

**Tribhuvan University**

**Orientalist Representation of India in Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire***

A Thesis Submitted to the Department of English, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus for the Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements of the Degree of Masters of Arts in English

by

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## Declaration

I hereby declare that the thesis entitled  
**Orientalist Representation of Indian in Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire***  
is original work carried out as a Master's student to submit at the Department of  
English, Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus accepted to the extent that assistance from  
others in the thesis' design and conception or in presentation style, and linguistic  
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All the sources used for the thesis have been fully and properly cited. It contains no  
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Acknowledgement is made in the thesis paper.

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November 2018

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**Letter of Approval**

This thesis entitled “**Orientalist Representation of India in Danny Boyle's *Slumdog Millionaire***,” by Umesh Bhandari submitted to Ratna Rajya Laxmi Campus has been approved by the undersigned members of the Research Committee.

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### Abstract

This research studies *Slumdog Millionaire*, a movie based on the novel *Q & A* and directed by the British director Danny Boyle, to explore how and why Boyle has represented India. Using the post-colonial perspective in general and idea of representation and the concept of Orientalism in particular the thesis analyzes the politics of representing the Orient under predefined images created by the Occident. This movie is an imposition of the orientalist ideology of the director who tries to differentiate the West from the East thereby showing Indians as irrational, superstitious, barbaric and brutal. The director focuses on slum, rusticity, religious violence, rude language and behavior, futile administration and security system disrespecting the real condition of modern India. It is a complete imposition of prejudiced colonial legacy represented by the director who tries to term India and the 'Third World' as the 'Orient'; and in the meantime, differentiates it from the West or the 'First World'. The movie exposes the orientalist ideology by presenting the characters like Jamal Malik and Salim as slum kids who grow up and live in slum. The director presents those characters as stereotypes of all Indian kids, who are shown to be poor, rustic, barbaric and savage and at the same time hegemonized by English language and culture.

## Contents

Declaration	ii
Letter of Approval	iii
Acknowledgements	iv
Abstract	v
Chapter I Introduction	
<i>Slumdog Millionaire</i> : A Representation and Misrepresentation	1
Film as a Means of Representation	14
Different Representation of India in the Book and Screenplay	15
Chapter II Discussion of the Tool	
Post-colonial Studies and Issues of Representation	17
Chapter III Analysis	
<i>Slumdog Millionaire</i> and Colonial Legacy of British Director	29
Chapter IV Conclusion	
Colonial time has gone: Colonial Mindset Works on	52
Works Cited	56

## Chapter I

### Introduction

#### ***Slumdog Millionaire: A Misrepresentation of Indian Society***

This research studies the representation of Indian life in the novel and in the screen adaptation titled as *Slumdog Millionaire*. The representation of Mumbai in particular and India in general brings back the colonial mind set and perspective into practice even after the end of colonial raj in India. It is more of orientalist perspective than a way of life in India that Danny Boyle, director of the film shows the life and society. The research work uses the theoretical perspectives of post-colonial studies to dig out how and why the director, has represented India, a former colonized country the way he does. In fact, the question is why does he (mis) represents India? The answer would be because of his historicity: Danny Boyle is a British who owns orientalist ideology and views the society of the text in orientalist way. Thus, he has imposed the same ideology upon the plot construction, characters and dialogues while directing the movie by presenting only the dark, pessimistic and ugly aspects totally overlooking neglecting all positive life forces of modern India.

*Slumdog Millionaire*, a film written by Simon Beaufoy, and co-directed in India by Loveleen Tandan, is an adaptation of the novel *Q & A* by Vikas Swarup, an Indian novelist and diplomat. Despite the world-wide popularity the movie also carries some loopholes. It has stirred controversy concerning language use, its portrayals of Indians and Hinduism, and the welfare of its child actors. Danny Boyle is best known for his work on films such as *Shallow Grave*, *Trainspotting*, *28 Days Later* and *Slumdog Millionaire*. He was first known for his film *Trainspotting*, a witty at moments but aside from '*Requiem for a Dream*', is one of the best films about

drugs. It was a movie that showed about the use of Heroine; and good or bad, when the “walls are closing in” feeling began sinking in (literally, Boyle does a great job of expressing that feeling).

*Millions*, another movie by Boyle is a cutesy family fantasy that is probably the weakest of Boyle’s movie, but it is worth discussing here as we can compare some aspects of the movie with *Slumdog Millionaire*. In *Millions* the movie deals with two brothers’ survival after they find millions of Pounds the day before the countries’ currency is being changed to Euros. Looking back this, in many ways, is similar to *Slumdog Millionaire*. Two brothers find lots of money versus two brothers try and find lots of money, both trying to survive. Sure one is in a suburban area of England and one is in Mumbai, India and the circumstances are extremely different, shots of this movie (Damian’s urge to help the poor in *Millions*) seem very similar to those in *Slumdog Millionaire* (Jamal wanting to help Latika from the rain for the first time).

Boyle’s *Slumdog Millionaire* is set and filmed in India. It is the story of a young man from the slums of Mumbai who appears on the Indian version of “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?” (*Kaun Banega Crorepati* in Hindi version). The film is a success story of a young man, Jamal, from Indian Slum area. Jamal, a slum boy becomes contestant in the game show and exceeds people’s expectations and reaches till the last question in the very attempt which arouses suspicions of the host of game show and to the law enforcement officials. They suspect how a slum boy could answer and reach to that height of the game show where till then no one had reached, and thus set an inquiry on Jamal. In the process of inquiry when police constable asks if the boy knows the answer the police inspector fierce fully says, “[P]rofessors, doctors, lawyers, general knowledge *walas* never gone beyond sixteen thousand rupees, he’s on ten million rupees. What the hell can a Slumdog possibly know?” It



shows how slum people are misjudged by so called modern people of India itself. They don't address the slum people as a normal human being but lower than that; and suspect in each success because they had never hoped slum peoples' success defeating them. Supporting this view Gautaman Bhaskaran writes for *The Japan Times* about the movie that:

[. . .] just one correct answer away from his millions in the game show, is hung upside down in a police station and tortured with electricity because quiz master is convinced that the boy is a cheat. A little earlier, we see the quiz master deliberately trying to mislead Jamal with an incorrect answer and get him out of the race. (2)

This shows how the general people and so called high class people misbehave the slum boys. The above lines also clarifies that the success story of the slum people are not easily accepted among other people. They try to overturn the reality by using their authorial power. But, finally, the fact becomes clear that Jamal had not cheated on the game show and he had reached to the height of the game show due to his own personal experiences and knowledge. Thus, at the end of movie Jamal becomes the winner of the game show and wins 20 Million. He becomes Crorepati.

*Slumdog Millionaire* presents the rustic condition of Mumbai slum area. The whole movie revolves around and with the slum area and slum characters. The presentation of every minor aspects of Mumbai slum area shows how minutely the movie has been directed; but the movie focuses just over the slums of India. Christie Davies in her article about the movie writes:

The most frequently expressed negative criticism of the film was that it showed India and Mumbai in a bad light: as a country full of squalid slums. In Mumbai itself, there were fears that the film would dent the

city's image as a successful centre of trade, finance, and modern industry, where the wealthy live in splendid apartments overlooking the sea. In the background, there may well even be a fear that the sight of the slums will put off foreign investors as it has in dismal Detroit.

(31)

Here, the view of Davies gives the negative aspects of the presentation of slums in the movie. Davies criticizes the way a western director represents the Indian context and characters and also points out some dangers that India may face due to that sort of presentation. The above lines clearly give the glimpse that how it can baffle the image of Mumbai in the eyes of the first world. The movie does not show any light over the modern Indian context. The movie focuses on the rustic, exotic condition of slum area of Mumbai: living style of slum people, education system in slum area, behavioural aspects of slum people, attitude of other developed world towards the slum people.

Apart from these, the movie also shows how Street boys and girls are used for the benefit of the criminals and criminal activities in India. In the movie Mamanand Javed uses Slum children for their benefit and criminal activities. Maman collects the street children, train them to sing songs, then making the children blind employs them in the street to beg. The major characters of the movie Jamal, Latika and Salim also befall in his grip, but finally got the chance to run away from him. Christie Davies supporting this presentation as the real aspect of Mumbai writes:

[A] third of its people live in shanty housed in un-desirable locations.

In the worst of these slums, life is as bad as the scenes shown in the film. In India, lost and orphaned children are regularly abducted. Some have their eyes put out, as in the film, so that they can become blind beggars, trading on the extra sympathy of passers-by for those with

some deformity or affliction, but handing on their money to the gangster who runs them. Others become child prostitutes. (31)

The movie also focuses on another harsh social reality that how rude an Indian becomes with Indians just for the personal benefits and what the condition of Mumbai slum is. Despite presenting this harsh reality of Mumbai with sympathy, the director of the movie, employing his colonial legacy, just stressed on negative aspects whereas he rudely neglects all humane, loving and emotional aspects of Indian people and better aspects of India. Gautaman Bhaskaran in his article “Little reasons for Indian’s to claim Slumdog”, thus, claims that the movie does not favor India. He writes:

The movie was shot in Mumbai and with some Indian actors; except for these, India can hardly lay claim on the movie [. . .]in reality it is a British film. It is very gritty in the beginning and very realistic, because our movie culture is based on that kind of realism which is Hollywood, and Bollywood is not quite there. (1)

Bhaskaran through these clarifies that *Slumdog Millionaire* is completely a commercial English movie that favors England, the white. It is just a fake supposition that it is an Indian movie as the movie fulfils the needs of colonial legacy over the pre-colonized country.

