study (3rd revised ed., 5th impression; London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd., 1954), p. 145.

134. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 66.

135. Ibid., p. 66.

136. Ibid., p. 37.

137. Ibid., p. 41.

138. Ibid., p. 181.


140. For Orwell's use of this term and its implications see Orwell, Inside the Whale and Other Essays, p. 95.


143. Ibid., p. 27. For an interesting discussion of group pressure on the individual see Verba, ch. II, The Primary Group and Politics, pp. 17-60.

144. Verba, Small Groups and Political Behavior, p. 28.

145. Ibid., p. 29.

146. Ibid., p. 53.

147. Orwell, Inside the Whale and Other Essays, p. 92.


149. Verba, Small Groups and Political Behavior, p. 54.

150. Ibid., p. 58.
151. Orwell, *Burmese Days*, p. 69. "He [Flory] had no tie with Europe now, except the tie of books . . . There was, he saw clearly, only one way out. To find someone who would share his life in Burma — but really share it, share his inner, secret life . . . a friend, that was what it came down to."

152. For implications of these terms see Verba, *Small Groups and Political Behavior*, pp. 142-60.

153. Verba, *Small Groups and Political Behavior*, p. 61. For Orwell's objection to the use of the word "extraneous" see *Politics and the English Language*, in *Inside the Whale and Other Essays*, p. 147.

154. In *Small Groups and Political Behavior*, p. 61, Verba asks, "If the political system cannot be studied 'on the scene' by the experimental method, can the researcher create his own miniature political process in the laboratory?" adding that in such a situation "the social objections to the manipulation of the political process do not apply" and that "cut off from the uncontrollable bustle and flux of the political process, the experiments can create the situation he wants." I am not suggesting here that Orwell's observations nor the small group behaviour were divorced from the "bustle and flux of the political process" but that the situation in Kyauktada was relatively stable so that behaviour before the war, for example, was not likely to be substantially different from that immediately after the war, the latter being described by Orwell in *Burmese Days*, p. 64, as "a storm beyond the horizon" during which time Burma, "the hot, blowsy country, remote from danger, had a lonely, forgotten feeling."


158. In *Burmese Days*, p. 40, Orwell talks of "all the gramophones playing the same tune." This image, symbolic of the effects of mass culture, was to reappear throughout his work. (See above, n. 82.)

159. In *The Crystal Spirit*, p. 76, Woodcock, referring to the pukka sahib's code as described by Orwell in *Burmese Days*, also writes that "these injunctions sound very much like the code of a secret order, and the white society of Upper Burma, as Orwell portrays it, is the earliest prototype of the ruling elite of Oceania which he described fourteen years later in *Nineteen Eighty-Four*.


York: Houghton Mifflin, 1970), p. 214. It should be noted, however, that "the neighborhood pub" analogy here is limited in that Deutsch did not claim that the British government considered pubs an appendage of official establishments or ever seriously used the pub to implement its orders.

163. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 45.

164. Ibid., p. 135.


166. Geertz, The Social History of an Indonesian Town, pp. 5-6.


168. Guyot, Bureaucratic Transformation in Burma, p. 357. For further discussion of the administrative frame in which the "district officer was the key member of the structure" see pp. 354-84.

169. Guyot, Bureaucratic Transformation in Burma, p. 360. (See above, p. 24.)

170. Ibid., p. 380.


172. Ibid., p. 39.

173. Samuel P. Huntington, "The Change to Change: Modernization, Development and Politics," Comparative Politics, III (April, 1971), p. 290. It should be noted that after the immediate post-independence era of many of the newly emerging nations, the optimism of the fifties has given way to a return to pessimism in the seventies and indeed the relationship between the terms "modernization" and "political development" is now being seriously re-examined. (See R.S. Milne's article "The Over-developed Study of Political Development," Canadian Journal of Political Science, V (December, 1972), pp. 560-68.

174. Ibid., p. 294.


178. Furnivall, Colonial Policy and Practice, pp. 74-75.

179. In The Crystal Spirit, pp. 168-70, Woodcock mentions how Orwell "freely" (p. 168) admitted the influence of Zamyatin's novel We on Nineteen Eighty-Four but notes that while there are undoubtedly "many points of resemblance between the two books there are "some important differences"
and one of these is that whereas Zamyatin was "preoccupied with the mechanical problems" of instituting a totalitarian society Orwell, who "did not have a scientific mind," was much more concerned with the "cultural and psychological means of tyranny," (pp. 169-70).


