

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology  
of Egypt / Egyptology

**EXPLORATION OF RACISM AND STEREOTYPES: A POSTCOLONIAL  
REPRESENTATION OF GEORGE ORWELL'S SHOOTING AN  
ELEPHANT**

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Exploration Of Racism And Stereotypes: A Postcolonial Representation Of George  
Orwell's Shooting An Elephant , Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of  
Egypt/Egyptology 18(8). ISSN 1567-214x.**

**Keywords: Post colonialism, Racial Stereotyping, Imperialism, Prejudice, superior,  
inferior.**

**ABSTRACT:**

The current examination is an investigation of George Orwell's article "Shooting an Elephant" (1936) through a postcolonial point of view. The Postcolonial hypothesis of racial generalizing propounded by Said (1977) and Bhabha (1994) has been applied to investigate racial generalizing. The scientists have inspected Shooting an Elephant to discover the occurrences of the racial bias appeared against individuals of Burma and have likewise brought to surface the extreme conflict of societies, strict qualities, and doubles of shading, skin, and race which at long last turned out to be more awful and driven individuals to partner against the Whites. This conflict at last got answerable for the finish of English guideline in Burma. The provincial and supreme guideline has brought forth the "idea of race" (Youthful, 2003: 2) since they expand such anthropological hypotheses which depicted the colonized individuals as substandard, crude, unsophisticated, and unfit to care for themselves. George Orwell's shooting an Elephant is a postcolonial article. It has large amounts of numerous episodes that uncover racial bias, and social othering against the locals of Burma because of Whites. The Whites extended themselves

as better and enlightened with an onus than manage and to motivate the natives having a place with other ethnic foundations until they can have their steady balance on the planet

## **INTRODUCTION:**

Post colonialism is a control introducing approaches of scholarly talk that examine, explain and answer to ethnic and social traditions of colonialism. Dominion or Imperialism happens when an incredible country vanquishes a more fragile country or state and oversees its financial, authoritative, or social life. The wonder of government bolts the "first occupants and the newbies [of all vanquished regions] into the most unpredictable and awful connections in mankind's set of experiences" (Loomba, 2005: 7-8).

### **Race, Prejudice and Racial Generalizing:**

Loomba clearly clarifies the racial bifurcations. She feels that "belief systems of racial distinction were strengthened by their joining into the talk of science, which increased the alleged association between the natural highlights of each gathering and its mental and social credits" (Loomba, 2005: 100). She specifies John Burke's *The Wild Man's Family* which clarifies the contrasts among European and Asians in a recognizable one-sided way:

European. Reasonable, optimistic, sturdy; hair yellow, earthy colored, streaming; eyes blue; delicate, intense, innovative. Covered with close frocks. Administered by laws. Asiatic. Dirty, despairing, inflexible. Hair dark; eyes dim; serious, haughty, greedy. Covered with free articles of clothing. Administered by sentiments (cited in Loomba, 2005: 100). The highlights related with the two classifications are slanted towards projecting one gathering better than the other gathering. Europeans are "represented by laws" (100) and Asians are "administered by conclusions" (100). Prejudice is "a perspective that the unchangeable actual attributes of a gathering are straightforwardly connected with its mental or scholarly qualities and on this premise that gathering is recognized 'unrivaled' and 'substandard' racial gatherings" (Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin, 1998: 98). Prejudice has profound roots in mankind's set of experiences. The whole mankind's set of experiences is a record of a naturally decided fight among people of different races. Bigots are each one of those who accept that inborn, acquired attributes naturally decide human conduct. The regulation of prejudice states that blood is the marker of public ethnic personality. Inside a bigoted system, the worth of a person isn't controlled by their uniqueness, however rather by participation in a supposed racial aggregate country (<http://www.usmmm.org>). Generalizing in the expressions of Gilman is "to sustain a fake feeling of the contrast among self and other" (referred to in Loomba, 2005: 55).

