

COLONIALISM IN JOSEPH CONRAD'S *HEART OF DARKNESS*

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ABSTRACT

A study was done on a literature work, novel by Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. This study is done because this novel does not contain a story that entertains but also informs the adequate data about the historical aspect to its reader. The phenomenon that informed is colonialism and its influence toward the changing character of the story.

The objective of the study is to describe the colonialism that was written in the *Heart of Darkness* and its influence toward the changing character of Mr. Kurtz.

This study used the qualitative description as research methodology which involved with library research, internet browsing, historical text that related to the research study.

The result of this study shows that the colonialism in the novel was a mission of civilization toward the savage that had been distorted into a force, exploitation and violence to the native. And the colonialism spirit and its circumstances can influence a person inside to become savage too.

The conclusion of this study is that civilization can not be the reason of colonialism, whereas the violence and exploitation are only done by savage.

Keywords : *Heart of Darkness, Colonialism, Changing Character.*

INTRODUCTION

What a piece of work is a man
How noble in reason!
How infinite in faculty!
In form and moving how express and admirable!
In action, how like an angel!
In apprehension, how like a god!
The beauty of the world, the paragon of animals.
(Shakespeare)

There are many reasons for people reading a literature work. Such as, reading for escape, reading to learn, reading to confront experience and reading for aesthetic pleasure (Hoepfer, 1990:1). It cannot be denied that literature is part of a country's heritage, human civilization and reference to history. We can understand more about human feeling and social civilization in a country more by seeing through its literature work. Writers usually write what they imagine, think and feel. So, when the reader reads a

literature work, it is a kind of communication type between the writer and the reader. Wonderfully, the reader who lives in modern time possibly communicating, learning and understanding about anything that happened in the past time through the book. So, literature is not merely a fiction. Defining literary value is a matter of observing what happens to texts (Easthope, 1991:57)

An important movement in literature was aestheticism, which claimed that the main aim of art was to evoke feeling and beauty. There are three branches of literature, poem, prose and drama (Rees, 1973:2). For the writer, reading a literature work carries different kinds of sensation, for example, a poem can soften heart, a

prose can inspire through its conflict and drown us in to deep reading because its suspense, whereas drama carries deep emotional feeling. The literature its self can be responded in an emotional or intellectual way, depending on our moods and intellectual and aesthetic needs. Studying literature also an exercises for our brains, and makes us think for ourselves (Hoeper,1990:1).

As other literature works, poetry and drama, novel grows in line with the phenomenon which happen in its society. In the year 1800th, In a journal posted by WCL students Sarah Hymowitz and Amelia Parker at www.wcl.american.edu/humright/center/write :

“By the mid 1800s, the western powers had established colonies all along the African coast. Africa provided a source of cheap labor, raw materials and new markets for these countries, which were going through the Industrial Revolution. These colonizing powers, however, began to compete with each other over control. They decided to hold a conference to set up ground rules for colonizing Africa. In 1884, leaders from 14 colonial powers, including the United States, Belgium, Portugal, Germany and Spain held the Berlin Conference, where they divided the continent of Africa into 50 countries and claimed them for themselves. These divisions were made arbitrarily and without any consideration of the common culture, history and language shared by different groups of African people. They often divided an ethnic group or brought enemies under the same government. The map of Africa today remains largely the same as when it was divided in 1884.

The spirits of colonialism was well-spread during 1800th. In that time, many literary works raise the topic

about colonialism such as *Plymouth Plantation* by William Bradford, *The Conquest of New Spain* by Bernal Diaz, *Slave in Algiers* and *A Struggle for Freedom* by Susanna Rowson and *Heart of Darkness* by Joseph Conrad. Joseph Conrad writes *Heart of Darkness* through his journey to Africa where he met savagery toward people in Africa by the pilgrim.

Joseph Conrad was involved in the in his own story and seen the savagery in the realtime in 1800th and the *Heart of Darkness* is one of his finest book that he has created. Stallman (1960:339) says

In 1890 he went to Belgian Congo to command a river steamer – realization of a hope expressed as a child when he put his finger on a map of Central Africa and said he would go there one day. From his experiences in the Congo conrad was physically weakened but psychologically awakened, and his writing career dates from this period, for he was then writing his first book, *Almayer's folly*. Years later he gave his Congo story in one of his finest books, “*Heart of darkness.*”

By reading *Heart of Darkness*, we get a good deal information about colonial Africa. Literature serves as a social document and gives us insight to the custom, attitudes and values of the time and place in which it was written. On www.litcharts.com/heartofdarkness state:

“Joseph Conrad’s novel reside in the transition period between Victorianism, with its strict convention and focus on polite society, and modernism, which sought to explode old conventions and invent new literary forms to convey human experience more fully. Conrad’s work was instrumental in his effort, particularly his experimentation with the use of time and non-chronological narrative. *Heart of Darkness* also fits squarely into the genre of colonial literature, in which European nation from Africa to the Far East in the late 19th and early 20th century.”