185. George Orwell, *The Lion and the Unicorn* in *Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters*, Vol. III, pp. 93-94. Contrary to Orwell's above comments, R.V. Kubicek in *The Administration of Imperialism: Joseph Chamberlain at the Colonial Office* (Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 1969), p. 30, asserts that "Technological innovation in communications did not change imperial administration significantly in the 1890s either in gathering and disseminating information, formulating and implementing policy, or modifying organization and procedure" and notes that "The telegraph as a medium of communication in this stage of development [the 1890s] made the office [Colonial Office] more acutely aware of the need to support rather than curb or direct the actions of the man on the spot" (p. 32). He adds that although the use of the telegraph "accelerated the pace of some aspects of decision making it had not supplanted the mailed despatch as the chief focus of office business" noting that "by 1893 it [the Colonial Office] handled an average of 6 telegrams an official day compared to 138 letters and despatches" while "a decade later the figures were 20 and 315 respectively" (p. 31).

It may be true that Orwell overestimated the impact of the telegraph during the 1890s and first decade of the twentieth century when he claimed "the Blimp class was already losing its vitality" (see above) but in view of the ever increasing number of despatches both to and from Whitehall and the much more efficient telegraph, and later telephone, communication systems Orwell's point about there being less room for individual initiative because of increased communications is probably valid for the period after 1911 (which he was talking about in the passage quoted above). It should also be remembered that *Burmese Days* deals with an even later period, that is during the nineteen twenties, when communications had improved greatly due to the first world war.

In any event Kubicek's comment that "the telegraph . . . made the office more acutely aware of the need to support rather than curb or direct the actions of the man on the spot" is made about a period during which the Colonial Office experienced an acute staff shortage as reported in 1903 by Frederick Graham, Colonial Office assistant under-secretary who wrote (p. 29, *The Administration of Imperialism*), "During the last seven years it has been impossible to discharge the work of the Colonial Office promptly and thoroughly. This is primarily due to the fact that while . . . the volume of work has increased steadily and
rapidly, the increase of the staff has always been behind it." In view of this statement I would suggest that Whitehall's willingness "to support rather than curb or direct the actions of the man on the spot" perhaps had more to do with the staff shortage at that time — there were, for example, only 113 in the Colonial Office in 1903 (p. 27, The Administration of Imperialism) — than with any conscious determination not to interfere with subordinate colonial officials, particularly those in the farthest flung outposts such as Kyauktada.


187. Ibid., p. 228.

188. Ibid., p. 227.


190. Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier, p. 127.

191. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 32.

192. Ibid., p. 235. The scene in which Ellis canes the Burmese boy almost certainly owes something to the following incident as described by Dr. Maung Htin Aung: "One afternoon, at about 4 P.M., the suburban railway station of Pagoda Road was crowded with schoolboys and undergraduates, and Blair came down the stairs to take the train to the Mission Road Station, where the exclusive Gymkhana Club was situated. One of the boys, fooling about with his friends, accidentally bumped against the tall and gaunt Englishman, who fell heavily down the stairs. Blair was furious and raised the heavy cane that he was carrying, to hit the boy on the head, but checked himself, and struck him on the back instead. The boys protested and some undergraduates, including myself, surrounded the angry Englishman . . . The train drew in and Blair boarded a first-class carriage. But in Burma, unlike India, first-class carriages were never taboo to natives, and some of us had first-class season tickets. The argument between Blair and the undergraduates continued. Fortunately, the train reached Mission Road Station without further incident, and Blair left the train." (See p. 188, The Unknown Orwell).


194. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 66.


198. In Urban Politics, p. 5, Kaplan writes how "Parsons describes
the content of a role not in terms of the incumbent's behavior but in terms of the normative expectations surrounding the incumbent."


200. At the beginning of Colin Wilson's The Outsider (London: Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1956) this total disenchantment with the world is revealed in a section of dialogue from Bernard Shaw's John Bull's Other Island, Act IV, which runs as follows:

"Broadbent: ... I find the world quite good enough for me - rather a jolly place, in fact.
Keegan: (looking at him with quiet wonder): You are satisfied?
Broadbent: As a reasonable man, yes. I see no evils in the world - except, of course, natural evils - that cannot be remedied by freedom, self-government and English institutions. I think so, not because I am an Englishman, but as a matter of common sense.
Keegan: You feel at home in the world then?
Broadbent: Of course. Don't you?
Keegan: (from the very depths of his nature): No."

201. Van Dyke, Political Science, p. 177.

202. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 244.

203. Van Dyke, Political Science, p. 177.

204. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 40.

205. Van Dyke, Political Science, p. 177. Van Dyke gives a concise yet general description of Carr's "utopian" and "realist."


209. Ibid., p. 124.

210. Ibid., p. 66. (See above, p. 69.)

211. Ibid., p. 66. Note the mechanistic image at a time of alienation.

212. Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier, pp. 139-40. Further criticism of the Left was made in Orwell's essay on Rudyard Kipling in which he wrote: "All left-wing parties in the highly industrialized countries are at bottom a sham, because they make it their business to fight against something which they do not really wish to destroy. They have internationalist aims, and at the same time they struggle to keep up a standard of life with which those aims are incompatible. We all live by robbing Asiatic coolies, and those of us who are 'enlightened' all maintain that
those coolies ought to be set free, but our standard of living, and hence our 'enlightenment,' demands that the robbery shall continue." (See p. 219, Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol. II.)

