

CHAPTER - V

CONCLUSIONS

George Orwell was born in a troubled generation of the first decade of the twentieth century. He grew during the cynical twenties and remained a witness to both the great Wars. He lived in the age of Depression, unemployment, poverty and destruction. He had developed consciousness to take note of the disturbing things happening around him. His consciousness, worries, fears, reactions and prophetic visions constitute a major part of his writings.

His writings always discuss peculiar themes like the effects of imperialism, life of the outcasts, poverty, corruption-in religion, in education, and in politics, moral degradation, racism, war. The study of his three major novels, i.e. Burmese Days, A Clergyman's Daughter and Coming Up for Air confirms the view that Orwell concentrates on certain social issues. Burmese Days deals mainly with the drastic effects of imperialism in Burma. The novel depicts utter exploitation of the natives by the white rulers. It also projects the disgusting master-slave relationship developed by the impererialists. One of the consequences of imperialism is the moral deterioration of the natives. The power conflict between the two natives- U

Po Kyin and Dr. Verasawmi is a speaking example of the moral degradation. Both desire to be a member of the whites' club. Eventually U Po Kyin succeeds in defaming his rival and getting a membership of the club. Corruption of English life and decline of British imperialism are the major issues discussed by Orwell in the novel. The white rulers in this novel are possessed with the feeling of superiority. Their social behaviour is characterized by gossip, backbiting, drinking, frequent visits to brothels or affairs with native girls. Orwell vehemently criticizes the hollow nature of the imperialists.

Poverty remains another significant concern for Orwell. Almost all his novels discuss poverty and its deep effects on its victims. Burmese Days depicts poverty in Burma. Though Orwell here doesn't provide a detailed picture of the poverty of the Burmese, they are shown illiterate, superstitious and victims of oppression. Orwell feels poverty is the result of imperialism in Burma. A Clergyman's Daughter is a novel depicting poverty in detail. Dorothy Hare, the protagonist, herself is experiencing poverty. Her careless father makes her move from place to place to collect funds for the church. As the rector is interested more in investing his money in shares the entire responsibility of financial matters falls on Dorothy. She has to work very hard to make both ends meet. After amnesia when Dorothy comes to the streets she witnesses the real nature of poverty. She stays with tramps and

shares their starvation, stealing and begging too. Then she spends some days with beggars, the unemployed and thieves. Her life in Trafalgar Square is awful. Orwell shows full sympathy for the social outcasts. The novel Coming Up for Air, too depicts unemployment and poverty. After the war soldiers are dismissed. They go on collecting funds from citizens. Katie, George Bowling's maid in the childhood, is so poor that she has to share her clothes with her sisters.

Loss of faith, Orwell feels, has become a feature of modern society. Too much science and technology have led the world to its destruction in every sense. In A Clergyman's Daughter Orwell shows that a very central institute like church has lost its meaning in the modern world. Church is getting rejected by the society, and it is all a result of the element of corruption that has entered the church. Dorothy's father is neglecting his duties as a rector. The church is not clean. Bells are not in use. People are shown selling the Bible at half prices; but there is nobody to purchase it. In A Clergyman's Daughter the priest, Mr. Tallboys, tries to seduce a girl. In Burmese Days Orwell shows that even priests are having illegitimate children. Corruption in religion leads to loss of faith and also to moral degradation. Orwells shows in Coming Up for Air that murders, violence have become a part of daily life in the advanced world, killing becomes common. In Burmese Days the white rulers have illicit relationship with the

native women ; and their children are called 'Eurasians'. The Eurasians are a serious social issue as they are the victims of hatred of both - the white fathers and the black mothers. Prostitution becomes a common affair in the modern world. Dorothy, after recovering from the state of amnesia, stays with the prostitutes and watches closely their agonies.

Orwell discusses the fall of standard in academic field too. A Clergyman's Daughter, in particular, deals with corruption in education. After regaining her memory Dorothy joins a school in the suburb of London whose headmistress, Mrs. Creevy, is a lady with mercenary motives. She doesn't have any academic intention. She wants to earn money. She divides her students according to their economic status. She doesn't want to change her conventional and outdated teaching techniques. Neither the teachers nor the parents understand the real motive of school. In his novel, Coming up for Air, Orwell has shown the horrible consequences of war. War becomes an unavoidable affair. War becomes synonymous with death, destruction, starvation, foodqueues, bombing, fear and hatred, War changes the mentality of people. Hence George Bowling is more afraid of facing a post war society than actual war.

