

**MYANMAR WOMEN
THROUGH THE EYES OF
TWO BRITISH WRITERS:
MAURICE COLLIS AND GEORGE ORWELL**

PhD DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

This thesis studies the works of two 20th century British writers – Maurice Collis (1889 – 1973) and George Orwell (1903 - 1950) – who spent some years in Myanmar, during the colonial period. Their writings are still very well-known and read. Their writings vividly portray the economic, political, social and cultural background of Myanmar and its people during the colonial period. Both of these British writers learnt to speak Myanmar because they seemed to be very interested in the Myanmar people and their society. So their writings which are the reflection of their ideas, opinions and feelings are a mixture of the thoughts and perspectives of the Myanmar and the British. Moreover, unlike most British people of the time, they themselves seemed to have different views and perspectives towards the Myanmar people. Although it cannot be denied that both Maurice Collis and George Orwell were very fond of the Myanmar people, sometimes, due to who they were, they stood on the side of the rulers. It is considered worthwhile to study these novels and compare their points of view about Myanmar and her people, to find out whether their views about the people they are talking are true. In brief, a comparative study of the works of these two British writers is a study of the Myanmar people as seen through the eyes of foreigners.

After studying the works of Maurice Collis and George Orwell, it appears that although they were British whose background and views were different from the Myanmar people, they did not look down upon the Myanmar people, especially Myanmar women. They even noticed the courage of Myanmar women. They highlighted the capability, honesty, loyalty and simplicity of Myanmar women in their books. This study shows that the good qualities of Myanmar women were noticed and remarked upon by these two writers who are representative of the Englishmen who came to work in Myanmar during the colonial period.