Conrad presented in the *Heart of Darkness* how the moist air and the pressure that includes the wild African jungle atmosphere that gripping from beginning to end raises the same atrocities on the human beings who trapped in this story was presented in his novel that shows colonialism in Africa during 18th century.

If we look back at the 1800th century, historically, Congo was firstly a personal colony of King Leopold II of Belgium. In Regelin Farn’s dissertation (Colonial and postcolonial rewritings of “*Heart of Darkness*” 2005:6) He defines that the borders of the huge state. Leopold exploited the country ruthlessly and gave it very little in return. Congo was the name of Heart of darkness land, now change to *La Republique du Zaire* in the 1800th, when Henry Morton Stanley stepped on this land.

There is a close relation between the colonialism and the empire in controlling a land in the some time in 1800th because in that time the empire of Europe explores the world in order to civilize, to control their resources, to spread religion, etc and this intention can be done by hook or by crook. Doyle (1986:46) defines that :

“Empire is a relationship, formal or informal, in which one state controls the effective political sovereignty of another political society. It can be achieved by force, by political collaboration, by economic, social, or cultural dependence. Imperialism is simply the process or policy of establishing or maintaining an empire”.

In relation to this, colonialism, which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory. (Said, 1993: 8).

Even Conrad brings “colonial” theme in his some writing, such as, *Victory*, *Nostramo* and *The Rescue*. The history, phenomenon and well-description situation in the novel *Heart of Darkness* that appeals the writer most to analyze this novel. Conrad not only shows the colonialism through his well-description in his novel but also reveals the darkness side of human being desire to be wealthy by force, violence and exploitation.

Based on the objective of the study the writer has purpose as follows:

1. To describe the colonialism in Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness*.
2. To explain how the colonialism influences the change of the character of Mr.Kurtz in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*.

RESEARCH METHODE

In analyzing this research, the study employs qualitative approach. Because the data are in the form of words. As Biklen (1992:32) states that

“Qualitative approach research is descriptive, the data collected are in the form of words or pictures rather than number. The written results of the research contains quotation from the data to illustrate and substantiate the presentation. The data include interview transcrip, field notes, photographs, videotapes, personal documents, memos, and other official records. They often contain quotation and try to describe what particular situation or view of the world is like narrative form.”

Meanwhile to analyze the data, the writer uses content analysis. According to Brog and Gall in Artanti (2003:16)

“Content analysis is kind of research technique to the object systematic and qualitative description of the manifest content of communication from especially written composition, novel news, newspaper, magazines, advertise, etc.”

In this study, the writer uses Joseph Conrad's novel *Heart of Darkness* as the object of research. Any

data contains that describing colonialism will be quoted as the prove in the analysis

Procedure of Data Collection

1. Reading The Novel

For the writer, the Novel *Heart of Darkness* is not strange anymore because this novel is already famous enough and were observed by the literature lover.but still reading the novel carefully is needed in order to understand the content of the novel deeply, The writer toke several month to finish reading this novel (about 3 months)

2. Collecting The Data

The writer employs library research and internet browsing. The writer searches conceptual of colonialism that occured based on the novel *Heart of Darkness*, and the relation between colonialism and its influence to the changing character of Mr.Kurtz.

3. Quoting from the Data Corpus

The quotation of the data corpus consists of words, phrases, clauses and discourses that refer to Colonialism in Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness*. The novel is printed in New York,

United States of America, edited by Robert Kimbrough in 1971.

In this collecting data, the writer quotes the evidence which contains colonialism.

“They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force – nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of other. They grabbed what they could get for sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind – as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much (Conrad; 1971:6-7)”.

“I’ve seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but, by all the stars! These were strong, lusty, red-eyed devils, that swayed and drove

3. Analyzing The Data

To analyze the data, which is the novel, the writer uses content analysis. According to Brog and Gall in Artanti (2003:16) “Content analysis is kind of research technique to the object systematic and qualitative description of the manifest content of communication from especially written composition, novel news, newspaper, magazines, advertise, etc.” It can be seen that the content analysis is technique implied in analyzing qualitative description such as novel, news, newspaper, etc.

ANALYSIS

This chapter will analyze the colonialism that is described in Joseph

Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* and character of Mr. Kurtz that represent in this novel.

1. Colonialism Described in

Heart of Darkness

The history of *Heart of Darkness* starts in the *Nellie*, a cruising yawl, awaiting the turn of the tide in the Thames river. There are five persons lounge on her deck: director of companies; captain and also the host, a lawyer, an accountant; marlow and the narrator. They exchange a few words lazily, mostly silent. And some reason they don’t start play dominoes, the situation in the lounge is meditative, and fit for nothing but placid-staring.

Marlow, sit cross-legged right aft, leaning against the mizen-mast, starts the story about his experience in Congo toward the other passengers in the ship and how map fascinates him, especially its blank spots “The biggest, the most black part” of the map that appeal him so much.