Similarly, Christie Davies writes, “Indians outside Mumbai have denounced the film as a Western put-down of their country, a revealing in the third-world backwardness” (32). Davies in her article “Wagging the Slumdog” writes,

The film is ‘colonial’, an expression of attitudes held during British rule [. . .] It is a film with Indian actors but a British director and the firms that first developed the Indian economy with British managers ‘exploiting’ Indian workers. (32)

Davies, as Bhaskaran clarifies, also claims that the movie is not an Indian movie. Although the movies employ some Indian actors and workers, the British managers have exploited them.

Apart from these, the movie is also commented negatively for its character selection. In the movie, the younger slum boys are the real slum boys of Mumbai, whereas the elder characters are (Non-resident Indians) characters. The major characters Dev Patel and Freido Pinto are the NRI characters whereas Rubina Ali (Younger Latika) and Azharuddin Mohammed Ismail (Younger Salim) are the real slum children. Kartik Nair in his article comments negatively about the movie

*Slumdog Millionaire:*

Anil Kapoor is a disaster from start to finish. Irfan Khan has a thankless role, and he gives us nothing to be thankful either. Freida Pinto is the biggest miscalculation of the lot; it doesn't help that she has to speak such unspeakable dialogue as "I thought we would be one only in death [. . .] Kiss me." The only exception is Dev Patel [. . .] Patel tries his best to bury the British accent, but it peeps out every now and again. What irritated me no end was Jamal's inexplicable, and very sudden, facility with English? And I mean English. Perfectly rounded, often accented, grammar-school finished. We are never told how he learned the language. (1)

This is how a keen observer of the movie will get from the movie. A keen Indian observer of the movie will never accept the movie as it is. He or she certainly raises some discomfort in the presentation of the movie as the above line shows.

Moreover, Boyle's title "Slumdog" has angered those who live on the periphery. Gautaman Bhaskaran writes how negatively the people re-acted against its

title. He quotes Nicholas Almeida, a social activist and Mumbai slum-dweller himself who has filed a complaint in a city court against Boyle, producer Christian Colson and the distributor, saying the title is damaging and discriminating. Almeida puts his words as, “[W]hen the British ruled India, they called Indian ‘dogs’. Why do we want to call these poor children depicted in the celluloid work ‘dogs’ 60 years after independence” (quote in Gautaman Bhaskaran 2). These quoted lines shows how negatively the slum and the slum people are addressed among the so-called developed world or the colonizers. Probably, if the movie was named “Slum boy Millionaire”, the movie wouldn’t have got such popularity all over the world. But the word ‘dog’ is exactly what the colonial countries want to hear about the third country like India.

Another fact to be noticed in the movie is its focus in fate disregarding the importance of knowledge gained through life experience. The film opens in *medias res* in Mumbai with a policeman torturing Jamal Malik (Dev Patel), a former street child from the Juhuslums. In the opening scene, a title card is presented:

Jamal Malik is one question away from winning 20 million rupees.

How did he do it?

- a. He cheated
- b. He is lucky
- c. He is a genius
- d. It is written (0:01:01)

When the movie ends, a title card is presented where the answer of the question is given: “D. It is written.” Similarly, most of the actors in the movie depend upon the fate. Even Jamal himself terms his success in love as the destiny. He says, “[T]his is our destiny”, when at the end of the movie he re-unites with Latika. Reviewing about the movie *Slumdog Millionaire*, Professor Mitu Sengupta also states the movie as

“story of a love-struck boy, Jamal, who, with a little help from ‘destiny’, triumphs over his wretched beginnings in Mumbai’s squalid slums” (1).

Moreover, Author and critic Salman Rushdie also commented upon the movie. He sought the movie from the different angle and delivered a very harsh comment against the movie. In his essay “A Fine Pickle”, he writes:

In an interview conducted at the Telluride film festival last autumn, Boyle, when asked why he had chosen a project so different from his usual material, answered that he had never been to India and knew nothing about it, so, he thought this project was a great opportunity. Listening to him, I imagined an Indian film director making a movie about New York low-life and saying that he had done so because he knew nothing about New York and had indeed never been there. He would have been torn limb from limb by critical opinion. But for a first world director to say that about the third world is considered praiseworthy, an indication of his artistic daring. The double standards of post-colonial attitudes have not yet wholly faded away. (2)

Rushdie points out the problems how a western director cannot understand the context of east and thus cannot represent the East as it is. He also gives an example of what happens if easterners try to represent the West who has never been there or understand the context of the West. And also Rushdie clarifies how the colonizers try to impose their will upon the colonized.

Despite these criticisms against the movie, Mitu Sengupta writes critically in favor to the movie. Supporting the way the movie is presented, Sengupta writes, “[I]t will also enhance the film’s already-robust reputation as an authentic representation of

the lives of Indian's urban poor" (1). In the article "*Slumdog Millionaire's* Dehumanizing View of India's Poor" Sengupta writes:

Though at times embarrassingly contrived, most of the film's heartrending scenarios reflect a sad, but well-documented reality. Torture is not unheard of among the police, though none is surely dim enough to target an articulate man who is also a rising media phenomenon. (1)

Sengupta asserts that the condition shown in the movie about the Mumbai slum area is a definite reality. But he also severely criticized the way in which Mumbai's poor are depicted, Sengupta further writes:

[D]ehumanizing view of the poor, with all its troubling political implications [. . .] Jamal in the form of an imported quiz-show, which he succeeds in thanks only to 'destiny.' [. . .] Their own destinies of rescue by a foreign hand? While this self-billed 'feel good movie of the year' may help us 'feel good' that we are among the lucky ones on earth, it delivers a patronizing, colonial and ultimately sham statement on social justice for those who are not. (2)

Sengupta criticizes the movie and expresses his dread on the colonial legacy that is imposed upon the characters and plot of the movie.

### **Different Representation of India in the Book and Screenplay**

Simon Beaufoy, while revisiting the script, loaded some differences apart from the script of Vikas Swarup's novel *Q & A*. In *Q & A*, the first-person narrator and quiz show contestant is named Ram Mohammad Thomas, who is named Jamal Malik in the movie. Ram was abandoned at birth in the clothing bin of a Catholic church in Delhi, and raised for eight years by a benevolent English priest named Father

Timothy. His surname comes from a family that adopted him for three days before giving him back to the church. Local religious leaders suggested his first and middle names, on the theory that his birth parents might be either Hindu or Muslim. Father Timothy and the Catholic Church do not appear in *Slumdog Millionaire*, nor does Delhi. This naming process of the Ram shows religious endurance present in the Indian context of that time. But this aspect is omitted in the movie just because the whites don't believe that India could be a country with religious endurance. So, the movie also shows the scene of violence between Hindu and Muslim. Christie Davies writes that even Swarup commented negatively in the case of this representation.

Davies writes:

Swarup liked the film, but commented on one curious difference between the final script and his original work. In his novel, the hero was called Ram Mohammed Thomas, a deliberate combination of the names of the Hindu deity Ram associated with the holy pilgrimage site Ayodhya, a Muslim prophet called Mohammed, and the St. Thomas from the eponymous apocryphal gospel, who brought Christianity to India. The hero was thus a representative of three of India's religious tradition [ . . . ] In the film, however, he becomes Jamal Malik, a Muslim through and through and nothing but; ironically enough, the part is brilliantly played by a very British Hindu, Dev Patel, the son of Gujarati parents born in Kenya. (33)

Through the lines above Davies wants to claim that even Swarup also commented negatively towards the movie as it omitted the part of religious tolerance present in India. Omitting this part from the movie showed India full of religious violence.



Further, Christie Davies claims this sort of modification in the story of the movie has some causes and writes:

It is disturbing that Thomas has been turned into Malik for reasons of political correctness. He became an orphan because his mother was killed by a mob of Hindus on the rampage in Mumbai; this indirectly reinforces the false myth that Muslims in India are innocent victims and the Hindus the blameworthy aggressors [. . .] why the hero could not be a Hindu whose parents had been killed by the Muslims in a communal clash [. . .] no cinema in Britain would have dared to show such a film for fear that local British Muslims would have burned the cinema down and attacked its patrons. (33)

In *Slumdog Millionaire*, Salim Malik is Jamal's older brother, and both boys are orphaned by the Hindu mob, after which they live as rag children in the Mumbai city dump. Besides, the movie also totally displaced the presence of Christian religion in India which is one of the important aspects in the Swarup's novel *Q & A*. It is also noteworthy that India now has large number of Christian population.

Moreover, there is more explicit violence in the film than in the book. There is no such severe violent scene in *Q & A*, although its possibility is suggested. The novel tries to keep balance between good and bad aspects of India. However, the director of the movie intentionally tries to portray India as exotic and full of such severe violence and thus with very great emphasis portray frequent violent scenes. In the most graphically violent scene of *Slumdog Millionaire*, a young beggar boy is drugged and blinded with acid while unconscious.

In the novel *Q & A*, Ram works as a daytime houseboy for a retired middle-aged film actress Neelima lives on the second floor of a Mumbai chawl, sharing a

room with Salim. An older girl, Gudiya, whose face Ram never sees, lives next door in the chawl with her drunken father. They can hear through the adjoining walls. Shantaram physically and sexually abuses his daughter until Ram pushes him off the balcony, supposedly to his death. Ram then flees back to Delhi, leaving Salim behind, and finds employment as a houseboy for an Australian diplomat and later as a tour guide at the Taj Mahal in Agra, where he falls in love with a prostitute named Nita who is battered by a customer who leaves cigarette burns on her breasts, similar to Neelima's injuries. Ram finds out that the abuser of both women is the same man. But, in the movie, *Slumdog Millionaire*, there are no such sub-plots and Jamal's love interest is Latika, a childhood friend from the slums who is forced into prostitution in Mumbai.