Racial generalizing is a method of criticizing non-white countries as a lower rush to Europeans. The Europeans see themselves as noble and recognized to every single non-white. As per Loomba (2005), the varieties of shading and race happens from the soonest times and as it is profound established in western culture it is hard to obliterate it.

### **Significance of the Study:**

The meaning of the current examination lies in its cases that the freedom after English Raj is as yet not solemnized in obvious soul. The issue of racial generalizing and destruction is a researchable subject these days as this marvel is constantly risky even today, undermining the existences of millions of individuals all over the world. The most unpleasant picture of racial generalizing is apparent in Burma, where a huge number of Muslims are slaughtered on the sole premise of having a place with another race, another group, and another religion.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVES:

1. To offer a comprehension of the minimized self of colonized individuals of Burma through the investigation of Orwell's Shooting an Elephant in the light of Said's and Bhabha's postcolonial understandings.
2. To uncover the circumstance of colonized society where colonizer's incomparability subordinates the neighborhood individuals.
3. To fill in as a mirror to coldblooded and control tipsy western colonizers, considering them responsible, and to make victims battle against persecution and pressure.

## LITERATURE REVIEW :

Frantz Fanon has worked a great deal on the racial othering. He unmasks the brutality of Whiteman who in the intoxication of his superiority complex dehumanizes the Blackman. Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* "reflects the miserable schizophrenia of the colonized's identity" (Loomba, 2005: 124).

Fanon's work *The Wretched of the Earth* describes the differences of race and species. He writes, "The cause is the consequence; you are rich because you are white, you are white because you are rich". He in fact explains that the colonial powers define the economic structure, the variance among those who are rich and those who are not rich on the basis of race. Bhabha (1994) observes that Fanon reveals the reality of blackness and belatedness to sabotage the structure of binary of power and identity. Fanon negates the concept that "Black must be Black" (Bhabha, 1994: 237) and declares that "The Black man is not any more than the white man" (238).

Asian-named minority groups in a British school system: a study of the education of the children of immigrants of Indian, Pakistani or Bangladeshi origin from the Indian sub-continent or East Africa in the City of Bradford' is an example of peace study. It is an investigation of the state of the Asian children of migrant families, communally and ethnically deprived in Britain, in the Bradford school system from the mid 1970's to 1980, and it also exposes their success in external examination assessments as compared to their peers. Thomson's research valuably contributes to the better understanding of the racial othering.

A writer whose contribution in exposing the Whiteman's superiority complex cannot be denied is Ania Loomba. She in her book, *Colonialism / Post colonialism* (2005) talks about colonial and postcolonial Identities. She raises certain questions like "are human beings essentially the same or different? Is difference defined primarily by racial attributes?" (Loomba, 2005: 91) She actually tries to stir the human mind to think, to ponder and to find the answers. She writes, "The 'othering' of vast numbers of people by European colonialist thought, and their construction as backward and inferior, depended upon what Abdul Jan Mohamed calls the 'Manichean allegory', in which a binary and implacable discursive opposition between races is produced".

Differences in presentation of white, black, Asian and oriental ethnic groups in British comic and magazine publications for children' is a postcolonial work from the perspective of race, colour and ethnicity. The basic concern of this research is to examine the level of equivalence in expositions of black, white and Oriental groups in comic books and magazines for youngsters. The goal is to trace any indefensible variances in the expositions. Each chapter of the thesis tries to cope with an explicit zone linked with xenophobia and jointly all chapters endeavor to provide proofs to endorse the argument that representation of black characters is generally associated with deleterious and negative depictions.

Exploring the idea of racism in their book *Theories of Race and Racism*, Back and (2000) explain racism by saying that the imperial expansion in Victorian era shaped the idea of race regarding India and Africa. They opine that the idea of race was important to Europeans because European supremacy was associated with the inherent qualities of white race.