“It had become a place of darkness. but there was in it one river especially, a mighty big river, that you could see in map, resembling an immense snake uncoiled, with its head in the sea, its body at rest curving afar over vast country, and its tail lost in the depth of the land” (Page:8)

Conrad never says explicitly that the setting of the novel refers to Congo, but through geographic science

and history, we can find out the setting of *Heart of Darkness*. “Heart” symbolizes the center point or what is inside something. Whereas “Darkness” symbolizes the dark place in the earth which refers to some places that the black men mostly live, the continent of Africa. The country of Africa that is passed by a big river and the equator line is Congo.

Historically, the time of the white comes to Africa is in the mid of 19th century, where the expedition and exploration of a new world is up raising in Europe. Boustin (1988:36)

“The exploration systematically to Central Africa by Europeans start in the mid of 19th century. Among the explorers open that area is David Livingstone, Richard F. Burton and Jhon H Speke. The most famous of them is Henry Morton Stanley, who crosses the Afrika from Zanzibar to Atlantic, explores the Tanganyika river and Uganda, and traces Congo river stream, King Leopold II of Belgium pays him to open great area, which is now known as Republic of Zaire. Stanley builds trading post and signs some treaty with the African chiefs of tribes in the Organization that supported by the King”

This area has been changed its name for several times. We may get confuse about the changing of country’s name. Based on the timeline of this country’s name stated on Regelin Farn’s dissertation (2005:5) that:

“The past and present of the country that has been known as the Congo Free State (1885-1908), the Belgian Congo (1908-60), Zaire (1971-97) and the Democratic Republic of the Congo has been the focus of increasing public interest in recent years. Historical works (notably Hochschild’s) make a fascinating read and help understand the complex background of “Heart of Darkness”.”

From the statement above, there is the changing country’s name of Democratic Republic of Congo. But in the 18th until early 19th that state is famous by Congo. The explorers and poet or literary workers call Congo or Belgium Congo because it is famous as the personal colony of King Leopold II of Belgium.

The colonialism in the Joseph Conrad’s *Heart of Darkness* is described through the Marlow’s experience during his voyage to Africa. Marlow is a seaman that just returned from six-year “dodge” of the far east and hunts for a new ship. By his aunt’s help, he gets a job in an ivory company as a river Captain to change the previous Captain that had been killed because a scuffle with native.

As the European mindset, Marlow’s aunt thinks that the voyage is not merely to earn profit but also to civilize the native. Making the natives behave with morality, intelligent and modern

“I was also one of the workers, with a capital – you know. Something like an emissary of light, something like a lower sort of apostle. There had been a lot of such rot let loose in print and talk just about that time, and the excellent woman, living right in the rush of all that humbug, got carried off her feet. She talked about ‘weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways’ (page:12)

Here shows Marlow's aunt's naivety toward his journey to Africa. She is described as the most European women that only hear unbalanced information about the exploration to the Africa and never undergo, living in the jungle. She is just the woman who stays at home and sees the expedition as a great and noble work. Remember the first type of colonialism is *settler colonialism*, there is always the motivation they migrate from Europe to Africa, they are often motivated by religious, political, or economic reasons. As the point of Marlow's aunt's point of view above, it states that the Marlow's journey is to civilize the ignorant. But Marlow, that has a dose of experience of explorations and deep feeling in this journey as a sea man shocks his aunt with his statement:

'I ventured to hint that the company was run for profit'(Page:12)

It means that, his coming is not about doing charity in humanity mission but it is merely the economic reason. In relation to this opinion, Mushtaq (2010:26) also defines in his journal that :

"The image of the black people is stereotypical and provides a view of the African people as being 'others' in contrast with the 'self' which is the British empire. The 'others' are considered uncivilized, savage, and mindless people; they are physically, emotionally and psychologically maltreated by the whites, who

consider themselves to be superior, civilized, and intelligent. Marlow however believes that it is his aunt's naivety to believe that his company intends to civilize the 'ignorant millions', their motto is to exploit the resources of the colonies and to earn as much profit as possible, since, in Marlow's words, "Company was run for profit". This indicates that the empire's motive behind keeping the control of the lands is utilitarian rather than humanitarian".

The theory that has been defined by Mushtaq above is in line with *Binarism Theory* that introduced by Russel. Binarism also gives the significant signal of colonialism. The words such as *uncivilized*, *savage*, and *mindless people* refer to the native and the opposite words belong to the pilgrim. This theory also shows the class of the native.

Marlow is the man that his mind is abode both liking the empire, as the germs of wealth and civilization that shown in the very beginning of the novel, and vice versa, hating the empire after undergoing a journey in Africa.

While in the Thames river, Marlow shows his admiration toward the Roman empire that lights the Thames river and brings the civilization to British. Their coming is spreading the wealth seed.

"I was thinking of very old times, when the Romans first came here, nineteen hundred years ago -- the other day... Light came out of this river since -- you say Knights? Yes; but it is like a running blaze on a plain, like a flash of lightning in the clouds. We live in the flicker -- may it last as long as the old

earth keeps rolling! But darkness was here yesterday”. (Page: 5)

As the statement above, it is vividly explained that Civilization mission might follow in the footsteps of forced labour. The ruthless method of civilization practiced such as colonization is allowed. Doing an exploitation, robbery with violence, murder on a great scale from a different complexion or slightly flatter noses, is no a big deal.