When Ram becomes a game show contestant, it is purely by chance that most of the questions have answers in his life experiences. When he answers the twelfth question and wins the billion-rupee grand prize, he is told that question didn't count and the real question #12 will come after the next commercial break. During the break, both Ram and the host, Prem Kumar, are in the bathroom alone together. Ram pulls out the gun and reveals that his motive for going on the quiz show was to get close enough to Prem to kill him for abusing the two women in his life: the actress Neelima Kumari, and the Agra prostitute Nita. He loses his nerve, and rather than pull the trigger he offers to spare Prem's life if he tells the answer to the new question 12, which he does.

But, these aspects are not included in the movie and Jamal Malik is portrayed as a complete good character without any motives of revenge in the movie. Jamal's motive to participate in the game show is just to get back his love. When Jamal finally meets Latika in the movie, he expresses his deep hope that she would be watching the

game show and come to meet him and says, “I know you’d be watching”, where Latika answers, “I thought we’d meet again only in death.”

In the novel *Q & A*, after winning the grand prize, again, Ram is arrested by police who try to torture him into signing a confession of cheating. This scene is where the book begins. He is rescued from torture by a woman lawyer who calls herself Smita, and who listens to his explanations, given in the sequence of the relevant question number. She then reveals herself to be Gudiya, from the chawl. She gets him his prize money, Ram marries Nita, Salim becomes a film star, and the crippled children are liberated from their imprisonment. This part is not precisely shown in the movie but indirectly the freedom theme is presented in the movie; freedom of slum kids from the slum, freedom of Latika from chawl, freedom of Latika from the grip of Javed, freedom of Jamal from imprisonment and finally the success of Jamal and his union with Latika, all these shows some aspects of freedom.

In *Slumdog Millionaire*, Jamal never carries a gun and never shoots or threatens anybody. Salim does the shooting. There is no lawyer, and no Gudiya. Jamal’s interrogation is conducted by the police, before, not after, the last question. The police release him to complete the quiz show. The host, Prem Kumar, has no history with Jamal or his women and is not an evil character, although he does try to trick Jamal into giving a wrong answer. Jamal’s motive for going on the show is to regain his love, Latika, with whom he has lost contact (despite her being in the custody of his brother Salim). Finally, as in the book, he gets the money and the girl.

### **Film as a Means of Representation**

Film, a form of art, which is very much similar to novel, represents the society and culture as novel does. The actors, plots and dialogues represent the society, people living in the society, their circumstances and their languages too. As novel

represents a time period, certain place, people living there, their living style and so on, the film also represents the society, time and culture. Films are produced by recording the images from the world with cameras, or by creating images using animation techniques or special effects. Films are cultural artefacts that are created by specific cultures and reflect the specific cultures. But besides only representing the society and culture film in turn also affects the society and culture.

Nowadays, film is considered as an important form of art, a source of popular entertainment and a method for educating the viewers. In an article “Barack and Slumdog Millionaire” Gardels and Medavoy wrote:

[. . .] Mexican director, Alejandro Gonzalez Inárritu, voiced the hope that such recognition meant Hollywood was entering a new era. “In the global age,” he said, “films must show the point of view of others, with respect and compassion, not as caricature.” [. . .] That is exactly what Danny Boyle’s *Slumdog Millionaire* has done so splendidly, despite the misplaced rumblings of some Indian critics that it is “poverty porn.” And, true to Gonzalez Inárritu’s hopes, this love story about class and social mobility on the dark side of shining India [. . .] Echoing a similar sentiment, President Barack Obama pledged in his first TV interview—with the Arab satellite channel Al Arabiya—that under his watch would “listen with respect and not dictate” to the world. (9)

Film not just only represents certain place and time but also has a compassion on them. The above lines of Gardels and Medavoy focuses that discourses must address the context and reality with respect. Besides, film is a type of discourse that creates certain truth via its representation. Since, discourse holds a kind of authority and

power, a film also prints certain reality in the mind of the observer. Film imposes certain power and authority over the viewer and makes them believe that whatever they have been observing is truth.

Although, *Slumdog Millionaire* is a well-made movie and has a very positive ending with the theme of freedom and union, the movie imposes certain power and authority that presents vivid negative aspects of India as its current truth. Actually, some contexts shown in the movie is real but most of other presentations are misguided due to the colonial legacy of the director. The director imposed his colonial legacy and tries to make the viewers of the movie believe that India is still full of slums and evil factors through the discourse of the movie *Slumdog Millionaire*.

The researcher, thus, claims that despite the great popularity of the movie all over the world, it sustains the perspective of orientalism as the movie focuses only on the rustic slum condition of India. The movie is not easily adapted by all people as scholars from various spheres express different views about the movie. Most of the western critics comment the movie with silver glowing words, whereas eastern critics criticize the movie from different perspectives.

Orientalism refers the representation of Eastern cultures in the West by writers, designers and artists. An“orientalist” is a person engaged in these activities, but it is also the traditional term for any scholar of Oriental studies. Edward Said defines orientalism in following words:

Orientalism describes the various disciplines, institutions, processes of investigation and styles of thought by which Europeans came to ‘know’ the ‘Orient’ over several centuries, and which reached their height during the rise and consolidation of nineteenth-century imperialism [. . .] this way of knowing Europe’s others is that it

effectively demonstrates the link between knowledge and power, for it 'constructs' and dominates Orientals in the process of knowing them.

(49quoted in Bill Ashcroft and Pal Ahluwalia)

The purpose of this research is to show how a western director is still full of colonial legacy while directing the movie based on an Indian plot and characters. The research is focused on how a world-famous movie directed by popular director holds flaw in its presentation of plot, selection of its characters and use of its languages. The research also analyzes the politics of representation; the representation of the east by westerners, representation of people of the east, Indian slums and various other aspects of India.

The research paper has been divided in four major parts. The first part 'Introduction' gives overview above the movie and the tool that researcher uses to study the movie. In the second part, 'Post-colonial Studies and Issues of Representation' the researcher has discussed about the Post-colonial theories; Orientalism and Representation. In the third part the researcher has studied the movie thoroughly using the post-colonial tools. And finally in the fourth part 'Conclusion' the researcher has concluded the findings of the research project.

## Chapter II

### Post-colonial Studies and Issues of Representation

Post-colonial literature is simply a classification: a body of work or works produced by a previously colonized nation. But the work not just write about colonized but also influence them for a long period of time. The Post-colonial studies examine such works not only by the era and location of the production of such work but also by the style of the writing and its political and social impact on society. Post-colonial studies repeatedly surface the idea of representation. Inevitably, post-colonial theories judge how adequately some text represents an indigenous people or by how it reacts to the oppressing colonizers. Edward Said uses the term “Orientalism” in one aspect of post-colonial theory. Said states: “it [Orientalism] is, rather than expresses, a certain will or intention to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world” (90). Thus, choosing to represent an indigenous culture with the language of the empire, serves as another form of colonization.

Post-colonial literature often involves those writings that deal with issues of de-colonization or the political and cultural independence of people formerly subjugated to colonial rule. In other words, it reacts to the discourse of colonization. It is also a literary critique to texts that carry racist or colonial undertones. Moreover, in current context, Post-colonial literature also attempts to critique the contemporary post-colonial discourse that has been shaped over recent times. Dr. Rajan Gurukkal defines Post-colonialism as:

Post-colonialism loosely designates a set of theoretical approaches which focus on the direct effects and aftermaths of colonization. It also represents an attempt at transcending the historical definition of its

primary object of study toward an extension of the historic and political notion of “colonizing” to other forms of human exploitation, normalization, repression and dependency. Post-colonialism forms a composite but powerful intellectual and critical movement which renews the perception and understanding of modern history, cultural studies, literary criticism, and political economy. (Compiled conference)

The above lines of Gurukkal state that Post-colonialism studies the effect of colonization and the effects after colonization. It also encompasses the political notion of colonizing where the domination in various forms is treated as colonizing process. Further, he clarifies that post-colonialism gives a new perception and level of understanding.

Post-colonialism demonstrates “the heterogeneity of colonized places by analyzing the uneven impact of Western colonialism on different places, peoples, cultures” (Sharp 453). In this view post-colonialism is a “specifically Western malaise which breeds angst and despair instead of aiding political action and resistance” (Loomba xii).

Besides, post-colonial critics establish a template for studies alert to the culture of imperialism and suggest the field of study: colonial discourse analysis. Such studies show the ways in which discursive formations worked to create a complex field of values, meanings and practices through which the ‘European Self’ is termed as superior and non-Europeans as an inferior. On this matter, Jacobs says:

Such racialized social constructs provided the sense for social relations established under colonialism. That is, social evolutionary logic did



more than just categories the world's people in hierarchical ways' it also legitimized the exercise of power. (17)

The above lines state that the western construction of 'Self' and 'Other' are integral to the territorial, military, political and economic extensions or the power exercise of Europeans all over the world.

Colonial discourse is a complex structure of signs and practices those maintain social existence within colonial tie. Colonial discourse always creates certain images about the East and aims at ruling and dominating over the orient. So, in the colonial discourses representing agents always play a discursive and hegemonic role. Stephen Slemon quotes Edward Said as: "What brought that purely conceptual space into being, argue Said, is a European 'style of thought based on an ontological and epistemological distinction 'made between the Orient and the Occident'".

Representation is presently a much-debated topic not only in post-colonial studies and academia, but in the larger cultural milieu. Representations can be clear images, material reproductions, performances and simulations. Representation can also be defined as the act of placing or stating facts in order to influence or affect the action of others. "Of course, the word also has political connotations" (2), Ann Marie Maldonado elaborates the term representation.