In The Lion and the Unicorn, Orwell wrote: "In England there is only one Socialist party that has ever seriously mattered, the Labour Party. It has never been able to achieve any major change, because except in purely domestic matters it has never possessed a genuinely independent policy. It was and is primarily a party of the trade unions, devoted to raising wages and improving working conditions. This meant that all through the critical years it was directly interested in the prosperity of British capitalism. In particular it was interested in the maintenance of the British Empire, for the wealth of England was drawn largely from Asia and Africa. The standard of living of the trade-union workers, whom the Labour Party represented, depended indirectly on the sweating of Indian coolies. At the same time the Labour Party was a Socialist Party, using Socialist phraseology, thinking in terms of an old-fashioned anti-imperialism and more or less pledged to make restitution to the coloured races. It had to stand for the 'independence' of India, just as it had to stand for disarmament and 'progress' generally. Nevertheless everyone was aware that this was nonsense." (See p. 113, Collected Essays, Journalism and Letters of George Orwell, Vol. II.)

213. Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier, p. 140. It is interesting that in regards to Africa Cairns makes essentially the same point in The Clash of Cultures, p. 247, where he writes: "The slave trade, which so appalled western observers, was partly a reflection of the demands of western civilization for ivory to grace the piano keyboards and dressing tables of middle-class homes."


216. Ibid., p. 241.


218. Orwell, Inside the Whale and Other Essays, p. 92. The use of phrases like "saecula saeculorum," it might be noted, contravenes Orwell's later notion that "bad writers, and especially scientific, political and sociological writers, are nearly always haunted by the notion that Latin or Greek words are grander than Saxon ones" though of course Orwell writes that if we look back on his essay Politics and the English Language, p. 154, we are certain to find "that I have again and again committed the very faults I am protesting against." The point I wish to make here is that Orwell's attraction to such phrases, despite his high level of consciousness about them, testifies to the difficulty of shaking our "habit" of surrendering to ready-made phrases.

219. Dahrendorf, Class and Class Conflict, p. 166.

221. Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict*, pp. 170-71. Although Dahrendorf is discussing a more modern and complex society than that discussed in *Burmese Days*, I do not believe that the line is sometimes as difficult to discern as he states. The important point here, I think, is that the ruled simply have more of an effect upon the rulers than we might previously have imagined.


223. Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict*, p. 171.

224. Ibid., pp. 171-72.


227. Ibid., p. 92.

228. In *The Road to Wigan Pier*, pp. 120-34, Orwell gives a detailed account of how strong his Burmese experience proved to be in his view of, and determination to investigate, the English working class.


230. In *The Clash of Cultures*, p. 92, Cairns notes the existence of the same analogy in imperialist Africa and also mentions that "the most explicit indication of the denial of equality of racial and cultural status is seen in the very widespread comparison of the African to a child." (See above, p. 68.)

231. Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier*, p. 130.

232. Ibid., p. 124.


234. Ibid., p. 124.

235. Ibid., p. 126.

236. Ibid., p. 123.

237. Ibid., p. 131.

238. Ibid., p. 117. Mannoni in *Prospero and Caliban*, p. 111, suggests that such feelings result from "repressed tendencies towards sadism, rape, or incest" which both "frightens and fascinates us" and are "projected on to others" in an effort to rid ourselves both of fear and guilt. The only explicit case of repressed sexuality coming to the surface in *Burmese Days*, I think, occurs during the hunting
trip (pp. 149-65) when Elizabeth trembles with excitement before the kill and upon being told about Flory's tiger shoot she "wriggled her shoulder-blades against the chair. It was a movement that she made sometimes when she was deeply pleased. She loved Flory, really loved him, when he talked like this. The most trivial scrap of information about shooting thrilled her." (Burmese Days, p. 153.)

239. Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier, p. 125.

240. Ibid., p. 112.

241. Ibid.

242. Mannoni, although he says that smell does not figure in any prejudice the Malagasy may have against the white colonial, for example, does mention that the latter's smell is criticized by the natives. In any event it is most definitely noticed and criticized. (See Prospero and Caliban, p. 117.)