“They were conquerors, and for that you want only brute force – nothing to boast of, when you have it, since your strength is just an accident arising from the weakness of other. They grabbed what they could get for sake of what was to be got. It was just robbery with violence, aggravated murder on a great scale, and men going at it blind – as is very proper for those who tackle a darkness. The conquest of earth, which mostly means the taking it away from those who have a different complexion or slightly flatter noses than ourselves, is not a pretty thing when you look into it too much”.

(Page: 6-7)

In this paragraph, it is shown the greed of white and the exploitation toward the native. From the mouth of the Congo, Marlow takes a short trip upriver on a steamer. This ship leaves him at the Company's Lower Station. Marlow finds the station to be a vision of hell—it is a “wanton smash-up” with loads of rusting ancient wreckage everywhere, a cliff nearby being demolished with dynamite for no apparent reason, and many starving and dying Africans enslaved and laboring

under the armed guard of the Company's white employees.

“A slight clinking behind me made me turn my head. Six black men advanced in a file, toiling up the path. They walked erect and slow, balancing small basket full of earth on their heads, and the clink kept time with their footsteps. Black rags were wound round their loins, and the short ends behind wagged to and fro like tails. I could see every rib, the joints of their limbs were like knots in a rope; each had an iron collar on his neck, and all were connected together with a chain whose bights swung between them, rhythmically clinking. Another report from the cliff made me think suddenly of that ship of war I had seen firing into a continent. It was the same kind of ominous voice; but these men could by no stretch of imagination be called enemies. They were called criminals, and the outraged law, like the bursting shells, had come to them, an insoluble mystery from the sea. All their meagre breast panted together, the violently dilated nostrils quivered, the eyes stared stonily uphill. They passed me within six inches, without a glance, with that complete, deathlike indifference of unhappy savages. Behind this raw matter one of the reclaimed, the product of the new forces at work, strolled despondently, carrying a raffle by its middle. He had a uniform jacket with the button off, and seeing a white man on the path, hoisted his weapon to his shoulder with alacrity.”

(Page:16)

The second type of colonialism, *Exploitation Colonialism*, is shown from the paragraph above. It describes the trait of whites exploit the native to work. In relation to this, the classification of human being also shown by mentioning their caste, class, or race base on their complexion, *black men* and *white men*. Also the disparity between them by showing what they do and appearance description.

Marlow's real introduction to the land and the enterprise begins here. An insoluble mystery is coming to Marlow after seeing this violence, that

how come these black men are called enemies, criminals and having outraged law, whereas, the whites who torture the blacks shout doing the civilization mission and *weaning those ignorant millions from their horrid ways*.

Here it may be appropriate to quote Karl Marx who also noted that “the profound hypocrisy and inherent barbarism of bourgeois civilisation lies unveiled before our eyes .. .in the colonies, where it goes naked”. Zins (1998:P.65-66)

This is the turning point of Marlow’s opinion about the colonialism because he sees the colonialism practiced by his own eyes. The noble mission that his aunt’s description is not true. Moreover, he sees beyond greed of human’s lust.

“I have seen the devil of violence, and the devil of greed, and the devil of hot desire; but by all stars! They were strong, lusty, red-eyed devils that swayed and drove men - ”

(Page:17)

His opinion toward the native is also changed. Marlow doesn’t think the native as criminals and enemies but as a victims of Colonialism of white. Sometimes, our opinion can be changed after looking deeply inside to the phenomenon. Understanding from both

side is needed in order to have a comprehension.

As Marlow realizes about the native will undergo as the result of colonialism that they will dying slowly.

“Black shapes crouched, lay, sat between the trees, leaning against the trunks, clinging to the earth, half coming out, half effaced within the dim light, in all the attitudes of pain, abandonment, and despair. Another mine on the cliff went off, followed by a slight shudder of the soil under my feet. The work was going on. The work! And this was the place where some of the helpers had withdrawn to die.

They were dying slowly– it was very clear. They were not enemies, they were not criminals, they were nothing earthy now – nothing but black shadows of disease and starvation lying confusedly in the greenish gloom. Brought from all the recesses of the coast in all the legality of time contracts, lost in uncongenial surroundings, fed on unfamiliar food, they sickened, became inefficient, and were then allowed to crawl away and rest. These moribund shapes were free as air – and nearly as thin. I began to distinguish the gleam of eyes under the trees. Then, glancing down, I saw a face near my hand. The black bones reclined at full length with one shoulder against the tree, and slowly the eyelids rose and the sunken eyes looked up at me, enormous and vacant, a kind of blind, white flicker in the depths of the orbs, which died out slowly. The man seemed young – almost a boy – but you know with them it’s hard to tell”

(Page:17-18)

In this Marlow’s journey in the outer station, he sees the slavery and the exploitation toward the native, he meets the Company’s chief accountant that tells him for the first time about someone, named Mr. Kurtz, that is told by the accountant as remarkable person, first class agent and he can send in as much ivory as all the other agent put together. This explanation makes Marlow curious about Mr.Kurtz and

decides to meet him in the very bottom of the jungle.