Representation refers to the construction in any medium of aspects of 'reality' such as people, places, objects, events, cultural identities and other abstract concepts. Such representations may be in speech or writing as well as still or moving pictures. The term representation refers to the processes of representing something or someone as well as to its products; what and how that is represented. For instance, in relation to the key markers of identity: Class, Age, Gender and Ethnicity, representation involves not only how identities are represented or rather constructed within the text, but also

how they are constructed in the processes of production and reception by people whose identities are also differentially marked in relation to such factors.

Similarly, Morton Stephen in “Learning From the Subaltern” defines representation as the power play. Stephens writes:

[R]epresentation of the various lower-class subaltern groups was thus framed in the terms and interests of the ruling power, or dominant social class. In the historical archives of the British Empire, the lives and political agencies of the rural peasantry in India were subordinated to the larger project of imperial governance and social control; in the elite narratives of bourgeois national independence, the localised resistance movements of the peasants were subordinated to the larger nationalist project of decolonisation. In both cases, the complex social and political histories of particular subaltern groups were not recognised or represented. (50)

The above lines by Stephen state that representation is always a misrepresentation. Representation is a tool for the rulers to represent the ruled. He also states that those who represent someone never represent their complex reality, instead only those things are represented that the suppressor wants to present about the suppressed.

Similar view about representation is expressed by Stuart Hall. Hall defines the systems of representation as: “the systems of meaning through which we represent the world to ourselves and one another” (23). Besides, Spivak argues that representation especially covers the part of “political representation and thus is mostly misrepresentation” (qut. in Morton 57). Most often representation seems to be political as the powerful represent the powerless in much of the cases. In such representation, instead of representing as they are, they represent them as they need or

think them to be. For example, while representing a colonizer represents the colonized to be ignorant, uneducated, barbaric etc.

Edward Said, in his analysis of textual representations of the Orient in *Orientalism*, emphasizes the fact that representations can never be exactly realistic:

In any instance of at least written language, there is no such thing as a delivered presence, but a re-presence, or a representation. The value, efficacy, strength, apparent veracity of a written statement about the Orient therefore relies very little, and cannot instrumentally depend, on the Orient as such. On the contrary, the written statement is a presence to the reader by virtue of its having excluded, displaced, made supererogatory any such real thing as “the Orient”. (21)

According to the lines of Said above, representations can never really be natural depictions of the orient. Instead, they are constructed images, images that need to be interrogated for their ideological content. Similarly, Said in his article “Representing the Colonized: Anthropology’s Interceptors” writes:

In the age of Nietzsche, Marx, and Freud, representation has thus had to contend not only with the consciousness of linguistic forms and conventions, but also with the pressures of such transpersonal, transhumant, and transcultural forces as class, the unconscious, gender, race, and structure. [. . .] To represent someone or even something has now become an endeavor as complex and as problematic as an asymptote, with consequences for certainty and decidability as fraught with difficulties as can be imagined. (206)

Said intends to imply that the term representation is not only concerned with constructing reality about something but also with power and authority of who is constructing the reality.

Rajeswary Sundar Rajan emphasizes the paradox between the real meaning of representation and the politics associated with it. She states: “representation is something other than the ‘representation of reality’. It is rather an autonomous structure of meaning a code of system of signs that refers not to ‘reality’ but to the mere reality of codes system and signs themselves” (167). This shows that representation of non-West by the West is always misrepresentation. When non-Western world is being represented in literary text, it fulfills the western interest and purpose because of the Western hegemony.

Similar view is expressed by Boehmer that “the white men represent non-Westerners as ‘Others’ and themselves as the archetypal workers and provident profit-makers” (39). By its effect, they create hierarchy between “superior” and “inferior”. In *Orientalism*, Said argues:

It is Europe that articulates the orient; this articulation is the prerogative, not of a puppet master, but of a genuine creator, whose life giving power represents, animates, constitutes the otherwise silent and dangerous space beyond familiar boundaries. (56)

The above lines state that ‘orient’ is the creation of a genuine creator: Europe. It also states that the creator has a power to represent them beyond the boundaries. This means those who represent, use their interest over them. They are not compelled to represent them as they are.

Expressing similar view about representation, Radha krishnan discusses about representation. According to Radha krishnan: “all representation is an act of violence

and inauthentic” (42). He terms the act of representation as a type of violence and an act that is not actually authentic. The very essence of the notion of representation is violated by the interest of the westerners. The play of identity and difference becomes conspicuous in the process of standing for the other because “representation is always of something or someone, by something or someone” (Lentricchia 12). The westerners’ substantive way because they can only substitute their interest rather than consult them and act as they are.

Some rays are thrown upon is-representation in *Key Concept in post-colonial studies*. The editors of the book view about the misrepresentation of non-westerners as cannibal:

This term for an eater of human flesh is of particular interest to post-colonial studies for its demonstrations of the process by which an imperial Europe distinguishes itself from the subjects of its colonial expansion, while providing a moral justification for that expansion. This definition is itself a very good demonstration of two related features of colonial discounted factures of colonial discourse: the separation of the ‘civilized’ and the ‘savage’ [. . .] this day cannibalism has remained the west’s key representation of primitivism. (29)

The above lines state that cannibalism has become the key representation of primitivism. Europeans differentiate themselves from cannibals terming themselves ‘civilized’ and those of cannibals as ‘savage’. And to keep this concept of distinction strong, cannibalism has become the best cement.

Besides, Frantz Fanon, views that western hegemony and ideology created so-called reality about the other. The western authors of different centuries have been representing the Easterners, in the history, according to their interest. To take an

instance example, the modern Western authors as well as politicians create the image of the Muslim and non-Western as terrorists in their texts, television, serials, newspaper and many programmers. These sorts of texts are discourses which are made by the western ideology to govern the non-western people. Fanon views that western thought, language; life-style and culture are imposed to the non-western people through their colonial legacy. He says in his book *Black Skin White Masks* as:

Every colonized people in other words every people in whose soul an inferior complex has been created by the death and burial of its local cultural originality-find itself face to face with the language of the civilizing nation, that is, with the culture of the mother country [ . . . ]

He becomes white as he renounces his blackness his jungle. (18)

Fanon expresses brutal reality of representation. A Black person becomes white just after the death of his own culture, with full of inferiority complex. Due to inferiority complex while being in front of the so called civilizing nation, they prefer to be colonized.

A key in the study of representation concern is with the way in which representations are made to seem 'natural'. Systems of representation are the means by which the concerns of ideologies are framed; such systems 'position' their subjects. The term representation is defined as the act of representing, or the state of being represented; a likeness or model, purporting to be descriptive that represents a point of view and is intended to influence judgment. This shows that the term representation refers to the construction of reality through a model and that the reality sustains for a long run so that the represented object, person or place would be judged or analyzed through the constructed reality or representation.

Besides these, Ruma Sen discusses about the forms of representation. She says, “forms of representation in the cultural capital of a nation, for instance in the film industry, contribute to the discursive formations occurring within that culture” (159). Theorists interested in Post-colonial studies, by closely examining various forms of representations, visual, textual and otherwise, have teased out the different ways that these “images” are implicated in power inequalities and the subordination of the ‘subaltern’. About representation, Ann Marie Baldonado writes:

Representations [. . .] these ‘likenesses’ [. . .] come in various forms: films, television, photographs, paintings, advertisements and other forms of popular culture. Written materials [. . .] academic texts, novels and other literature, journalistic pieces [. . .] are also important forms of representation. These representations, to different degrees, are thought to be somewhat realistic, or to go back to the definitions, they are thought to be ‘clear’ or state a fact. Yet how can simulations or “impressions on the sight” be completely true? (2)

Baldonado views that representation has various forms in various states. But all forms of that representation create certain reality and that remains as imprint in the viewer or reader or the observer as the outcome of representation. And, further, as the representation is mostly a misrepresentation, a false reality is created among the readers, audiences or viewers.

Moreover, another theorist and critic, Gayatri Chakrabarti Spivak discusses and differentiates two types of structures of representation: Aesthetic and Political. Spivak writes:

The general difference between aesthetic and political structures of representation is that aesthetic representation tends to foreground its

status as a re-presentation of the real, whereas political representation denies this structure of representation. (qut. in Morton 57)

Spivak states that generally the representation in the colonial discourse is a political representation, thus, it does not re-present the reality but denying the real structure it represents with its interest that results representation a mis-representation.

Representation employs certain political interest over them who are being represented.

In the theory of post-colonialism, representation is connected to the Foucauldian concept of discourse that is created by power. For Foucault, discourse is power because it is based on certain knowledge that helps to form power. In other words, discourse creates certain truth about the represented person, place or object. In the Foucauldian philosophical project, there is no epistemological justification to support the idea of the existence of an intellectual figure who can be considered to be the universal thinking subject. On the contrary, the Foucauldian specific intellectual is not interested in speaking on behalf of other people. Commenting on Foucault, Chris Barker writes in *Cultural Studies*:

Foucault is thus concerned with the description and analysis of the surface of discourse and their effects under determinate material and historical conditions. For Foucault, Discourse concerns both language and practice and refers to the regulated production of knowledge through language, which gives meaning to both materials object and social practices. (19-20)

Barker states that in Foucauldian words representation is not just a general matter in any discourse. Representation in any discourse holds some power and creates certain



truth about that object. Discourse not only occupies the language but also its practices. Besides, through the knowledge of what is being represented, discourse creates power or truth over the object of representation; both material or social. As any kind of discourse holds some power and creates certain truth about what is being represented and representation is generally a mis-representation, the truth created through the power of discourse is generally an anti-truth; it gives negative reality about the object that is represented in the discourse.