From *Jim Crow to racial hegemony: Evolving explanations of racial hierarchy*' (2006) reflects a need for a better understanding of racial inequality. He is of the view that such an understanding can be achieved when the bipolar method is substituted by one that grasps the manifold and even contrary nature of racial disparity in present-day societies. Docota has worked on the topic of 'Racial stereotyping and selective positioning in contemporary British animation' (2007) for his doctoral degree. His thesis scrutinizes the portrayal of blacks in present-day British films discovering racial othering. In fact in modern day Britain much of the work has mainly been produced for television. This thesis claims that Britain's multiculturalism has not been effectively represented in current modes of television animatronics, and this is primarily obvious in the works of Aardman, Britain's best animation studio.

Court (2000) in his article entitled 'Conditions of Possibility versus Conditions of Causality: Some Comments on the Contemporary Reception of Hannah Arendt's Writings on Imperialism and Totalitarianism' talked about various features of Arendt's theory of totalitarianism. The article explains Arendt's concepts on race and bureaucracy. Court quotes Lee who argues that Arendt "puts forth the argument that two fundamental innovations were cultivated and employed during the rise of modern imperialism: the first was 'race as a principle of the body politic' and the second was 'bureaucracy as a principle of foreign domination'" (quoted in Court, 2009)

Grigolo, Hermanin and Moschel in their article 'Introduction: how does race 'count' in fighting discrimination in Europe?' (2011) opine on the issue of race. They are of the view that governing race-skeptical doctrines in the Europe generates more glitches than resolutions and requires be revising and integrating with better contemplated procedures if someone seriously desires to contest racial discrimination.

Foster's 'Radicalized transitions: the pathways from education to the labour market for black Caribbean young people' (2011) is a valuable contribution to the study of othering based on race and colour variations. The researcher discovers transitions of a group of Black Caribbean youth, to find awareness of the dynamics which affect their transitions. Important details voiced by the persons regarding the journey of their transition are provided to clarify the specific conditions of this controlled group and to exemplify the nature of the quandaries came across and the reactions produced.

Quiros and Dawson wrote an article 'The Color Paradigm: The Impact of Colorism on the Racial Identity and Identification of Latinas' (2013). In fact scanty research is available on the skin color privilege and disgrace on racial distinctiveness and identification among Latinas. Quiros and Dawson's article discovers the undercurrents of colorism. The article shows how Latinas convey their racial identification and endure experiences of shame and honor in the U.S. context.

## **DATA ANALYSIS:**

The textual analysis assumes that the narrator in shooting an Elephant acts more as intellectual potentates than travelling intellectuals. However, the constraints placed on their freedom and authority by the British Empire and the native crowd shatter their image as independent, free,

self-determining and self-initiated subjects. On that basis, Imperial authority and freedom are mere illusions that are shattered at the first encounter with the colonized. The narrator in *Shooting an Elephant* comes to Burma as a potentate but not as a traveller because Burma was a colony whose domain and people were supposed to be protected and defended by the British Empire. Through his protection and guardianship of Burma and the Burmese, he attempts to establish the British Empire's power and leadership. He does so, though, with an air of detachment and authority.

He preserves the dualism of the west and other cultures and civilizations, which allows him to remain as aloof from the Burmese as possible. The claim that "it is imperialist shame and indigenous guilt that preserve the relationships of domination and submissive in colonial Burma" resonates with this analytical assessment of the narrator's imperialist sentiments. He compares his civilization with the savagery of the indigenous, his whiteness with their yellowness, his bravery with their fright, and his supremacy with their superiority, for example. He criticises their anti-European views while displaying their yellow cheeks, fear of the charging elephant, and, most crucially, racial and cultural distinctions. He reveals that the Indians were too afraid to "rattle" him, but whenever it seemed safe, they would insult and jeer at Europeans. Another tactic to maintain his distance from the colonised and the colonial reality is the narrator's use of collective rather than proper nouns to refer to the people of Burma, such as "crowd," "sea of yellow faces". As a potentate, the narrator has to lead and command with mastery, firmness and confidence. In the novel, the word *sahib* is employed in the sense of a potentate. It is an English term of Arabic origin that means mister or master in the Indian Subcontinent. He said he had to act like a *sahib*, who "needs to seem resolute, know his own thoughts, and do specific things". The elephant incident is what puts his authority and leadership in jeopardy.