The next day Marlow leaves that station with sixty native carriers, each with sixty-pound load. After fifteen days on difficult track, Marlow hobbles into the central station. Marlow's first interview with the manager of the central station proves unusual. He knows that Marlow has walked twenty miles since dawn, but he does not ask him to sit down. The follows is complete description of the manager's appearance and character that he is an unwelcoming man.

"He was civil or uncivil. He was quite. He allowed his 'boy' – an overfed young negro from the coast – to treat the white men, under his very eyes, with provoking insolence"

(Page 22-23)

In this central station Marlow also see the colonialism is practiced by the Manager while they collect the ivory, that their main purpose to migrate to Africa

"I asked myself sometimes what it all meant. They wandered here and there with their absurd long staves in their hands, like lot of faithless pilgrims bewitched inside the rotten fence. The word 'ivory' rang in the air, was whispered, was sighed. You would think they were praying to it. A taint of imbecile rapacity blew through it all, like whiff from corpse. By jove! I've never seen anything so unreal in my life. And outside, the silent wilderness surrounding this cleared speck on the earth struck me as something great and invincible, like evil or truth, waiting

patiently for the passing away of this fantastic invasion."

(Page : 23)

At this place, Marlow hears that Mr. Kurtz is ill. The situation is very grave. The manager thinks, it needs three months to raise and repair the sunken steamer to go to the inner station. And to repair, it needs rivets.

One evening, Marlow overhears the manager speaking to one of agents, one of the men mentions Kurtz and saying something about taking advantages "this unfortunate accident". To Marlow's sensitive mind, it is indicating an air of sinister secrecy.

The young man who was with the manager invites Marlow to his room, when Marlow asks with genuine interest, "who is this Mr.Kurtz ?" the agent explanation reveals that Marlow and Kurtz are classed together as being of the new "gang of virtue, " and the agent is sure Marlow must know the company's plans to Mr.Kurtz. Marlow laughs and asks the agent if he reads the company's private correspondence. He does not answer. "when Mr. Kurtz is general manager," Marlow says in a severe voice "you won't have the opportunity".

The reason for the manager's discourtesy to Marlow is his belief that Marlow, like Kurtz, poses a threat to his own position. Whereas Marlow sees the manager is intentionally delaying shipment in order to make Marlow reaches the inner station, Mr. Kurtz, longer and hope Kurtz will die of neglect.

One evening, when Marlow lies on his steamboat, and hears voices approaching. On this conversation James L. Roberts (1965:P.23) said it establishes the following important points regarding Kurtz and the manager.

1. The manager fears and hates Kurtz.
2. The manager has purposely delayed and avoided sending either food or supplies to Kurtz, hoping he will sicken and die.
3. The manager's defense of his neglect for Kurtz is false and invalid. If Kurtz could manage the upper 300 miles of the river alone in a dugout with four native paddlers, the manager could have sent supplies up to him by the same means at any time.

4. Even the abundant flow of precious ivory from Kurtz's station station infuriates the manager. He knows such success will endear Kurtz to the company.
5. Marlow's impulsive reaction to the revelation of the manager's inhuman treatment of Kurtz shows his horrot at such conduct. Also he knows he is classed with Kurtz. What vicious plot will the manager concoct to get rid of his steamer captain?

By using Eldorado Expedition, Marlow continues down the river on his steamboat with a crew of several whites and about 20 to 30 blacks. As he travels down the river to the inner station, he comes across this shack where he picks up wood, and a note cautioning him to travel carefully. The journey seems like passing the prehistoric time

"Going up that river was like traveling back to the earliest beginning of the world, when vegetation rioted on the earth and the big trees were king. An empty stream, a great silence, an impenetrable forest. The air was warm, thick, heavy, sluggish. There was no joy in the brilliance of sunshine."

(Page:34)

He continues down the river and becomes surrounded by savages in the fog. Marlow is frightened but the savages don't do anything... until the

fog rises. The savages attack and Marlow's men fire back. The arrows of the savages have little effect on Marlow's men or his boat. And the guns of Marlow's men have little effect on the savages since they fire too high. Only Marlow's helmsman dies. Marlow blows the whistle and mysteriously, all the savages retreat in fear. The journey to meet Kurtz is very difficult behind the hostile wall of jungle and savages – for remarkable man. Marlow shortly reaches the inner station where he is greeted by the Russian Fool who seems to survive in the heart of the continent by not knowing what's going on around him. Kurtz is very ill and needs to be taken back to England, but he does not want to go. In fact, he is the one who ordered the attack on the steamboat so that they couldn't take him back to England. Kurtz is worshipped by the natives because the native treat him as God and Kurtz takes advantage by completely exploits them. Kurtz tries to escape to the natives but Marlow catches him and takes back to the steamboat head back for England. While still on the river, Kurtz is dying and saying, "The horror, the horror."

Marlow returns to England. He visits Kurtz's fiancée who is still in mourning a year after Kurtz's death. She still remembers Kurtz as the great man he was before he left, and Marlow doesn't tell her what he has become before he dies. Marlow gives Kurtz's old letters to her and leaves.