In *Key Concepts in Post-colonial Studies*, Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin elaborate Foucault's view about discourse and representation as:

Discourse is important, therefore, because it joins power and knowledge together. Those who have power have control of what is known and the way it is known, and those who have such knowledge have power over those who do not. This link between knowledge and power is particularly important in the relationships between colonizers and colonized, and has been extensively elaborated by Edward Said in his discussion of *Orientalism*, in which he points out that this discourse, this way of knowing the 'Orient', is a way of maintaining power over it. (72)

Ashcroft et. al. elaborate the Foucauldian view of discourse and associate the power theory with Said's *Orientalism*. Discourse is associated with the power politics of colonization. The colonizers exercise the power over the colonized and create various discourses about the colonized. They use their mentality while creating discourse and do not represent the colonized as they are but represent them in a way they want them to be.

Thus, representation, in Post-colonial literature, in most cases serves as another form of colonization as 'representation 'has always some political connotations. It constructs a kind of reality about the powerless; and the powerful use their effort to represent them with some pre-established images. Besides, representation has also become a medium of binary opposition between East and West, Orient and Occident.

### Chapter III

#### ***Slumdog Millionaire* and Colonial Legacy of British Director Danny Boyle**

*Slumdog Millionaire* is certainly a well made movie, with a very emphasizing presentation of Indian Mumbai slum area like Juhu. Besides, there is no doubt that the movie is the output of the great effort of the director and the casts in the movie, as the movie was super hit almost all over the world. The movie also won 8 Academy Awards, Five critic's choice awards, BAFTA awards and so on. But despite these facts, the movie has been severely slated by the developing countries and especially by Indian community. The movie carries the full colonial legacy of a British director Danny Boyle. The way the director presents the Indian Slum, the characters he chose, the language; the plot, subplots and the very concept carries the colonial legacy, and thus, has been severely attacked by the critics. Focus only over the slum of India, selection of characters for various casts, concept of destiny, religious conflict, scenes of violence, images of young tourist guides, use of its language etc are the major highlighted subject matter of critique.

Colonial mentality of the director can be easily diagnosed in the movie while observing the movie thoroughly. The movie endows India with the oriental images like barbaric, undeveloped, rustic, irrational, superstitious etc. The presentation of the slum and the children of the slum are sharply prejudiced due to the colonial legacy of the director. All the major casts of the movie: Jamal, Salim, Latika are from slum area. Jamal Malik is a child born in Juhu slum, so is Salim and Latika. Other characters like Maman and Javed too are related with slum area. As the movie presents the experience of those characters in the slum area, the only focus is over the slum area. While presenting such facts, the director intentionally didn't shot the scenes of developed Mumbai area, skyscrapers and other modern infrastructure. The

movie presents the slum children as the fun loving kids who don't like to go to school but have very keen interests on movies. The slum kids are presented as the stereotype of the whole Indian kids; poor, uneducated, barbaric and rough in behaviour. In the movie, the slum kids are shown poor and rustic. They are often shown to be playing, using very bad language. Here is a clip where the slum children are shown running over the garbage after being chased by the policemen:



*Clip. No. 1: Slum Children running over the garbage (0:06:43)*

The above given picture clips show the condition of children in the slum area of Mumbai. The director of the movie intentionally shows the very poor and rustic condition so as to fit the pre-defined images: rustic, barbaric, uneducated and so on. Besides, they are also shown to be naughty enough to challenge the policemen. In one scene of the movie, a group of slum children play on the runway of airport where policemen chase them to their community. But the children instead of being afraid of police, they make fun of them.

Children: Jamal catch it! Catch it! Jamal. Jamal, it's yours. Oh....shit!

*Abe yaaritnihaluwaihaikichhoddi ?*

How did you manage to drop a sitter like that, damn it ?

Policemen: (*riding in bike with stick to chase the children*)

*Private ka-land! Private ka-land! Terabaap he yahanpe.*

Catch them. Catch them.

Children: (*teasing the policemen*) The dogs are coming, run! *Eh Kutte !*

(0:06:22)

The above dialogue between the policemen and children makes us very clear how naughty the children in slum area are shown. They are playing cricket in the runway of the airport by running away from the school. Not only this, they tease the policemen and run away making the policemen chase them to their community. The scene represents the whole Indian kids as a mass of naughty children. They don't care for the rule and are not afraid even of policemen. Instead, they tease and challenge the policemen calling them 'dogs'. Apart from this, the scene indirectly shows what sort of culture the kids are given in India. The culture and language of any kid is always depended upon their parents. So, by presenting those kids, the movie indirectly presents the whole Indian community as rude, barbaric and those who don't care for rules.

Apart from these, in one scene of the movie, when mother of Jamal and Salim drags them to the school, they are shown that they are not able to turn their books properly. Jamal and Salim have no idea what their teacher is teaching to them. Besides, the film portrays the very pitiable circumstance of Indian educational system. A mass of students junked together in a single class is shown in the movie.

Teacher: Cried the two musketeers.

Students: Musketeers.

Teacher: Athos!

Students: Athos!

Teacher: Repeat it. “You have sent for me, sir,” said Athos.

Students: You have sent for me, sir.

Teacher: Ah! Here come our very own musketeers.

*Bahutahesankiyaaapnehamariclassmeaakar.Porthos!*

*(throwing book to Salim and Jamal) Kholo usko. Thik se*

*kholnabhinahiaata. (Beating them) Tukyasamajhtahai huh ...*

*Athos ? (0:08:57)*

The scene shows the callous condition of students in the class of slum area. The above dialogue from the movie shows the education system in India. It clarifies that India is bearing a harsh educational system till date. Students are not attentive to what teacher is teaching; most of them don't have books and copies. Most focussed are the major casts Jamal and Salim, who are the stereotype of slum children, cannot hold and turn the book properly and thus get punished by the teachers. Moreover, it also shows that India is still practicing the traditional teacher oriented teaching-learning system and imposes force to control the students. This scene of movie strictly negates the fact that India has gone far ahead from this sort of teaching-learning system. India has been practicing modern and highly elaborated teaching learning techniques. Besides, it is most noticeable that a great mass of scientist in the NASA is from India and there are numbers on Indian intellectual working in the so-called First World.

Another topic this researcher has raised against the movie is the presentation of the slum of India and focus only upon the slum negating the highly developed aspects of modern India. It is true that still India has such a part like Juhuslum area but most of the places in India are now developed. India has the highly developed cities like Mumbai and Delhi with high skyscrapers and with almost all modern facilities. In the context of this twenty first century, India has established itself as one

of the powerful nation of the world in academy, in economy and in military forces. India is considered to be a super powerful country of Asia. Despite the fact, still the Westerners compare India with rusticity and themselves to be developed; socially and economically. In one scene when Jamal guides tourists to a place, some hooligans including Salim damage the car and steal its parts. In that situation, the driver rudely beats Jamal.

Tourist (Male): What the hell happened here?

(Driver shouts in hindi and begins to beat Jamal, Jamal protests)

Jamal: *Maine nahikiya.*

(Driver kicks Jamal to the ground)

Tourist (Male): (To driver) Cool it ! Cool it, will you? Jesus. (To Jamal) You got insurance, don't you? Are you ok?

Jamal: You wanted to see a bit of real India, here it is.

Tourist (Female): Well, here is a bit of the real America, son. (Asks for money in lip words with her husband)

Tourist (Male): Oh! Yes, Yes. Jesus. (0:45:48)

The above conversation among Jamal, driver and tourists shows how pessimistically India is portrayed among foreigners and how Westerners prove themselves civilized. In the dialogue above, Jamal, an Indian kid asserts himself that the real bit of India is rusticity. While telling so, Jamal covers the condition of damaged car, the rude driver and his torn condition. The director of the movie presents the theft, rude behaviour, lies as the real bit of India. This is what Britishers exactly feel about India. They still feel that real India is full of rusticity, criminal activities and barbaric. Moreover, a tourist gives money to Jamal and tells him that it is the real bit of America. This shows how those Westerners tries to show them superior to Easterners using monetary

power. The director of the movie represents America as the economic super power that controls the whole world through its money. The scene also shows that India is still weak in finance and is still dependent upon the First World. Besides, the tourist coats America as developed and different from India. They clearly distinguish so-called First world with the so-called Third world; one a super power financially and behaviourally and next the dependent.

It is true that India was once the colony of British government. Although the colonization is over India is still colonized socially and culturally by the Britishers. Not only this, Britishers still view India as their own estate and thus, till now British people draw the pictures of India in their discourses as they had perceived India during colonization. Besides, the First World perceives the Third World as the underdeveloped or undeveloped part of world. They also represent the Third world as the barbaric and rustic part that depend on the First world; economically, academically, socially and culturally.

Moreover, due to this colonial bequest of British people, they differentiate developing countries or the Third World countries like India as 'Other' and term themselves to be 'Self'. Developing countries like England and America define themselves different from those Third World nations and terms themselves to be 'Occident' terming the developing countries as 'Orient'. Through this concept, they create certain images for 'Orient' nations as barbaric, rustic, uneducated, underdeveloped, poor etc and differentiate themselves with the images like developed, educated, civilized etc. There is no doubt that the First world always tries to differentiate their world from the Third world so as to sustain their pre-established images among the world. Besides, as their voice is accepted as the authorized voice throughout the world, they produce discourses with their implanted images about East



and West; and make the world believe that the Orient world still exist and is different from the Occident. In the scene when Jamal is beaten for the broken car by driver, the dialogues spoken by an American tourist and an Indian kid Jamal covers the theme of difference between the Third World and First World, that the director of the movie has tried to convey. Jamal says: (pointing in rude behaviour of driver, broken car and his torn condition) "You wanted to see a bit real India, here it is." In response, to differentiate West from India, the tourist speaks: (Asking money with her friend) "Well here is a bit of the real America, son." Using such dialogues in the movie, the director tries to differentiate the 'Orient' world with 'Occident'.