Orwell has shown his protagonists suffering from the sense of 'loneliness'. Flory is hated by his own people and is not accepted also by the natives. His birthmark also is responsible in making him more lonely,

Dorothy, too, is lonely. Her father doesn't care for her. After amnesia she wanders alone with the outcasts. Even after her return to the rectory finally she knows that she is alone. George Bowling from Coming Up for Air is hated his wife and children. So he begins to suffer from the sense of 'loneliness' and desires to escape to the pleasant past. Orwell attempts to show that his protagonists are victims of some system - political, social, religious or industrial. This sense of being a victim and of helplessness develop the feeling of loneliness among the protagonists.

Orwell's writings show an obvious connection with his life. Therefore most of Orwell's novels are regarded autobiographical. Orwell certainly had a first-hand experience of poverty and war. In his childhood he was sent to St. Cyprian's school. Due to his poverty Orwell had to suffer much in the school. He was looked down upon by other boys belonging to richer class. The headmaster and his wife were greedy who had a cynical view of education. Orwell creates Mrs. Creevy, the headmistress in A Clergyman's Daughter out of his awful experiences at St. Cyprian's. What Dorothy observed at the school in the suburb of Southbridge was, infact, Orwell's own experiences. At St. Cyprian's students were divided according to their financial status. The school looked like a prison with severe punishments and underfeeding. These bitter experiences developed in Orwell the sense of class discrimination and social snobbery. Another experience of

poverty Orwell could have when he resigned from the Indian Imperial Police and reached the poor quarters in London and Paris. He spent his nights with tramps in Trafalgar square. He slept covering himself with papers only. He went for haph-picking too. These are the experiences of Dorothy Hare also.

Orwell was in the Indian Imperial Police in Burma for five years. Initially he felt happier as he was superior to the natives, but later on he realized that he was a part of the oppressive mechanism of imperialism. He, therefore, resigned and joined the company of the outcasts. His experiences in Burma are attributed to Flory in Burmese Days.

The sense of loneliness that is observed in the protagonists of Orwell was experienced by Orwell himself. Since childhood Orwell suffered from ill-health. Everybody showed pity for him which he didn't like. Thus he started cutting himself off the rest of the world. The sense of financial insecurity, too, made him more lonely. As he belonged to the lower-middle class family he became a victim of social snobbery. The school atmosphere added into his loneliness. The prison like school, its severe punishments, greedy teachers, snobbish class-fellows, all these things helped Orwell develop a sense of loneliness. In his childhood his father remained away from the family. This is also one of the reasons for his feeling of loneliness.

Orwell was a victim of ill-health since his childhood. Hence he shows his protagonists, too, unfit physically, Flory has a hideous birthmark on his face which develops a feeling of inferiority in him. Dorothy falls a prey to amnesia - a mental state of forgetting. George Bowling is very fat and uses false teeth.

These protagonists who can be regarded as Orwell's mouthpieces as they share his views and concerns are 'misfits' in their existing systems. They are not happy with the prevailing conditions. Hence they attempt to escape, but fail and return to the same harsh realities. Flory leaves the club of whites and goes for hunting. But it is a temporary escape. He returns to the reality, but can't face it; and finally kills himself. Dorothy, too, is not happy with her present world. During amnesia she escapes into the sub world of social outcasts. After regaining memory. She returns again to the rectory and submits to reality. George Bowling hates the horrible present. He hates the past war society too. So he desires to escape into the past-to Lower Binfield. But after visiting Lower Binfield he feels disappointed as industrialization has changed his native place thoroughly. Infact it has worsened it. Bowling, therefore, has to leave Lower Binfield and return to reality dejected.

Orwell shows that social injustice results into psychological complexities. His protagonists suffer from the 'loss of identity'. Flory

introduces himself as 'Flory' only and not as 'John Flory'. Nobody knows anything about his family. He is discarded by the whites as well as the black natives. Dorothy Hare, during the state of amnesia, literally loses her identity. George Bowling recognizes nobody in Lower Binfield, and nobody recognizes him there. In Burmese Days Orwell tries to point out the complex human relationship in Burma. The relationship between one white and another is based on hatred, prejudice and snobbery. The white hate the black natives and exploit them. They look at the natives as primitives. The relationship between one black and another is of hatred and of a sense of superiority. U Po Kyin and Dr. Veraswami struggle for the membership of the whites' Club which, they feel, would bring them a sense of superiority. Orwell presents the scheming character of U Po Kyin with great skills. U Po Kyin is capable of knowing the mentality of the white as well as the black.

Human beings and their sufferings stand at the centre of Orwellian novels. Orwell's protagonists suffer as they are victims of one or the other flaw in the existing social systems. With an extraordinary awareness and keenness Orwell looks around to record human sufferings. Being a humanist he always stands against social injustice. He vehemently criticizes social inequality and moral degradation. He is a silent observer who records attentively the social problems in his society but without suggesting any solutions.