2. The Changing Character of Mr. Kurtz

Reading for character is more difficult than reading for plot, for character is much complex, variable, and ambiguous. Anyone can repeat what a person has done in a story, but considerable skill may be needed to describe what a person is (Perrine, 1959:85)

The Portrayal character of Kurtz is a riddle for the main character in this novel, Marlow. Conrad's portrayal of Mr. Kurtz in *Heart of Darkness* is one of Conrad's greatest achievements in the field of characterization; and yet Mr. Kurtz remains a mysterious and elusive person whom we are not able to understand fully.

While Conrad has certainly delineated Mr. Kurtz in a manner which fascinates us, we cannot claim that we

have been able to understand the mind of Mr. Kurtz.

Mr. Kurtz is presented as a remarkable Man, according from the chief accountant of the trading company of which Marlow has become an employee. Here we learn that Mr. Kurtz is, a “remarkable man”, and a first-class agent of the Company. The accountant tells Marlow that Mr. Kurtz is in charge of a very important trading post in the interior of the Congo. Mr. Kurtz is able to collect as much ivory for export as all the other agents of the Company taken together. The accountant also speaks of the high potential of Mr. Kurtz who, in his opinion, would one day rise to a very high position.

“On my asking who Mr. Kurtz was, he said he was a first-class agent; and seeing my disappointment at this information, he added slowly, laying down his pen. ‘He is a very remarkable person.’ Further question elicited from him that Mr. Kurtz was at present in charge of a trading post, a very important one, in the true ivory-country, at the ‘very bottom of there. Sends in as much ivory as all the others put together...’ ”

(Page:19)

The company has three stations in the Africa. The first is the outer station where the chief accountant works, the central station, place of the

manager and the inner station is no doubt, place of the remarkable person, Mr. Kurtz.

After Marlow hears about Mr. Kurtz, he desires to meet him in the inner station. Before he reaches to the inner station, he meets the Manager in the central station. Then we hear a good deal about Mr. Kurtz from the manager of the Central Station of the Company. Although the manager also speaks about Mr. Kurtz’s efficiency as an agent of the Company, yet the manager is inwardly hostile to Mr. Kurtz because of his fear that Mr. Kurtz might one day supersedes him. While talking to his uncle a little later in the story, the manager clearly states his apprehensions with regard Mr. Kurtz; and his apprehensions are fully shared by his uncle.

Later we find the brick-maker at the Central Station talking glibly about Mr. Kurtz. The brick-maker describes Mr. Kurtz as a great apostle of pity, of science, and of progress. In the brick-maker’s view, Mr. Kurtz is a man of high intelligence and wide sympathies. But Marlow can easily see that the brick-maker is talking about Mr. Kurtz in a hypocritical manner, and that

actually the brick-maker shares the manager's antagonism towards Mr. Kurtz.

'Tell me, pray,' said I, 'who is this Mr. Kurtz?'

"The chief of the Inner Station," he answered in a short tone, looking away. 'Much obliged,' I said, laughing. 'And you are the brickmaker of the Central station. Every one knows that.' He was silent for a while. 'He is a prodigy,' he said at last. 'He is an emissary of pity, and science, and progress, and devil knows what else.'

(Page: 25)

Soon afterwards we come to know some more facts about Mr. Kurtz and his way of life at the Inner Station of which he holds the charge. We now learn that Mr. Kurtz has a passion for ivory. Indeed, his main concern as the agent of his Company is to collect ivory. In this respect, he is even more enthusiastic than his employers could have been. The word "ivory" has always been on his lips. Next to ivory, his greatest concern is his intended (the girl whom he proposes to marry). Even greater than his love for his fiancée, and greater than his passion for ivory is the fascination which the wilderness soon begins to exercise upon Mr. Kurtz. The wilderness seems to have penetrated into the very being of Mr. Kurtz. The wilderness has caressed him, has loved him, has embraced him,

has entered his blood, has consumed his flesh, and has taken complete possession of his soul.

You should have heard him say, 'My ivory.' Oh yes, I heard him. 'my intended, my ivory, my station, my river, my -- ' everything belonged to him. It made me hold my breath in expectation of hearing the wilderness burst into a prodigious peal of laughter that would shake the fixed stars in their places. Everything belonged to him – but that was trifle. The thing was to know what he belonged to him – but that was trifle. The thing was to know what he belonged to, how many powers of darkness claimed him for their own. That was the reflection that made you creepy all over. It was impossible – it was not good for one either – trying to imagine. He had taken a high seat amongst the devil of the land – I mean literary

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Mr. Kurtz has also developed a strong sense of power in the region in which he lives, and over the natives with whom he has been coming into a close contact. He shows his sense of ownership of things by repeatedly saying: "My ivory, my intended, my station, my river, my--." From the way in which Mr. Kurtz talks, it would seem that everything belongs to him. At this point, Marlow feels that Mr. Kurtz is an unbalanced kind of man who has lost his sense of proportion. It seems to Marlow at this time that, if the wilderness were to hear Mr. Kurtz talking about his possessions, the wilderness would burst into a mocking

laugh. It also seems to Marlow that, if Mr. Kurtz owns everything around him, he himself is owned by the powers of darkness. In other words, Mr. Kurtz seems to Marlow to be a man who has become wholly evil. Marlow feels that eventually the powers of darkness would claim Mr. Kurtz as their own. According to Marlow, Mr. Kurtz has taken a high seat among the devils of the land. In other words, Mr. Kurtz now seems to Marlow to be an embodiment of evil.