Similarly, such stereotypical images about orient can be seen in the movie. The director, a British, fully utilizes the politics of representation and follows the same tradition and views India on the dichotomy of 'Other' and 'Self' and 'Orient' and 'Occident'. Thus, while figuring out the movie, he prepares imageries that suit for the Orient world. Before directing the movie, director Danny Boyle had never been to India. Actually, he had prepared the concept for the movie before studying and observing India by himself. He directed the movie without exactly knowing what the real India looks like, instead exploiting the politics of representation imposes the implanted images about India. This proves what sort of images has been set in his mind about the Third World nations like India. Some clips from the movie are below:



*Clip. No. 2: Juhu Slum area of Mumbai, India (0:07:48)*

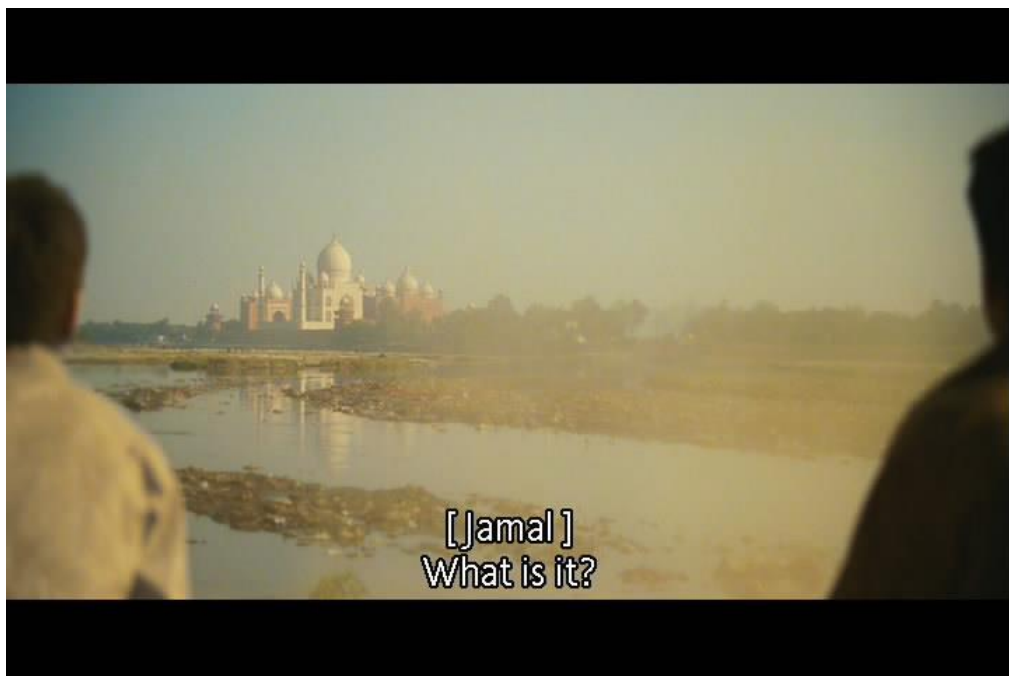


*Clip. No. 3: Public Toilet in Juhu Slum area of Mumbai, India (0:10:32)*

The above clips from the movie show the picture of Juhu slum area. Most of the clips and scenes in the movie capture this sort of rusticity among the slum areas. This shows that the director focuses only over such sceneries of India so as to cash the colonial inheritance of Britain over India. Most of the scenes have been shot in the Juhu slum area of Mumbai, India. Actually, director Boyle couldn't accept the fact that India now has been a developed country, and negates the developed Bombay city:

only a few scenes have been shot in the movie about the developed Bombay city. The whole story of the movie revolves around the slum area. Most of the characters have the experiences of slum area.

In one scene of the movie, where Jamal and Salim reaches to Taj Mahal for the first time, they think that they are seeing a hotel. This scene seems quite controversial as they speak fluent English language but they are not familiar about the world famous monument of their own country. This really questions the feelings of nationality among those Indians. Besides, the image of Taj Mahal is not presented with the feeling of glory but with the motive of showing India as an unmanaged country. In that situation following picture of Taj Mahal is shown:



*Clip. No. 4: Taj Mahal in the background of dirty river(0:41:07)*

The above clip of the movie shows that India is still full of garbage and unmanaged rivers and dust. Even in front of Taj Mahal there is still such garbage. Actually, the scene has nothing to do with the theme of the movie, but the director deliberately includes this scene with greater importance to focus on rusticity and unmanaged condition of the India. Not only this, the director has tried to devalue the real value of

Taj Mahal among the world community. The movie presents a very different picture of Taj Mahal, which probably the world has never noticed, but, in an exact negative perspective. So, through the perspective of 'Otherness', the director once again spills its colonial mentality even in portraying such a world famous wonderful monument, by mixing up such rude condition.

Moreover, the movie also negatively presents the images of small and young tourist guide children. They are shown to be guiding the tourists without having any knowledge about the thing and places exactly. By portraying the casts of Jamal and Salim as the cheaters who cheat the tourists at Taj Mahal, the director tries to prove that India is full of cheaters. Not only this, by creating these characters as the stereotypes of all the Indian kids, the movie tries to show that the children in India have cheating mentality and they are grown up with the culture of cheating others. In the movie, in one scene, Jamal, becoming tourist guide gives some information about Taj Mahal which is incorrect.

Jamal: The Taj Mahal was built by Emperor Khurram for his wife Mumtaz. Was the maximum beautiful woman in the world. So, when she died, the emperor decided to build this five-star hotel for everyone who'd like to visit her too. But she died in 1587 before any of the rooms were built or any of the lifts. But the swimming pool, as you can see was completely on schedule, in top-class fashion.

Tourist: There's nothing of this in the guidebook.

Jamal: The guidebook was written by a bunch of lazy, good-for-nothing Indian beggars. *(Pause)* And this, lady and gentleman, is burial place of Mumtaz.

Tourist: How did she die?

Jamal: A road traffic accident.

Tourist: Really?

Jamal: Maximum pileup.

Tourist: I thought she died in childbirth.

Jamal: Exactly sir, she was on the way to hospital when it happened.

(0:43:36)

The dialogue above shows that the small children guides in India for tourists are misleading the tourist. They are holding the profession of tourist guides without being qualified for that. These are the intentional inclusion in the movie so the British director could prove that Indians are beggars and cheaters. In this scene, Jamal guides a couple tourists around Taj Mahal with full confidence but has no real idea about Taj Mahal. Not only this, when the tourists asks them that guide book has different idea than what Jamal is telling, Jamal says that the guide book about Taj Mahal is written by group of lazy and good-for-nothing Indian beggars. Here, the director has imposed his implanted images of begging Indians in this dialogue. He also tries to show that India is still rustic and barbaric; Indian are beggars. Besides, this also shows that India lack intellectual group.

Not only this, the slum children are also shown creating groups and stealing the goods of those tourists. One of them guides the tourists and rest of the children steal their things. In one scene, Jamal guides a group of tourist to *Dhobi Ghat* and Salim and his group steal the parts of the car. The director Boyle intentionally draws the imagery of slum children in such a way. Director's colonial legacy over India has been extremely poured in the movie. Similarly, they are also shown stealing shoes of the visitors of Taj Mahal and selling them. In that scene Jamal says:

Jamal: (Taking the picture of tourist with the background of Taj Mahal) Ready? Don't move an inch. Smile.

(In the same time Salim and his friend steals the shoes of visitors' shoes. Later they are shown selling the stolen shoes)

Jamal: Unbreakable Thailand wood. (Tapping the shoes) You take. Shoes! American Brand! Shoes!

(Background music: *All I wanna do, and a-, and take your money.*)

(0:43:47)

The above scene of the movie is another example of how the director negatively portrayed the India and Indian kids. All this shows that Indians are poor, they need money and for money they steal things.

Besides, any discourse has a power and is a truth about what the discourse is about, by presenting only such images of India the director has tried to create negative imageries about the country. It is a universally accepted fact that discourse carries some power, that power binds the readers, viewers or the audiences to believe that the presented fact in the discourse is the exact reality. In the exact manner, the focus over the slum of Mumbai has tried to dismantle the fact that Mumbai today is the centre of Business of India and various investors has invested millions of dollars on the city.

The influence of British colonial legacy is clearly seen in the selection of characters for the cast in the movie too. There are only few casts but they cover lots of characters to cast over them. But the policy in selecting them and giving them the cast to act in the movie is criticized. Most of the characters, which are shown in the slum area, are from real slum background. The younger characters in cast of Jamal, Salim, and Latika are from real slum background. But when they become quite young, and when they become a bit civilized some NRI characters are presented to play the role.

Ayush Mahesh Khedekar, the cast who played the role of younger Jamal; Rubina Ali, the cast who played the role of younger Latika, Shah Rukh Munsli, Mozhim Shakim Sheikh Qureshi; the cast who played the role of a crippled slum kid are the children from the Mumbai slums in real life. These casts performed the role in the core Juhu slum area and its circumstances in the movie. But when Jamal, Latika and Salim leaves the slum area; they are grown up; the casts are changed for the characters: Tanay Chheda as Early Teenage Jamal, Tanvi Ganesh Lonkar as Early Teenage Latika, Ashutosh Lobo Gajiwala as Early Teenage Salim. These characters are not from real slum background and are not given significant role in the movie. But when these characters grow up young and have a greater role in movie, again, the casts are changed for the character. The casts for the elder Jamal and Latika are NRI. They are given very positive role, well personality. Dev Patel and Freido Pinto are the casts that played the role of Jamal and Latika.