243. This analogy with children is particularly evident in the number of times Ma Hla May is referred to as a doll. Early in the novel Orwell describes her as being "like a doll, with her oval, still face the colour of new copper, and her narrow eyes; an outlandish doll and yet a grotesquely beautiful one." Later, upon seeing Ma Hla May for the first time, Elizabeth Lackersteen exhibits surprise, commenting, "Oh, is that what Burmese women are like? They are queer little creatures! . . . They're just like a kind of Dutch doll, aren't they?" Again when Elizabeth is describing Ma Hla May to her aunt she depicts her as "such a queer little thing - she was almost like a doll with her round yellow face and her black hair screwed up on top." (See Burmese Days, pp. 50, 84, and 95.)

244. For an extremely interesting and, I think, perceptive account of these dependence relationships see Chapter III, The Threat of Abandonment, in Prospero and Caliban, pp. 61-88.

245. In Prospero and Caliban, Mannoni describes how "the most important factor in Malagasy family life is a body of customs or beliefs, coherent, firm, and deep-rooted, generally known by the name of ancestor-worship, or the cult of the dead." (See p. 49, Prospero and Caliban.) He cautions us against assuming "with the broadmindedness we believe to be a product of civilization, that 'every country has its customs,' and the Malagasy will echo us in one of his proverbs" warning that to us (Europeans) "customs are simply prejudices towards which we may be tolerant or indulgent, whereas to the Malagasy they are literally life-giving; they are the basis of his whole existence and not mere eccentricities for which he must be pardoned." (See p. 55, Prospero and Caliban.) Mannoni does not confine his examples of dependency and fear of abandonment to the Malagasy but reports how Congolese patients' demands for compensation after being treated by doctors were regarded as shocking reversals of the "'normal' situation" (i.e. of European expectations), but how a strong dependency was established when the "cured man says to the doctor: 'Your herbs cured me. You are now my
white man. Please to give me a knife,' and he adds, 'I shall always come to beg of you." (See p. 45, Prospero and Caliban.)

He also records how a Mr. Williams wrote of a Fijian patient who, once having asked for, and being given, food, "deemed himself at liberty to beg anything he wanted, and abuse me [Williams] if I refused his unreasonable request. . . . Again, an injured man was treated, but when he was refused something he had asked for he 'showed his sense of obligation by burning down one of the captain's drying-houses, containing fish to the value of three hundred dollars.'" (See p. 45, Prospero and Caliban.)

247. Ibid., p. 134.
249. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 182. See also p. 106.
250. Ibid.
253. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 28.
256. Ibid., p. 170.
258. Ibid., p. 147.
259. Ibid., p. 148.
260. Ibid., p. 31.
261. Mannoni, Prospero and Caliban, p. 44.
262. Ibid., p. 10.
263. Ibid., p. 122.
264. Ibid., p. 258.
265. Mannoni, Prospero and Caliban, p. 44.
266. Orwell, Burmese Days, p. 25.


270. Dahrendorf, *Class and Class Conflict in Industrial Society*, p. 171.


273. For examples of a "burra memsahib's" outlook and behaviour see *Burmese Days*, pp. 27-28 and 272.


276. In *Burmese Days*, Orwell writes that "(perhaps the most important of all the Ten Precepts of the pukka sahib)" is "not to entangle oneself in 'native' quarrels." (See p. 75.)


279. U Po Kyin was very much aware of this fact and sent one of his anonymous letters to Mrs. Lackersteen recognizing "the power of European women." (See *Burmese Days*, p. 130.)

280. Cairns, *The Clash of Cultures*, pp. 226-27. Cairns writes: "The problem which bedevilled the missionary attitude to colonization and commerce was the dichotomy between the desire for communities of God-fearing white Christians and the fear that in fact future settlements of whites could be conspicuously deficient in men possessed of the Christian characteristics described by Thomson." (The *Clash of Cultures*, p. 226.) Though Kyauktada is in Burma one cannot help but think that this small settlement is an example of what the missionaries in Africa were afraid of, particularly as it is partly exemplified in the lackadaisical character of Mr. Lackersteen and the vindictiveness of Ellis who is generally enraged by the possibility that the natives might think that they are equal to the whites and so exclaims, "What bloody fools we were ever to let those missionaries loose in this country! . . . Teaching bazaar sweepers they're as good as we are." (See *Burmese Days*, p. 26.)

282. Orwell, *Burmese Days*, p. 272. The fate of Elizabeth is particularly interesting when one reads in *Prospero and Caliban* that "At least one element in this feminine racialism is over-compensation for an inferiority complex similar to that of *nouvelle-riches* in Europe, whose relations with their domestic servants and social inferiors bear the stamp of over-compensation. There is undoubtedly some sexual tinge to it too: the white woman is constantly trying to impress it on the white man's unconscious that there can be no possible comparison between herself and the Malagasy [native] woman. As for her attitude to the Malagasy man, the power of issuing tyrannical orders to him no doubt satisfies her unconscious urge to dominate a male figure." (See *Prospero and Caliban*, p. 116.)


SELECTED BIBLIOGRAPHY