The changing character of Mr. Kurtz is analyzed as the previous mindset of white that is more civilized than the black, native Africa. But the colonialism change the character of Mr. Kurtz into the savage because the influence of his circumstances. This changing is possible as, Perrine (1993:70) state that, A changing of the character must meet three conditions:

- (1) it must be within the possibilities of the character who makes it;
- (2) it must be sufficiently motivated by the circumstances in which character finds himself; and
- (3) it must be allowed sufficient time for change of its magnitude believably to take place.

In his early life, Mr. Kurtz had been a man of sound views and an enlightened outlook upon life. All Europe had contributed to the making of him. On one occasion he had written a pamphlet in which he had argued that the white man had a great responsibility towards the savages who recognized his superior abilities and gifts.

“he bothered me enough when he was here. “Each station should be like a beacon on the road toward better things, a centre for trade of course, but also humanising, improving, instructing.””

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In the eyes of the savages, the white man was a kind of God; and, therefore, according to Mr. Kurtz’s original way of thinking, the white man could do a lot to improve the conditions of life for the savages. The white man could exercise unlimited powers of benevolence for the good of the backward peoples of the world. Such had been Mr. Kurtz’s views before coming to the Congo. However, at the end of that pamphlet, Mr. Kurtz had also jotted down the following words: “Exterminate all the brutes.” Now, this injunction seemed to contradict all the preceding arguments in that pamphlet. On one hand, Mr. Kurtz has wanted the

white men to confer all kinds of benefits upon the brutes; and, on the other hand, he wants all the brutes to be annihilated. Perhaps his injunction to exterminate all the brutes might only have meant that the brutal part of the savages should be exterminated and that they should be transformed into civilized human beings. In any case, Mr. Kurtz's ideas has, in those days, been highly progressive, and he has really been an apostle of pity enlightenment. But subsequently, after his prolongs stay among the savages, Mr. Kurtz has himself become a savage. What puzzles us most about this man is the great change which takes place in his character and his outlook after he has lived in the interior of the Congo for a fairly long time. Instead of civilizing the savages, he himself becomes almost a savage. Having lived in the midst of savages, he falls a prey to the influence of these men and begins to share their way of life and their customs. He identifies himself with them to such an extent that they begin to regard him as one of themselves. Not only that, they begin to worship and admire him because of his eloquence in speech and because of his

spellbinding speeches to them. He has been presiding over their midnight dances which always end with unspeakable rites.

“He was not not afraid of the natives; they would not stir till Mr. Kurtz gave the word. His ascendancy was extraordinary. The camp of these people surrounded the place, and the chief came every day to see him. They would crawl . . . ‘I don't want to know anything of the ceremonies used when approaching Mr. Kurtz,’ I shouted. Curious, this feeling that came over me that such detail would be more intolerable than those heads dying on the stake under Mr. Kurtz windows”

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In other words, he has been participating in their custom of offering human sacrifice to their gods, and perhaps even in their cannibalism. Having lived among them, he has lapsed into primitivism and has been giving full outlet to the primitive instincts which have gained an ascendancy in his mind. He has been seeking abominable satisfactions and he has been gratifying the monstrous passions which had begun to rage in his breast. He has been satisfying all the primitive appetites and lusts which had emerged in his heart. The monstrous passions, and their gratification include all kinds of sex perversions such as collective sex orgies, gang-rape,

homosexuality, sadistic and masochistic practices, and so on.

“They only showed that Mr. Kurtz lacked restraint in the gratification of his various lusts, that there was something wanting in him”

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This change in Mr. Kurtz does not mean that he has entirely forgotten his European heritage or that all the marks of civilization have been extinguished in him. The strange thing is that he retains his identity as a civilized man, while at the same time succumbing to his primitive instincts at times. In other words, whenever he mingles with the savages, he becomes a savage like them; and on such occasions he fully shares and participates in their rites and customs, including the offering of human sacrifice and cannibalism, and including also the satisfaction of certain monstrous passions and lusts. But he becomes his civilized self when he returns to his residence at the Company's station and resumes his activities as a trader in ivory on behalf of the Company of which he is the employee. Thus he leads a double life. He is a civilized man, striving to serve the Company to his utmost by

collecting the maximum possible quantities of ivory; and, at the same time, he pays frequent visits to the interior of the wilderness in order to participate in the primitive rites and customs of the savages. He has also managed to subdue the savages in order to be able to rule over them as their chief of chiefs, so that all the chiefs, of the native tribes come crawling to pay their homage to him.