Following that, his behaviours, choices, judgments, and attitudes reveal a deep care for his authority and image as a *sahib*. Fearful of being branded an idiot, he reconsiders the locals' statements, which he has cause to doubt. His interrogation of the locals about the elephant's whereabouts proves unproductive, a conclusion he backs up with his biased prejudice that "a narrative usually seems clear enough from a distance, but the closer you go to the site of events, the vaguer it gets." Despite the fact that he soon learns that "the whole narrative was a bag of falsehoods" (Orwell 1968: 24), he continues to pursue the elephant despite the villagers' uncontrollable screaming laughter. He balances his survival on one balancing scale and his public esteem on the other in his encounter with the elephant. He considers the risk posed by a charging elephant, whether his little weapon would be capable of killing one, and whether his feet would sink into the soft, muddy ground. In such a lethal confrontation, the frailties of his physical capability as well as his weapon are less scary to him than the looming humiliation and mockery, as evidenced by his realisation that if the rifle misses the elephant, he "should have about as much chance as a toad beneath a steam-roller."

On the other hand, the narrator condemns the practice of hanging in the British colonies including Burma. He considers prisoners, whether in Burma or elsewhere, equal to their British jailers in terms of humanity as evidenced in his abrupt realization "what it means to destroy a healthy, conscious man... He and we were a party of men walking together, seeing, hearing, feeling, understanding the same world" (Orwell 1968: 20). He thinks it is an unspeakable crime to cut someone's life short "when it is in full tide" (Orwell 1968: 20). The prisoner is just as alive as anyone else; the organs of his body such as eyes, ears, brain, belly and nails are fully at work.

The moment when he steps aside to avoid a puddle on his path to the gallows clearly shows that his eyes can see and his brain can still remember, foresee and reason. The right to life

is, therefore, so sacrosanct that it cannot be violated for whatever considerations or justifications. What also mitigates the narrator's sense of superiority is the homage he pays to the intrepidity of the hanged prisoner. Contrary to the flattering claims of Francis, he relates that the prisoner was neither scared nor afraid. He walked quite steadily; and his feet were stable enough to print "themselves on the wet gravel" (Orwell 1968: 19). Though his arms were bound and his shoulders were gripped, he was able to step "slightly aside to avoid the puddle on the path" (Orwell 1968: 20). The prisoner showed no signs of regret or apology for what he had done to deserve such a punishment. His voice never shook with fear or terror; the fervent prayers he cried out to Ram (his god) while on the gallows were "not urgent and fearful like a prayer or a cry for help, but steady, rhythmical, almost like the tolling of a bell" (Orwell 1968: 21). The prisoner's cries seemed to cause pangs of remorse for the British and the natives alike, "everyone had changed colour. The Indians had gone grey like bad coffee, and one or two of the bayonets were wavering. The same thought was in all our minds: oh, kill him quickly, get it over, stop that abominable noise!" (Orwell 1968: 21) Tormented with the prisoner's intolerable and unflinching cries, the narrator wishes that he would be immediately hanged in order not to hear his cries anymore.

### **CONCLUSION:**

According to the findings, the narrator in *Shooting an Elephant* is oppressed by imperial control and the native mob. They despise the British Empire and are repentant for its crimes and faults. They, too, vilify the indigenous people for their indifference, savagery, and violence. Yet, for fear of humiliation and punishment, they avoid any confrontation with the empire or the people. Their power and command as a sahib or potentate, whom Said imagines as a free authoritative subject, are disrupted by the restrictions put on their liberties. Their authority as British Empire agents clashes with that of the native populace, to whom they finally succumb. According to the report, their criticism of the British Empire does not address any complaints or injustices that have been inflicted.

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