Further, the dialogues and the languages that are defined for the casts also show the full colonial influence within the director. The slum kids, when they are in slum area and are small, speak Hindi in most of the scenes. Those who speak Hindi language use a very brute language. In one scene of the movie Salim speaks: "*Saale log, kaam to karnanahi, din bharkhel nakhelna.... Kya has raha he be?*" The language he uses is a very brute and third class language in society. And when they grow up, they began to speak English in a civilized way. The movie neglected the importance of some real consequences in the movie. The movie doesn't portray how those slum kids learnt to speak English. Besides, the audience could tolerate if they had spoken a type of broken English. Instead, the characters speak in perfect English accent. The most striking fact is that the director assigned civilization with English language and

assigned rusticity with Hindi language. The following dialogue shows how perfectly Jamal and Salim speaks English.

*(Jamal and Salim jump off the train and while landing on the ground, they reach in the front of the Taj Mahal)*

Jamal: Is this heaven?

Salim: You're not dead, Jamal.

Jamal: What is it? Some hotel, huh? (0:41:10)

The above piece of dialogue between Jamal and Salim shows that they are able to speak perfect English and in perfect English accent. But there is no logical sequence in how they learned to speak English. By making the characters speak English the director of the movie imposed the language over the characters. Besides, the policy for the selection of English language for the cast shows that the movie practiced 'Brown Babus' policy, which was employed by the Britishers when India was their colonial estate. Britishers, at that time, to spread their influence among Indians, chose a group of Indians and taught them English language, culture and style. Those people would speak, think, and act exactly like English people but they were Indians by colour and origin. So, they could represent both; India and Britain. Although these brown babus are Indians, they speak and act the ideas of English people. They helped English people to colonize the Indians and make the Indians follow the English trend. In the similar policy, the movie has turned the Indian casts to the Brown Babus.

Moreover, the movie presents the Indian society full of religious conflicts. The conflict between Hindu community and Muslim community is violently shown in the movie. In one scene, a group of Hindu people come to the community of Muslims and slaughter them, burn them alive, burn their houses shouting: "[T]hey are Muslims. Get them." The victims shout: "*Jamal Chal!, Bhag!*" The scene is full of violence and



portrays the people as monsters who damn care about the life of others. They are too much barbaric and violent. Besides, the movie also portrays the loose moral Indian policemen. At the time of the violence, they are shown to be playing cards in the Jeep. They ignore the fact that the violence has been raised and scold the kids who were there for help: “Hey, get lost. Are you deaf? I said piss off’.” The crowd are screaming, children crying and running, some people were burnt alive but policemen are shown to be neglected. By portraying all this in movie, the director of the movie tries to elaborate that Indian society is still barbaric, unmanaged and even the administration of India is useless.

The director of the movie fully exploits the politics of representation and compares Indians as the irrational and emotional who blindly believe on fate. Not only this, the movie also shows that the Indians are not modern; instead they are practicing the superstitious beliefs. By showing such beliefs among Indians, the director differentiates the West from such community as they claim Westerners are modern and rational who are not emotional or superstitious. Thus, this sort of mentality of the director is severely criticized by the critics. The movie adjoins most of the consequences and events to the fate of the characters. The British director tries to show that Indians are not rational and modern and thus believe more in fate than their own efforts, experience and performance. The success of Jamal to win the game “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?”, Jamal’s success to find Latika again, and re-union of Latika and Jamal are associated with fate and destiny. “Who Wants to Be a Millionaire?” is a quiz game show where a correct answer would be awarded by prize. Jamal answers almost all the questions through his experience. The host of the game show ‘*Kaun Banega Karodpati?*’ tells Jamal “You got Lucky, huh!” as if Jamal has won the game just by his luck. Actually Jamal had been able to answer all the

questions through his own personal experiences. Disrespecting the fact, his success is joined with luck and not with his intellectuality.

In the same manner, once when Jamal and Salim searches and finds Latika after some period of time. Jamal himself terms his success to meet Latika with luck. The cast is made to speak that the incident is his luck despite the fact that he have had great effort and desire to meet her again:

Latika: You came back for me.

Jamal: Of Course.

Latika: I thought you'd forgotten.

Jamal: I never forgot. Not for one moment. I knew I'd find you in the end. It's our destiny.

Latika: Destiny..... (1:02:19)

The above dialogue elaborates that how the strong wish and effort of Jamal to meet Latika is termed just as a part of their destiny. Both Latika and Jamal believe that that's their destiny. This certainly devalues their efforts and desires.

At the end of the movie, when Jamal meets Latika once again Jamal says "[T]his is our destiny." Despite the fact that Jamal has taken part in game show just to find out Latika, he wins the game with his personal experiences and finally found Latika with great efforts all of them are associated to destiny. But to prove Indians are superstitious and irrational even in this twenty-first century, the director makes the characters speak such dialogues terming their own hard effort and deep feeling as destiny.

Apart from these things, the game show that makes Jamal millionaire, the host and the questions in the game show carry some motive of representing the Third World. The language used in the game show is English. All the questions and answers

are in English. But just to hold the Indian feelings some questions related to India are asked. Besides, Jamal had his personal experience so as to answer almost all the questions. But his entire pavement to success is referred as the destiny.

The host of the game show represents somehow a brown babu. He speaks and acts as an English person but is an Indian. The more controversial aspect within him is that he treats Jamal very negatively. In the beginning of the show, he says:

Host: And what does a assistant phone basher do exactly?

Jamal: I get tea for people and-

Host: *Chai wallah. A chai wallah!* Well ladies and gentlemen... Jamal

*Malik garmagaram chai dene walla* from Mumbai, let's play

*Who Wants to be a Millionaire?* (0:03:04)

The above dialogue shows how the host represents himself as a brown babu and negatively addresses an Indian for his profession. Jamal works in a call centre and serves tea there. So, for that, the host makes fun of him. Not only this, the host also tries to nervous Jamal in the game show.

Host: So, Jamal are you ready for the first question for 1000 rupees?

Jamal: Yes.

Host: (To make Jamal nervous) Not bad money to sit on a chair and

answer a question. Better than making tea, no? (Audiences

Laugh)

Jamal: (Nervous) No. Yes. No.

Host: No? Yes? No? Is that your final answer?(0:10:02)

This shows that the host is not in favour of Jamal. He wants Jamal to be nervous and leave the game show. Because he thinks that Jamal is a slum boy, working as a *chai wallah* probably knows nothing.

Similarly, the questions asked in the game show also cash the motive of the director. The first question is “Who was the star in the 1973 hit film Zanjeer?” and the answer is Amitabh Bachan. This question links to the personal experience of Jamal. Jamal says: “He’s the most famous man in India.” All the people in India know and adore Bachan. In one scene, when Amitabh’s helicopter approaches near the slum area, all the people gather in that place. Jamal who was locked in the latrine by Salim jumps into the latrine pit so as to take an autograph of Amitabh Bachan. He shouts: “My Amitabh Sir! Move, out of my way. Please wait, I am coming for you. Amitabh sir, please give me your autograph.” This is how the slum people are shown inclined towards the movie stars. They are shown that they would do anything to meet, see and take autographs of the movie stars.

Another question in the game show is: “A picture of three lions is seen in the national emblem of India. What is written underneath? The options for the questions were: A. Truth alone triumphs, B. Lies alone triumphs, C. Fashion alone triumphs and D. Money alone triumphs. The answer is ‘Truth alone triumphs’. The person, who answers all other questions, is not able to answer this question and asks for the help to the audiences. This also shows that Indians actually know very less about their own country and know much more about film industries. This questions the intellectuality of the Indians.

The third question in the game show is “In the depiction of God Rama, he is famously holding what in his right hand?” The answer for this question is ‘Bow and Arrow’. This question is included in the movie to support the ideas of director to show India as a land full of religious violence. Jamal knows the answer of this question as he himself has experienced the religious conflict between Hindus and Muslims. He could never forget this event because this conflict became the cause of his mother’s

death and reason he leaves the slum area. Jamal says: “I wake up every morning wishing I didn’t know the answer to that question. If it wasn’t for Rama and Allah, I would still have a mother.” There is no doubt that these lines carry full feelings of Jamal but this also gives clear picture that due to such religious conflict in India many of Indian kids had become orphan and many of them has been displaced from their shelter. The director used this question as the tool to show the conflict in Indian society and has taken a great chance to show the brutal violence; murder, and conflict among the Indian community.

Another question in that game show is “The song ‘*Darshan Do Ghanashyam*’ was written by which famous Indian poet?” The options are: A. *Surdas*, B. *Tulsidas*, C. *Mira Bai* and D. *Kabir*. The correct answer for this question is *Surdas*. The question, is about an Indian song and seems that has some Indian value but the question is used to show that the pre-established images about India as Orient still fits in the context of India. Jamal answers this question through his own experience at Maman’s child care home. Maman is a person in the slum who collects street children and trains them to sing. Jamal, too, is one of those children. The song “*Darshan Do Ghanashyam*” and lots of other songs are taught to those kids. As the children become able to sing songs, they are made blind and kept to beg. In this case, Jamal says, “Blind singers earn double, you know that?” This whole scenery carries rusticity, barbaric condition and lack of humanity among those Indian people. Thus, even this part of the movie serves as a chance to practice the colonial inheritance of the director.