The Russian explorer and traveller who has studied the ways of Mr. Kurtz and who has come into intimate contact with him has high praise for Mr. Kurtz. In fact, the Russian's praise of Mr. Kurtz greatly exalts Mr. Kurtz's image in our eyes; and even Marlow cannot help being influenced by the Russian's eulogy of Mr. Kurtz. The Russian says that Mr. Kurtz has taught him much and that Mr. Kurtz has enabled him to see into the life of things. The Russian has become a devoted admirer and disciple of Mr. Kurtz, and has even nursed him during his illnesses. The Russian has felt greatly impressed by Mr. Kurtz's poetic talent also, and has often listened to Mr. Kurtz's recitation of his poems. At the same time, the Russian bears

witness to Mr. Kurtz's passion for power, his passion for ivory, his passion for his fiancée, and his passion to own things.

Marlow too begins to admire Mr. Kurtz after having come into personal contact with him. Marlow cannot exactly define the positive qualities of Mr. Kurtz except his magnificent eloquence but Marlow does fall under that man's spell. Marlow has found Mr. Kurtz to be "hollow at the core", and yet subsequently Marlow becomes a devotee of that man. Marlow pursues Mr. Kurtz into the wilderness when Mr. Kurtz has slipped away from his cabin on the ship in order to rejoin the savages in response to the beating of their drums; and Marlow brings Mr. Kurtz back, though he has to use all his powers of persuasion to make him agree to come back. Thus Mr. Kurtz has found the call of the wilderness to be irresistible even after having decided to accompany the white men who have come especially to take him away and send him to Europe for medical treatment. This means that Mr. Kurtz finds it difficult even at this stage to tear himself away from the wilderness

and from the savages environment in which he has been living. Marlow finds the native woman's devotion to Mr. Kurtz also to be evidence of Mr. Kurtz's influence over the savages. This native woman has been Mr. Kurtz's housekeeper and, most probably, also a mistress of his. Then Marlow feels deeply impressed by Mr. Kurtz's dying words: "The horror! the horror!" Marlow takes these words to mean that, while dying, Mr. Kurtz has been able to recognize the evil within himself. To Marlow, it seems that Mr. Kurtz has, at the end, partially redeemed himself by realizing the horror of the evil which has been dominating his mind, and which has taken possession of his heart and soul. Marlow regards Mr. Kurtz's last words as an "affirmation" and as a "victory". After having heard these last words of Mr. Kurtz, Marlow becomes further confirmed in his friendship and his admiration for Mr. Kurtz; and it is because of this feeling of friendship for the dead man that Marlow tells a lie to Mr. Kurtz's fiancée when, in response to a question by her, he says that the last word spoken by Mr. Kurtz before his death was her own name.

In proportion to the fullness of their development, the character in a story are relatively flat or round. The flat character is characterized by one or two traits; he can be summed up in a sentence. The round character is complex and many-sided; he might require an essay for full analysis. (Perrine;1959:87)

Mr. Kurtz is not an ordinary character in an ordinary novel. *Heart of Darkness* is an extraordinary work of fiction-cum-facts, and Mr. Kurtz is an extraordinary person. In addition to what he seems to be or what he apparently is, he has also to be viewed as a symbolic figure. He represents the western man's commercial mentality and the western man's greed. Secondly, he represents the hypocrisy of the white man's claims of civilizing the savages. Thirdly, he represents the western man's love of power and his desire to subjugate and rule over the backward races of the world even at the sacrifice of the fundamental principles of ethics and morality. Finally, Mr. Kurtz symbolizes the power and force of the primitive human instincts which may seem to have been brought under control by the civilized people but

which manage the rise to the surface if a civilized man has to remain in an environment of savagery and brutality for a long time.

Conclusion

In this novel the writer finds that colonialism is the consequence of the imperialism that is done by the white toward the native Africa. Instead of civilizing the savage of Africa, the whites exploit them by slavery and violence in order to get their purpose "ivory".

Heart of Darkness that is presented by Joseph Conrad, tells about social-colonial literature which happened in the Africa some time in 1800th. This novel also refers to the history that is occurred during that time. E.g. the character of Mr. Kurtz that refers to an explorer, Henry Morton Stanley, which takes an adventure in the jungle of Africa and opens the economic activity by making some stations in the inner jungle of Congo River.

Heart of Darkness shows smoothly the disparity between the civilization in the Thames river and

Congo River (white and black, civilize and savage, intelligent and ignorance).

This novel reveals that the civilization is not always act in a humanitarian way. There is the possibility that force, violence and slavery are also used.

The human civilization propaganda sometimes has been distorted into colonialism that ensued exploitation toward the native by the pilgrim, the natural resources robbery, the changing ideology, genocide and religion influence, as this novel tells us.

Colonialism also influences the changing character of civilized white man , Mr. Kurtz, that shown has us his changing character when he gets deep in to the jungle of Africa, he becomes a savage too by exploit the native to his personal purpose.

Heart of Darkness is also a kind of condemnation from Joseph Conrad as a literary worker toward the colonialism.

must be interesting in analyzing a novel from the second language of the writer.

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