Besides, answers of almost all the questions in the game show were related with Jamal’s past life. So, Jamal successfully answered them and became millionaire. But neglecting this fact the movie tries to show that all that is because of luck or

destiny. The fifth question is: “On an American One Hundred Dollar Bill, there is a portrait of which American statesman?” The options are: A. George Washington, B. Franklin Roosevelt, C. Benjamin Franklin and D. Abraham Lincoln. The answer is Benjamin Franklin; and Jamal correctly answers this question due to his experience. While Jamal goes to search Latika, he meets his old friend who was blinded by Maman, who was begging on the street. Jamal gives him a hundred dollar bill.

Beggar: Dollars? How much?

Jamal: One hundred.

Beggar: So, you take me for a fool.

Jamal: Honestly. I swear on my mother’s soul.

Beggar: What’s on this note? Whose picture is it?

Jamal: There’s an old man. He’s bald on top with long hair on the sides, like a girl.

Beggar: Benjamin Franklin (0:52:48)

The answer to the fifth question was easy for Jamal as he had already got this idea through his blind friend. Answering this question, thus, is the result of his personal experience.

Similarly, another question is: “Who invented the revolver?” The options are: A. Samuel Colt, B. Bruce Browning, C. Dan Wesson and D. James Revolver. The answer is Samuel Colt and Jamal answers this correctly. Although the exact idea is not clear about how he knew the answer but he had experienced revolver when Salim, using revolver, kills Maman. However, the question somehow served the director to support his ideas about India. This shows that India is full of crimes and a general slum kid like Salim could get a revolver so easily. Besides, no police inquiry is

included for the murder of Maman. So, this event is also a sharp hit on the Indian security system and Indian administration too.

The next question in the game show is: “Cambridge Circus is in which UK city?” The options are: A. Oxford, B. Leeds, C. Cambridge and D. London. The answer is London, and Jamal correctly answer this question. The movie links this question to Jamal’s experience in Call Centre where the names of different countries were kept. Similarly, the eighth question is: “Which cricketer has scored the most first class centuries in history?” and the options are: “A. Sachin Tendulkar, B. Ricky Ponting, C. Michael Slater and D. Jack Hobbs. Cricket is the favourite game all over India. Indian people are too much crazy about Cricket. Almost all time, people keep themselves in front of television in the time of game shows. Although Jamal was confused in this question, he correctly answers this question: “D. Jack Hobbs.”

The last question in the game show for Jamal to win 20 million rupees is: “In Alexendar Dumas’ book, ‘The Three Musketeers’, two of the musketeers are called Athos and Porthos. What is the name of third musketeer?” And the options are: A. Aramis, B. Cardinal Richelieu, C. D’Artagnan and D. Planchet. Actually, Jamal does not know the answer; he guessingly answers it:

Jamal: A.

Host: “A” because?

Jamal: Just... because.

Host: Final answer.

Jamal: Yes. Final answer—“A” Aramis. (1:47:28)

Although, Jamal answers the question in guess, the answer is correct. Finally, Jamal becomes the winner of 20 million rupees. Although he seem to depend upon luck in this final question, that is not the fact. Actually, Jamal takes part in the game just to

meet Latika as he was sure she would watch the game show; when he gets the chance to talk to Latika and finds that she is fine, his motive to participate in the game is ended. At last he says to Latika, "I knew you'd be watching." So, while answering the final question, which he doesn't know, he answers it just to answer but not to win the game.

Finally, Jamal becomes millionaire and gets together with Latika. But the movie adjoins all this success of Jamal to his destiny and luck. As mentioned above, Jamal answers almost all the question through his own experiences. But the movie devalues the experiences and feelings of the characters and gives emphasis to destiny. The director tries to show that Indians still believe on destiny, fate and luck; they are still practicing these oriental concepts. But till the end of movie, it becomes clear to all of us that Jamal answers almost all the questions correctly due to his own experiences about those questions and he finally gets together with Latika because he took part in the game show as he knew Latika would be watching the game show.

Another most criticized aspect in the movie is its language. The movie tries to show the superiority of English language over the Hindi language. The movie is dubbed in two versions: English and Hindi. In the Hindi version, more than fifty percent dialogues are in English. Actually, the movie in no angle seems to be Indian movie; it is completely an English movie that utilized some Indian characters and used themselves to prove India is worse than it really seems to be. The movie tries to show that India is an Oriental nation, a Third world: barbaric, unmanaged, uneducated, slum, rustic, and full of crime, religious violence and so on. However, the movie in various scenes of the movie tries to raise the feelings of Indian that the movie is an Indian movie. To raise the Indian feelings over the movie, the director uses some India oriented questions in the game show, focuses slum area, and uses



Indian characters and so on. But in all aspects, Danny Boyle seems to fail in fulfilling this motive and thus, is severely criticized.

Among such tools that the director uses to raise Indian feelings over the movie, use of the name of Super-star, Big B Amitabh Bachan is also the one. He uses the name of Amitabh Bachan as the key to raise Indian feelings over the movie with a sequence of unnecessary five minutes long scene. However, the Super-star Amitabh Bachan himself is not shown in the movie. Although the name of Amitabh is used to raise the Indian feelings over the movie, it gave path to criticize the movie further. The scene was unnecessarily stretched and the very extravagant picture of craziness for the movie stars among the Indians is shown. The contradictory fact is that, although the name of Amitabh is given higher importance and the scene gets longer; the movie fails to present real Amitabh Bachan in the movie.

To sum up, the movie "*Slumdog Millionaire*" is a full exploitation of colonial legacy of the British Director Danny Boyle. The world famous and Oscar winning movie "*Slumdog Millionaire*" is severely criticized by the developing nations and especially Indian community due to the over spilt colonial mentality of director while presenting the movie. Due to the high influence of colonial mentality of the director, he focuses only over the pessimistic aspects of India negating all the optimistic aspects. The director, using slum area as the main plot, and showing Indian characters as rude, uneducated, barbaric, irrational, brutal and superstitious, tries to distinguish West from the East. Moreover, presenting the brutal scenes of violence, the director tries to convey the world that India is still full of such practices. Besides, the director also tries to show that India is still colonized after such a long era after the liberation of India, by giving higher preference to English language even in the Hindi edition of the movie. Thus, due to the colonial bequest of the director, he imposed orientalist

ideology upon the plot, character and dialogues by presenting only the pessimistic aspects negating all optimistic aspects of modern India.

## Chapter IV

### Conclusion

#### **Colonial Time has gone; Colonial Mindset Works on**

*Slumdog Millionaire* can be seen as a deployment of British colonial mentality. The movie seems to be showing Indian slum, its condition and a sign of positive change in it. But in the deeper level, the director, by imposing his colonial legacy over each component of the movie, tries to prove India as the 'Orient'. Not only this, while representing India, he also differentiates 'West' or 'Occident' from such 'Orient' or 'East'. The intention of director to represent India as the 'Other' can be seen in the movie's focus on the slums of India, selection of characters for various casts, concept of destiny, religious conflict, scenes of violence, images of young tourist guides, use of its language and dialogues.

The movie, disrespecting the fact, that in the context of this twenty first century, India has established itself as one of the powerful nations of the world in academy, in economy and in military forces, focuses only on the slums of India. This shows that still the Westerners think that India is traditional, superstitious, irrational and oriental. Although the colonization is over, India is still colonized socially and culturally by the British. The First World perceives the Third World as the under-developed or undeveloped part of world; barbaric and rustic part that depends on the First world.

In the same manner, the movie presents the children of India as the fun loving kids who don't have interest in education but in movies. The slum kids are presented as the stereotypes of the whole Indian kids; poor, uneducated, barbaric and rough in behaviour. Moreover, the movie tries to prove that India is full of cheats. By creating characters like Jamal, Salim as the stereotypes of all the Indian kids, the movie tries to

show that the child in India have cheating mentality and they are grown up with the culture of cheating others. Jamal is shown guiding tourist without having exact knowledge about that is an example how the director tries to portray Indian child.

Moreover, the selection of characters for various roles too carries the colonial legacy of the director. The children from real slum background plays the role of slum kid in their slum area who are rude, barbaric, uneducated. But when the characters grow up and gets matured some NRIs plays the role, who are civilized, educated and able to speak English well. Whereas when the characters speak Hindi, they use very rude and vulgar words but in an instance when the characters speak English, they speak in a polite and civilized manner.

Similarly, the presentation of religious conflict, violence, fire, murder, terror shows that Indian society is still full of conflicts. The movie also portrays the loose moral Indian policemen and administration. The movie shows the policemen ignoring the incident of violence and playing cards which is an example of how the director presents India among world community. Not only this, the movie does not show any stains that shows there is the presence of administration or security system in the Indian community.

Another most striking point that is deliberately focussed in the movie is 'Destiny'. By focussing upon destiny and fate the director tries to show that Indians are not rational; they are superstitious and are different from the modern Western people. They believe more in fate than their own efforts, experience and performance. The success of Jamal in winning the game, his success to find Latika again, and re-union of Latika and Jamal are associated with fate and destiny, whereas he wins the game show due to his personal experiences and re-unites with Latika just because he took part in the game show as he was for sure she would be watching the game show.

Further, the British policy of 'Brown Babus' is sharply employed in the movie. The director, using the Indians like Anil Kapoor, Irfan Khan and NRI characters like Dev Patel as brown babus, makes them speak the idea of the director and tries to convey the world that Indians are still superstitious, traditional, oriental, brute, barbaric and still dependent upon the first world financially, linguistically, intellectually and socially.

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